Seeing the Social:

Understanding why children are out of school in rural Ethiopia

Tigist Desta Grieve

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Social and Policy Sciences

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This thesis is dedicated to my husband Rob and our lovely daughter Ruthye who asks:

*Have you finished writing the story for Sarah mummy?*

Yes, I am done and I am all yours now.


ABSTRACT

The promotion of education has long been a priority of the successive regimes of Ethiopia. Combined with the momentum of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in recent years Ethiopia’s education sector has experienced a major expansion of primary school enrolment which has earned Ethiopia international acclaim and so much optimism in meeting the MDGs set for 2015. Despite this, however, large numbers of primary school aged children remain out of school, most of these are found in rural areas and many of them are girls. Many of the children that enrol do not stay on to complete the full cycle of their primary schooling. While there are numerous studies looking at rural children’s schooling, village-based ethnographic studies are rare, particularly in Ethiopia. The thesis offers a sociological insight as to why low enrolment and incompletion persist in rural areas.

Drawing on an ethnographic approach study over extended period this thesis presents analysis of data from two local communities. Methodologically the analysis are anchored on the voices of the children, their parents and teachers and make a valuable contribution in emphasising not only the importance of bringing local people’s own voices into the debate, but also drawing attention to the ways voice may be utilised and calling for greater sensitivity to the way it is interpreted in scholarly and policy circles. Theoretically, the study shows the value of applying Bourdieu’s approach to social reproduction in analysing the challenges faced by rural children in completing primary school. Time spent with children, their families and their teachers suggests reproduction of educational inequality at all levels (home, school, community). While these are certainly important, this thesis argues that more attention needs to be paid to the social context in which children and their schooling are embedded. It suggests the challenges in schooling rural children are not simply explained either by the quantity of primary schools available, or a lack of value being accorded to education, or deliberate acts of discrimination (e.g. against girls). Rather, it has argued that discriminatory outcomes, or the reproduction of social inequality, have to be understood as the outcome of social practice, where ‘choices’ are made in circumstances of considerable constraint. Furthermore, it has shown that these patterns of social reproduction are as characteristic of teachers and the field of the school as they are of parents and children and the field of home and community. Rather than the school operating as an external change agent, as imagined in much of the education literature, the school is very much part of the local social context. The application of policies and the social practice of staff are significantly marked by their positionality within the communities which they serve.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Translations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afer</td>
<td>dusty/dirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amarigna/Amhara</td>
<td>Language of Amhara people (also the current working language of Ethiopia)/ the people are called Amhara/Amaroch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areke</td>
<td>cheap local spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro</td>
<td>St Marys Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awaki</td>
<td>A 'knowledgeable' person, feared because of their connection and use of the 'spirits'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barataa</td>
<td>Student in Oromo language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barumssa</td>
<td>Education / school in Oromo language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belg</td>
<td>Ready for harvest crop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chigger</td>
<td>hardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiraro</td>
<td>Split dry wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cini</td>
<td>Traditional coffee cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derg</td>
<td>Literally 'council' but refers to the socialist government ruling Ethiopia between 1974 to 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dureyes</td>
<td>Literally 'juveniles', a derogatory term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebet mezak</td>
<td>Clearing animal dung - often a job reserved for girls and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fentata</td>
<td>smallpox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferenj</td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetel</td>
<td>handmade cotton material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gari</td>
<td>horse cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gebere</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guragenga/ Gurage</td>
<td>Language of the Gurage people is referred to Guragena/ the people are called Gurage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injera</td>
<td>A sourdough flatbread, the staple food of much of Ethiopia but not all regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jebena</td>
<td>clay coffee pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jellatii</td>
<td>cheap iced sugar water a treat for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalicha</td>
<td>specially gifted person - (with spiritual reference) not always seen positively but also can be taken as a 'healer'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebele</td>
<td>A sub-district, administrative -lower level of government (part of a woreda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kembatigna</td>
<td>Language of the Kembata people is referred to Kembatinga / the people are called Kembata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keleb</td>
<td>food-consumption but not in reference to daily (which is Migib)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kes</td>
<td>Priest / Religious school - cheaply available and local attached to Orthodox church priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitegn</td>
<td>Sexually transmitted disease (SDT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mana Barrumssa</td>
<td>Home of education/School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mehayim</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meshenga</td>
<td>Evidence of clearance commonly obtained from school / Kebele/workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mister</td>
<td>Secret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mister tebaki</td>
<td>Keeper of secrets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromigna/Oromo</td>
<td>Language of the Oromo people is referred to Oromigna / the people are called Oromo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selam</td>
<td>Hello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seytan</td>
<td>Satan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimagile</td>
<td>elder / traditional mediators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimaglewoch</td>
<td>Elders / traditional mediators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telefa</td>
<td>Abduction of girls by force for Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temari</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tena Kela</td>
<td>Health post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigregna/ Tigrawi</td>
<td>Language of the Tigre people is referred to Tigrigna/ the people are called Tigre/Tigrawi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timihert</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timihirt bet</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woreda</td>
<td>A district, administrative level of government comprising of several kebele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wot</td>
<td>stew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ye-ekul mares</td>
<td>shared cropping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zerf</td>
<td>sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mewakir</td>
<td>structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seraat</td>
<td>system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maheber</td>
<td>group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ye sengo mata lij</td>
<td>The Monday evening child - less offensive term to identify children born out of wedlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dikala</td>
<td>Pejorative term for child born out of wedlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wushima</td>
<td>Mistress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuba</td>
<td>Term used to the written Oromo text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ye set engda yelewim</td>
<td>Customary saying: there is no such thing called female-guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weyala</td>
<td>Minibus conductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merfe</td>
<td>Injection / Jabs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metor</td>
<td>To get help from relative usually child/ help ones relations in old age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
This study explores why so many children are still not in school in rural Ethiopia, despite universal primary schooling being seen as one of the pre-eminent and long standing goals of the global community and national development. Free primary schooling is seen as both a human right (UNCRC 1989) and a way of bringing social and economic development (UNESCO 2002). It is also expected that when children are in school they can be protected from harmful and exploitative work (UNCRC 1989; Boyden, Ling and Myers 1998). Following many years of varied global and national development initiatives such as Education for All (EFA) 1990, Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000, increasingly the world’s children are enrolled in school. In particular in the last decade the enrolment rate has increased significantly across the world. However, it is widely recognised that bringing to school specific categories of children such as those who are female, rural, in conflict situations, have physical or intellectual disabilities, are refugees or stateless, or from pastoralist communities has met with persistent problems. In addition, many of those children who enrol in developing countries leave school before they complete the full course of primary schooling. Therefore while the considerable increase in enrolment following the MDG movement is acknowledged, scholars have directed our attention to questions of equality, quality and more (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, 2013; Lewin 2007, 2009; Mundy et al. 2010). Taking Ethiopia as a case study, this thesis will consider the factors that affect primary school enrolment, non-enrolment and dropout for rural children.

This chapter describes the rationale and basis for my own investigation of this in the coming sections.

1.2 THE STUDY BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH PROBLEMS
The economic and social benefits of educating all children in developing countries are widely recognised and brought global and national actors to a consensus to develop a collective effort to achieve it. Following the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 28 established free primary education as a right on the basis of equal opportunity for all children. This then was followed by the UNESCO 1990 Education
for All declaration in Jomtien and subsequently by UNESCO 2000 the Dakar framework for action. The six education goals that developed from the conference went on to be part of the MDGs to promote the achievement of gender parity in school by 2005 and universal primary education by 2015. Consequently enrolment has increased significantly across the developing countries.

Currently there are 58 million primary school age children globally that are out of school (UNESCO 2015); this stands in stark contrast to the promises made in the 2000 UN summit to create Education for All children by 2015 (UNESCO 2000). Instead ‘one in six children in low and middle income countries or almost 100 million – will not have completed primary school’ (UNESCO-GMR 2015: xii), and the true figure may be much higher (Carr-Hill 2012).

The majority of out of school children are currently found in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA), which is an increase from 1999 when the African share of out of school children stood at 40% (UNESCO 2015). Despite earlier optimism (e.g. GMR 2008), recently UNESCO stated that ‘there has been virtually no progress in reducing the global rate and number of out-of-school children since 2007’ (UNESCO and UNICEF 2015-17). This is a worrying trend, especially regarding rural children, as they experience greatest need deprivation, exacerbated by lack of essential services and infrastructural development (Grantham-McGregor et al. 2007; also see Filmer and Pritchett 1999).

UNESCO-GMR (2015) divides the 58 million out of school children at primary level into three categories: those currently not in school but expected to enrol (34%), those who will never enrol (43%) and those who enrolled and left (23%). As described above, the categories of children that are out of school and considered marginalised range from poor and rural children to those living in conflict and emergency areas.

The global and national level attention given to primary education has reduced the incidence of fees for primary education resulting in an increasing number of poor people in poor countries enrolling in school. However, this has strained the education system with already under resourced schools experiencing increasing pupil teacher ratios and infrastructural issues, which has further reduced educational quality (UNESCO 2005).
1.3 **RATIONALE**

There is a plethora of literature on schooling in developing countries within which considerable overlaps, contradiction and duplication exists. Although the framing of the problem of enrolment, progress and completion is multifaceted, a key concern in much of the literature is inequality. So, in understanding the sources of inequality in access to sustained primary schooling, quantitative studies in particular ask what determines children’s access to school and why does one child’s schooling trajectory differs from another. Despite numerous studies of rural children’s schooling, I note the minimal focus on the everyday lived experiences of rural people, in particular children, and their perspectives. There is limited work which foregrounds our understanding from the local level of insights specific to rural contexts, and there are even fewer studies in relation to rural Ethiopia. It is this gap which I aim to fill with insights into how the social helps us understand the textures, nuances, process and mechanisms of schooling beyond the statistics and numbers we have in abundance.

Primary schooling is an important national and global goal agreed for all children, but despite this, rural children, and girls in particular, do not enrol and dropout before completion of a full cycle of primary schooling. Rural locations are an important area of research because the majority of the people in developing countries live in rural areas (in the case of Ethiopia over 80% of its population). High concentration of poverty is found in rural areas where basic services are much harder to access (UNESCO 2015). It is stated that ‘for every 100 urban children who have access to primary education, only 68 do so in rural areas. For every 100 children in urban areas who complete primary school, only 46 do so in rural areas.[...] these inequities in education directly threaten the sustainable development of the sub-Saharan region.’ (FAO 2005:no page number-online). More recent analysis also stated ‘Children living in rural areas, especially in remote regions, face heightened risks of marginalization in education, and more so if they are poor and female.’ (UNESCO-GMR 201027) By drawing on concepts of voice and using an ethnographic methodology, my study attempts to address this gap in our understanding of these inequities.

1.4 **THE AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS OF RESEARCH**

As I noted briefly in section 1.3 and discuss in chapter two, much of the knowledge about primary schooling in developing countries is an outcome of statistical analysis. Even though this is important, the methodology used means that our knowledge is largely based on
snapshots rather than detailed accounts of pertinent issues in the schooling of rural children. My intention from this study was to explore local level perceptions of schooling, assumptions, and the values they hold about school/education, including rural people’s interactions with schools and school level practices and children’s experience of this.

1.4.1 Research questions

Existing knowledge highlights the considerable global effort put towards Universal Primary Education for all children in the world and the persistent problems in schooling rural children. Starting from these accounts, the study formulated specific questions to explore the problem through empirical research, taking Ethiopia as its case study. The overarching question of this study is If the commitment to get children to school is ubiquitous, what explains the persisting problems? Why do many rural children remain out of school? Moreover, why do many of the enrolled children not get to complete their primary schooling?

In exploring these research questions from the seldom included but important perspectives of rural children, their parents and teachers, this thesis explores the following empirical sub questions:

1. What is the status of primary schooling in KaraKore1?
   a. What is the pattern of primary school enrolment?
   b. Who are the never enrolled and dropped out children?
   c. What are the key factors that influence enrolment and completion of primary school?

The above are primarily intended to be explored through the survey data. And the following question are utilised to explore the ethnographic data with commitment to the voices of local people by asking:

2. What patterns of thought, behaviour and practices lie behind the observed patterns of school enrolment, non-enrolment, intermittent enrolment (temporary withdrawals) and dropout?

3. Why do low enrolment and lack of completion persist in rural contexts?

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1 For the whole area of the two research site peri-urban and rural that are under same administration, I have given the pseudo name KaraKore. Individually peri-urban site and its school is referred to as Kara, the rural site and its school are referred to Kore.
1.5 Materiality of rurality and implication for children’s schooling

Despite the importance given to the schooling of rural children, less attention is given to rurality in research in education. In their observation of the literature on education Pini, Moletsane and Mills (2014) assert the lack of interest in the topic and the narrow approach to it as `mere setting’ (Howley 2004:258) or `context’ (Moletsane and Ntombela 2010:5) at the neglect of the substantial materiality of rurality itself. It is also argued that even when rurality itself may be taken as a topic of research, the focus remained on distance, limited services, and isolation, rather than rurality itself (Arnold et al. 2005; Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane 2008, 2011; Bhana 2010; de Lange and Mitchell 2014). Rural education research itself generates heated debates over its topic, quantity and quality among other things (for example see the exchange between Howley, Theobald, and Howley 2005 and Arnold et al. 2005). Dimensions aside from location that need to be taken into account in any study of rural areas include poverty, parental attitudes towards education and specifically in relation to Ethiopia, ‘adherence to traditional cultural values, attitudes and practices […] such as early marriage, abduction, genital mutilation, sexual violence, excessive domestic chores, male superiority and domination of women [which] are tolerated and encouraged by the community both inside and outside the school’ (Ayalew Shibeshe 2006:57). The motivation of teachers is also a concern in rural areas, as according to a UNESCO commissioned report in 2006 there is evidence that there are trained teachers without jobs in urban areas. The reason for this is that teachers across many counties have a preference to be deployed into urban areas due to problems associated with rural areas such as the poor quality of life, associated risks, lack of opportunity for career development, lack of representation of their interest at the national level, and lack of local language proficiency (Ayalew Shibeshi 2006). While centralised deployment of teachers in Ethiopia has been partially successful, it does ‘tend to suffer from congested decision-making processes and inattention to the individual needs of the education staff’ (Ayalew Shibeshi 2006:49). There are also shortcomings due to ‘undue influence being exerted by powerful individual on deployment decisions’ (Ayalew Shibeshi 2006:50; for studies in rural schooling challenges in Western context see Arnold et al. 2005). While there is considerable literature on teachers’ motivation, I don’t have space to address these issues here (see Gould 1993; Barrett 2005; Bennell and Akyeampong 2007; Day 2008 and Avalos and Barrett 2013). Another problem specific to rural areas is multi-grade teaching, which was initially adopted to address teacher shortages, especially in rural,
hard to reach areas with small school enrolments. It was to be used as a cost-effective measure to expand access to basic education and assist countries to achieve the MDGs and EFA goals. However, parents, teachers and education officers in Ethiopia perceive multi-grade as an ‘inferior and cheap option’ (Ayalew Shibeshi 2006:47). Other issues such as lack of suitable provision for disabled children are exacerbated in rural areas where families are reported to hide them, or in cases where they are enrolled they are reported to encounter exclusion (Ayalew Shibeshi 2007). Finally, Ayalew Shibeshi (2006) asserts that relevance is a key factor in education quality for rural children encompassing quality teaching and learning environment, suitably trained teachers and a relevant curriculum. However in practice the design of the curriculum is not linked to agricultural services, but instead reflects urban needs, which reduces its value to rural students.

1.6 ‘Categories or Participants?': Labelling of Rural People

In their analysis of qualitative data from Kenya and South Africa, Unterhalter and others identified three different approaches in what they called ‘boundary setting’, which related to the conceptualisation and positioning of specific categories of people (poor, rural, girls, indigenous, refugees and so on) as marginalised groups. This enabled them ‘to discern a number of ways in which poor people or other marginalised groups may be regarded or treated by those who work on the implementation of social policy.’ (Unterhalter, Yates, Makinda and North 2012:219). In their findings across the research sites they highlight how often blame rests on poor people and argue this arises from ‘lack of a critical language to think about marginalisation’ (Unterhalter et al. 2012:229). They also encourage more critical dialogue around concepts of marginalisation and inequality with officials and teachers to ensure appropriate action is taken (Unterhalter et al. 2012).

Whilst within mainstream education literature unpacking concepts of marginalisation is not encouraged and seen as a ‘detour’ (UNESCO 2010:135), I agree with Unterhalter and others that thinking about marginalised groups in ways that are deficient, distracts from the real issues that need addressing and shifts the focus on to the problematic parent or child. Whilst it is the case poverty makes it hard to access schooling, the poor are not passively existing, nor do they see their circumstances unescapable. Rather the way in which parents and children map out their escape is different to the schooling path subscribed to them. This is not a reflection of their ignorance of what the potential gains are from education; their decision making comes instead from their critical engagement with what is possible in
their own context and reflection on their own lived experiences. Seeing parents and children through a deficit lens suggests that it is inevitable that they would experience lack of education and the multiple structural inequities that parents, their children and rural teachers themselves overcome are ignored. An important measure often put forward to address concerns of children’s school enrolment and dropout is community participation and partnership. While many claims are made in relation to giving voice to communities to influence local level practice, in reality much of the literature reports participation as a tokenism (for further discussion on community participation see Bray 2001; Cooke and Kothari 2001; Moncrieffe and Eyben 2007; Wood 2007; Eyben 2007; and Swift-Morgan 2006 specifically in relation to Ethiopia).

1.7 AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
In this thesis I draw heavily on ‘thinking tools’ developed by Bourdieu such as habitus, field and capital which have been used in other studies to explain inequalities in education and their maintenance (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:80; Grenfell 2008). While the thinking tools are considered elastic (e.g. what counts as field), Bourdieu sets out a systematic three step process for analysis of the field of interests (Ritzer 2008:533 and Grenfell, 2008 : 222-223), which has influenced the approach I have taken in this thesis. The first involves analysing the position of the field (in my case, the school, the home and the community) vis-à-vis the field of power. The second, maps out the objective structure of relations between the positions occupied by agents who compete for the legitimate forms of specific authority (in my case, this involves identifying the positions of individuals constituted within the field with respect to the capitals they are able to employ and deploy and the value of the capital they possess and its conversion in buying other sets of capital). Finally, the third analyses the habitus of agents and the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a deterministic type of social and economic condition (in my case, looking not only at people’s backgrounds and trajectories, but also at people’s own perspectives and rationales). Therefore from a Bourdieusian perspective ‘it is the links between individuals (habitus), field structures, and the positionings both within and between fields, that form a conceptual framework for research’ (Grenfell 2008:223).
1.8 AN OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

In this study I aim to bring the views and perspectives of the rural children for whom schooling is intended and their parents and teachers into existing debates about primary schooling in rural contexts. I chose an ethnographic research approach as there was no better way to fulfil my objective of understanding the issues I outline. I also used survey method at the initial stage (phase 1) as an entry to the community giving me the necessary orientation as well as reliable statistical data which was hard to come by in the context I studied. All this is further expanded in chapter three which outlines the epistemological and ontological assumptions of this study. The contributions of my study come from its dual location in international development and education and the novelty of its theoretical framework, which as far as I am aware has only been used outside the Global North once, in a study of education in rural India (Froerer 2011). I also present detailed ethnographic evidence that explains why children are not in school, drawing together perspectives of children, parents and teachers to explore the dynamics of social practice.

Before I continue I will clarify the boundaries of thesis and some of its key concepts.

1.8.1 What is this study about and what it is not

This study is not a study of schooling or education per se. I recognise the implication of equating education with school because school based learning represents only a small part of what children learn. However, this narrow definition of education as school is pervasive and can be seen in the characterisation of rural parents as ignorant because little credit is given to their out-of-school literacy (Street 1997). In this study I am conscious of this necessary correction offered by Brian Street and others (e.g. Gould 1993). However, I have used the terms schooling and education interchangeably for convenience and simplicity.

This study is not a policy study or an evaluation of the specific interventions made globally or in Ethiopia nor is it a reflection on the educational strategies of current or previous regimes of Ethiopia. As a necessary background I draw on global and national educational initiatives, but ultimately the focus of this study is problems in primary schooling of rural children and the boundary is drawn around the views and perspectives of the rural children, their parents and teachers.
1.8.2 Age and schooling: the imagined and the actual
While the study is about rural children in primary school, therefore according to the assumptions of the education system in Ethiopia children aged between 7 and 14, as I will show in chapter four children’s age is often an empirical question. As there were much older children in the primary school I included them all in the analysis as long as they were age 18 or below (UNCRC 1989). I have clearly stated in all of the data presentation which age bracket it refers to.

1.8.3 Concepts and terms: education sector, system, structure
In this thesis I use the term education sector (zerf), which refers to the existing state education sector as compared to other sectors such as health or agriculture, education structure (mewakir), which refers to its age-based structure (e.g. age 0-6 pre-primary, 7-14 primary, 15-18 secondary and so on) and education system (seraat) and its structure, which refers to the internal set up of the primary, secondary, tertiary education system, as well as the system level set up of language, assessment, pedagogy, curriculum, transition, policy (e.g. automatic promotion, repetition), cost sharing and so on. I used the terms when appropriate in same ways as they are used in the Ethiopian Ministry of Education literature. This may differ from the usage in some academic education literature.

1.9 A BRIEF BACKGROUND ON ETHIOPIA AND ITS MOST RECENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

1.9.1 Ethiopian education sector post 1994
Ethiopia is governed in a federal system that has, nine regional states and two city administrations (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). The structure has Federal government at the top, and regional, zonal, woreda and lowest level administration Kebele. ‘Education is the shared responsibility of these administrative tiers.’ (EFA National Review-2015:2).

According to the recent report of Education for All 2015 National Review (2015) in the year 2000 the population of Ethiopia is estimated at 84 million with 2.6% annual average growth. The rural population is estimated to be over 80% while the share of under 15 years old and under being 33 million (ibid). Ethiopia’s economy is reported to be growing at a double digit rate even during the financial crises elsewhere. Nevertheless in 2011 it ranked 174 out of 187 countries in the UNDP Human development report (Shitarek 2012) and the rural poverty remained persistent owing to the frequent and erratic climatic conditions.
(drought, environmental degradation, disaster, shortage of rainfall or untimely rainfall) all affecting food production. Recent reports prepared for the UK government suggest that 40% of rural population considered to live in poverty and 29% in extreme poverty (Shitarek 2012). This report also highlighted the shortage of water and meant women, girls and children make 5-8 hours journey for water collection with direct implication on their schooling (Shitarek 2012). According to the Ethiopian government PRSPs a concern over rural urban disparity is recognised as a priority that needs to be addressed through targeted social policy (MoFED 2002). Its effort has been recognised by the recent ODI progress report as having ‘an ambitious and multidimensional policy approach which aims for equitable poverty reduction; embedding education policies into broader economic planning’ (ODI 2015:6).

For this brief background, I have chosen to start from 1994 as this is where the socialist regime (1974-1991) system was replaced by the current regime of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) with a renewed commitment to a pro-poor and pro-rural approach (Tassew Woldehanna and Jones 2006). The new Education and Training Policy (ETP) introduced by the EPRDF in 1994 recommitted to the government a fee-free primary schooling for all (GoE 1994). From 1997 onwards successive Education Sector Development Plans (ESDPs) were developed. All of these initiatives except for ESDP-I have been linked to the national macroeconomic plans which are aligned with the MDGs. ESDPs are also connected to the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDP). ESDPs were also linked to the Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I), and the most recent ESDP V is linked to the new GTP II planned for the next 5 years 2015-2020. Each emphasise a key goal of ‘reaching a middle-income country status by 2025’ (EFA National Review-2015:2).

EPRDF explicitly promoted primary school as a key poverty reduction strategy and building human capital,

‘Primary education is absolutely critical to a nation’s development, providing on average the highest public returns to investment for the state. It serves as the bridge to TVET and higher education and a critical driver of economic growth. In

2 The first ESDP (I) not linked with the PASDP is ESDP-I (2002), the second is short to end with the PASDP 5 year plan therefore ESDP-II (2003-2005), after 2005 the ESDPs were planned to last 5 years similar to the PASDPs therefore ESDP-III 2005-2009, ESDP-IV 2010-2015, ESDP-V 2015-2020.
Ethiopia, primary education, is defined as education in grades' (EFA National Review 2015:7).

The ODI reported ‘The explicit goal of the ‘universalisation of primary education’ has been hard-wired into every national development plan since 1995. (ODI 2015:36). With regards to the education sector progress in the most recent GMR (2015) report, Ethiopia is among the countries reported to have made remarkable progress albeit uneven with a decrease of its never enrolled children ‘from 67% in 2000 to 28% in 2011’ (GMR 2015:20) and ‘increased primary completion by over 20 percentage points’ (GRM 2015:18; see also Woodhead et al. 2009; see table 1.1 below progress in GER). Related to this, Ethiopia also saw considerable improvement in early childhood education from 4.2% (2008/9) to 33.65% 2013/14 (EFA National Review – 2015; Woodhead et al. 2009). Moreover, the successful implementation of relevant policy is reported to have reduced prevalence of early marriage ‘by over 20% between 2005 and 2011’ (GMR 2015:35).

Table 1.1: Changes in GER at Primary Level (1-8) by Region from 2000/01 to 2013/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2000/01</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M  F  T</td>
<td># of  M  F  T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigray</td>
<td>75.9 71.8 73.9 530</td>
<td>106.5 105.9 106.2 2236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afar</td>
<td>12.7 9.8 11.5 45</td>
<td>76.0 72.4 74.4 461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amhara</td>
<td>56.9 49.7 53.3 1857</td>
<td>107.2 106.2 106.7 8121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromia</td>
<td>73.5 42.1 57.9 2418</td>
<td>96.1 86.3 91.2 12866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>13.4 7.2 10.6 107</td>
<td>141.8 126.5 134.9 849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benshangul-Gumuz</td>
<td>112.7 63.3 88.5 121</td>
<td>108.7 90.8 99.9 440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNNPR</td>
<td>80.8 46.7 63.8 1539</td>
<td>107.1 96.8 102.0 5814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambella</td>
<td>117.1 73.0 95.8 27</td>
<td>154.7 145.9 150.5 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harari</td>
<td>120.8 89.1 105.3 50</td>
<td>103.2 92.7 98.1 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>118.0 118.5 118.3 235</td>
<td>141.0 167.7 154.6 823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dire Dawa</td>
<td>84.1 67.1 75.7 29</td>
<td>133.6 172.4 153.1 126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>67.3 47.0 57.4 6,958</td>
<td>104.8 97.8 101.3 32,048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Such improvement however put strain on the education system including a serious shortage of qualified teachers (GMR 2015; EFA National Review -2015) leading to serious concerns over quality. Consequently despite the enrolment increase in primary level, only 69.5% in 2013/14 were able to complete up to grade 5 (EFA National Review-2015). More worryingly ‘a 2008 study of grade 3 students in Woliso district found that 36% could not
read a single word in Afan Oromo, the local language.’ (GMR 2010:20). The education sector recognises this and devised the quality improvement plan (ESDP III). Quality of education with reference to language and learning are recognised as the most challenging issues for the Ethiopian education sector because there are over 80 ethnic groups and different languages with only 23 so far being provided for in the schooling system (EFA National Review-2015).

‘The challenge of quality is closely linked to the challenge of completion. [...] In order to better-prepare students for formal education, an early childhood care and education framework was established, to guide the country’s expansion of care and education for children from birth to grade one.’ (EFA National Review 2015:3).

The most recent education sector Development Plans indicated that pre-school availability can address quality problems by preparing children and their parents for primary schools. This is a major development since it was left for private providers in the past ESDP’s. ‘Pre-school in Ethiopia is almost entirely private, urban, and accessed by relatively advantaged families (Woodhead et al. 2009:viii). To overcome the cost of funding and address the gap in provision of early childhood care a new grade to the existing 2 cycled primary school is added as grade zero. This targets children aged 4-6 and expects to be cost effective by using existing government primary schools. The first cycle primary schooling (grade 1-4) is geared for children age 7-14 followed by the second cycle (grade 5-8) aimed for 15-18 secondary and preparatory level however in practice age based enrolment is a key challenge especially in rural areas (ESDP III, EFA National Review 2015).

Symptomatic challenges recognised at the EPRDF era and its predecessors is a significant lack of financial input (Tekeste Negash 1996:2006). One way it sought to overcome the challenge over resource shortage includes strong push for community partnership and participation (discussed in chapter two; also see Yamada 2013). The other is high dependency on donor funds which some have identified as problematic (Tekeste Negash 1996). Ethiopia’s autonomy in managing its own economic and social policy affairs, including education, is mixed. On the one hand it is reported that it maintains relative independence from donor pressures (Lavers 2009, 2013) on the other it is said that it has fraught relations with donors such as the World Bank and IMF (for reference on education sector differing priorities between donor and Ethiopian government see ActionAid 2005).
The main contention here is the concern on high unemployment and Ethiopia’s ambitious plan for education sector beyond primary level. Recent report stated:

In line with the key priorities of the current Growth and Transformation Plan, a large demand is expected for middle and high level human resources. It is therefore critically important to emphasize science and technology so as to produce capable citizens who can contribute to make the country competitive in the increasingly knowledge-based global economy. (EFA National Review 2015:3).

However, it is challenged because of the demand to cut public investment. In practice behind the cost cutting demand by donors, the promotion of community participation and the push for cheap schools with cheap materials, staffed with paraprofessional teachers sits in stark contradiction with the school experiences schools are expected to give children, also in tension with the local ownership rhetoric offered by donor community. Donor and the Ethiopian state relations indicate a further contradiction where global community level discourse appears to promote partnership and national ownership but on the other puts considerable pressure for states to follow donor priorities and set bench marks in order to qualify for donor assistance. Ethiopian government and its fraught relations with the World Bank and the IMF is reported both in terms of Ethiopia’s ‘failing’ to follow the expectation in public expenditure to primary education sector as well as its decision to respond to its local reality by diverting some allocation of funds to TEVT and tertiary education (World Bank 2002; ActionAid International 2005). Yamada (2007) notes, ‘the controversy here is that, although the international aid community says that it welcomes ‘ownership’ by the governments of assisted countries, this same expression of ‘ownership’ is apt to mean non-compliance with terms prescribed by the funders’ (Yamada 2007:468). This donor stance prevails despite the knowledge that the government faces an absolute lack of resources (Yamada 2007). Bridging the gap is left for local schools to draw heavily on community contributions both in kind, labour and cash as well as through cost sharing measures. While the official claim suggest a free schooling policy, communities ‘perceive these charges to be ‘school fees’ (Yamada 2007:475). This suggest in the context of Ethiopia, that power lies beyond the authorities at the education sector and even beyond the government where powerful interest could also undermine the achievement of internationally set goals such as the MDG (for detailed discussion see Tekeste Negash 1996; ActionAid International 2005; Yamada 2007).
With this brief background into the Ethiopia education sector I now turn to give the thesis outline for the subsequent chapters.

### 1.10 Outline of the Thesis

This study has seven chapters in total. The first chapter is intended to introduce and give an overview of what is to come in the rest of the thesis. It establishes the importance of studying rural children’s schooling as one of the key global and national level development concerns. The chapter contains a brief background to justify the study and an overview of the research aims, objectives, research questions, conceptual framework and methodology.

Chapter two considers how the literature has addressed the issues specific to primary schooling in rural contexts and more generally educational inequality in developing countries. Drawing on empirical studies and theoretical debates the chapter argues there is imbalance in existing knowledge that predominantly relies on positivist approaches. It suggests that development and education literature from developing countries and Ethiopia in particular may take a deficit view of rural people and their practices with implications for existing knowledge about the schooling of rural children. It then argues for the value of including local people’s voices (children, their parents and teachers) in a way that enriches existing knowledge about rural schooling. For example, analysis anchored on the voices of children, parents and teachers would help to expand existing knowledge about the processes and mechanisms that promote and sustain the persistent problems of rural children’s schooling. The chapter also develop the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study by drawing on Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory.

In chapter three I present the methodology and discuss the methodological decisions I have made and the justification for these. I first present the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning this study and the utilisation of voice is discussed following that. As this was an ethnographic study, I present a detailed account of the fieldwork and the research design, methods, analysis and practical and ethical issues that emerged during the study.

In chapter four, I present the findings from the first phase of this study where I carried out a survey of 133 households across the two selected study sites (Kara and Kore) together addressed as KaraKore. In this chapter I discuss key differences observed between Kara and
Kore with some explanations for them; I also discuss the limits to this analysis and how the ethnographic data is designed to bridge these gaps. Chapter five and six are largely based on the rich ethnographic data collected over an extended time spent in the study sites. Chapter five expands on the statistical results utilising the voices of children and parents. In this chapter I draw on vignettes to illustrate the contextual account of people’s choices, actions and inactions and expand existing understandings of why children enrol, do not enrol, or leave school and the processes in between such outcomes. Chapter six builds on the preceding empirical chapters by drawing on the school level data and the voices of teachers, school and community level observation. Here I draw on short cases as a way of explaining school level issues and their outcomes. I use relevant examples to reveal the way in which school and education system level practices may enable schooling or act in a way that reproduce existing inequality. Chapter seven offers discussion of the key findings and arguments of the thesis, implications of the study, its limitations and my own personal reflection as the thesis concludes.
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE: PERSPECTIVES ON THE PROBLEMS IN GETTING RURAL CHILDREN INTO PRIMARY SCHOOL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines what is already known about the persistent problem of getting all children in the global south into primary school and completing a full cycle of schooling. My research focus is how rural children in Ethiopia are enrolling or not into primary school and remain there or not until they complete their schooling. I locate this problem within the context of universal primary education discourse and for that reason the literature I have reviewed is mainly located within international development and education where this study is also positioned. I have also reviewed some literature from childhood studies in relation to child labour and voice.

In order to achieve the overall aim of this thesis that is, to understand the problems of schooling rural children, it is important to start identifying how existing studies frame the problem and the factors, processes and mechanisms that are seen as influencing it. With that in mind, this chapter reviews theoretical perspectives and empirical studies on primary education in developing countries with particular focus on rural schooling. Therefore I have explored pertinent empirical studies, conceptual and theoretical frameworks.

As I discussed in the introduction, achieving universal primary education is one of the long standing aims of global and national level actors as a strategy for economic and social development. This is the background within which I am reviewing the existing literature, by looking at what we know with regards to access to primary schooling in developing countries. I agree with Hunt’s assertion that focusing on access entails a focus on dropout because the processes of dropout are integral to our understandings of educational access (Hunt 2008), although for rural children in particular quality and relevance are also important (UNESCO 2005, 2015). I also acknowledge that the global pursuit of universal access has to entail moving beyond quantity (numbers enrolled) to include considerations
of equity (not just parity, but also equality) as well as quality. However, broadening my focus in this way and paying attention to concepts of access, quality, equity and relevance in detail would encompass a huge literature and so I am going to concentrate on issues related to these in the context of rural primary schooling. There is a large body of literature exploring the concepts of access and equity and quality, which I will draw on where relevant (for example on Access, Lewin 2007, 2008; on Quality, Punch 2002; UNESCO 2004; Alexander 2008; Nikel and Lowe 2010; Hickling-Hudson and Klees 2012; Aikman and Rao 2010; Tikly and Barrett 2013; on Quality in rural Ethiopia, see Tekeste Negash 1996, 2006; Tatek Abebe 2007; on Equity and Relevance, Aikman and Unterhalter 2005; Tikly and Barrett 2013).

In addition to the four aspects identified (access, quality, equity and relevance) the studies focused on rural schooling also identify specific measures necessary to bring rural children into school. These entail discussion of equity, exclusion and community participation, which I address in relation to poverty, gender, ethnicity, and spatial location. I also engage with three distinctive bodies of literature that take the issues of equitable school access to another level and inform my own approach. Discussing these will lead me to explain the theoretical framework that I will adopt for analysis of my data.

2.1.1 The background: global pursuit of Education for All

Much of the discussion on EFA and its inclusion with the MDGs starts from questioning the formulation of the global development agendas, suggesting that despite the involvement of 155 country representatives at the conference, there was considerable influence from expertise based in Northern rather than Southern governments (see King 2007; Shepherd 2008; Unterhalter 2012). The potential consequences of this were lack of national ownership by southern partners and the promotion of a one size fits all policy approach (King et al. 2007; Milligan 2013). Once the commitments were agreed upon, developing countries may have been constrained by powerful donors from making autonomous decisions with direct implications for their achievement of MDGs (Tikly 2004; Global

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3 I am aware the various debates surrounding the terminology of ‘inclusion/ inclusive education’, ‘exclusion’ See (Slee 2004; Ainscow et al. 2006), I am simply referring to those who lack schooling opportunity. However, a more expanded understanding in relation to education is offered by Lewis and Lockheed “Social exclusion from immutable factors, such as gender, ethnicity, and race, contributes to low educational participation for girls and members of subgroups. Social exclusion from external factors, such as poverty, contributes to low educational participation and to a cycle of exclusion based on poverty. Concatenating factors of exclusion lead to what is often called multiple exclusion (Lewis and Lockheed 2007:5).
Further debates surround the difference between the more comprehensive Dakar Framework that comprised six goals and the two globally agreed MDGs (Tomasevski 2003; Heyneman, 2003, 2009; Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, 2013; Hulme 2010), which did not fully capture the EFA agenda (Unterhalter 2007). The MDG number two states ‘Achieve universal primary education’ (MDGR 2010:16) and goal number three states ‘Promote gender equality and empower women’ (MDGR 2010:20) and these were set to be achieved by 2015. While there is a wide reaching recognition that these goals are important, the primary focus on getting all children in school is questioned (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, 2013). These scholars have encouraged an expanded vision of access (Lewin 2007, 2008) that considers equity as equality (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005).

With regards to quality, scholars argue that the focus needs to shift to thinking about what goes on within school and what children get out of it (UNESCO 2004; Barrett et al. 2006; Tikly and Barrett 2007; Unterhalter 2007; Nikel and Lowe 2010; Tikly 2011). Concern over this increased as evidence of the effects of higher enrolment on schooling quality emerged (Raynor 2005; Lewin 2009). However, within the debate there is a lack of consensus as to what quality education means and how this can be measured (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991; Heneveld and Craig 1996; Hanushek and Woessmann 2007; Sayed & Ahmed 2011; Tikly and Barrett 2013). While earlier discussions, e.g. in relation to school effectiveness models, often associated quality with input and output models (e.g. Lockheed and Verspoor 1991), more recent work thought more critically about context both in terms of learners’ needs and the learning environments within which education takes place (Tikly 2011; Tikly and Barrett 2011; Tikly 2013). Even though scholars still hold different positions in terms of what quality consists in (see Stephens 2003; UNESCO 2005; Aikman and Unterhalter 2013) there is a shared understanding that ‘the achievement of universal participation in education will be fundamentally dependent upon the quality of education available’ (UNESCO 2005:28).

Related closely to the above discussion on quality is the concept of relevance. Tikly and Barrett state ‘a quality education must be relevant, i.e. that learning outcomes must
contribute to sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing for all learners, must be valued by their communities and consistent with national development priorities in a changing global context’ (Tikly 2010:13, also Tikly and Barrett 2013). It is recognised widely one aspect of quality schooling is that education provided is relevant to the lives of learners and is inclusive and flexible (e.g. responsive to language, local economy and livelihood and so on) (Leggett 2005; Tekeste Negash 1996; Tatek Abebe 2007). This consideration of learner needs and education suitable to the local context runs alongside attention to ‘local rather than global voices’ and ‘developing local leadership and ownership of educational agendas to ensure that they reflect local realities and priorities’ (Tikly 2013:202). Other scholars address relevance in relation to the impact of schooling on local traditions, environments, skills, and sustainability in developing countries. As such they highlight the tension between modern education and traditional skills essential to people’s livelihoods and argue for schooling to be relevant to the immediate needs of people and their future life (see Dyer 2001; Katz 2004; Tekete Negash 1996; Aikman 2011).

One further observation relevant as a background to the discussion on EFA and the MDGs is that the goals were inherently unachievable due to their short timescale, especially for the achievement of goal number three within just five years. Colclough notes, ‘the international community has made a habit of setting unrealistic target dates for the achievement of its educational goals [though] it was predictable that both the enrolment and the gender goals would not be achieved within the time frames chosen’ (Colclough 2008:55). According to the Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR 2010) to meet the goal all countries needed to get all children enrolled in school at their right age by 2009, to have in place adequate number of teachers, schools and resources, and for all children enrolled to stay on until completion. But many of the developing countries, despite being identified as on track by the GMRs, were not at that stage. For example, Ethiopia started with only one-quarter of primary school-aged children in school and ‘by 2002, it is estimated that the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) had reached 75 percent for boys and 54 percent for girls’ (Rose and Dyer 2008:58). However, as in Sub-Saharan Africa more than 30% of enrolled children were dropping out before completion (MDGR 2010) achievement of the goal at the targeted date was beyond reach.

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4 For earlier work see Stephens (2003) that offered four pillars of quality ‘relevance, efficiency, ‘something special’ and inclusivity’.
2.1.2 Interaction of multiple factors in access and dropout rather than a single factor

The key message of studies that focus on schooling access and dropout has been constant since the early 90s and is essentially that socioeconomic, cultural, spatial, and person differences affect the schooling of children in both positive and negative ways. The differences in the philosophical underpinning of these studies becomes salient as they go on to recommend the remedies. There are those who assume that a technical fix will resolve the problem and this can be universally applied, and there are those who are process focused and argue for a context specific approach in recognition of the complexity surrounding what the problems are and what the solutions may be.

Moreover, the scholarship tends to locate the issues that impede access and completion and cause dropout in terms of what type of access or schooling opportunity is available, the specific attributes a child brings into school, including gender, and what happens within the school, in other words experiences of schooling. The predominant conceptualisation in a plethora of existing studies refers to the problems as ones of either supply or demand, or as an issue of ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’ (Buchmann and Hannum 2001). While such dichotomised concepts have value in categorising, they can also be restrictive as we go on to see in this chapter because the nature of the problem is often located at both ends (supply-demand) and these are also interconnected.

Various scholars have attempted to explain the problems of low enrolment and high dropout from school in developing countries. While researchers’ specific focus and approaches to understand the problem varies, there seems to be consensus that essentially points towards ‘inequality’ of access itself and other fundamental issues that are beyond access (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005; Lewin 2007; 2008; 2009). Many of the recent studies agree that it is an interaction of multiple factors rather than one factor that affects children’s enrolment and dropout of school (Lewin and Akyeampong 2009; Sabates et al. 2010; Ampiah and Adu-Yeboah 2009).

A comprehensive review of predominantly quantitative studies carried out by Buchmann and Hannum (2001)\(^5\) examined educational inequality in developing countries by looking at

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\(^5\) This comprehensive and high impact (citation) review is useful to discuss here because it is a suitable representation of quantitative studies on the topic. By not going direct to individual literature I am able to give a summary of the key points raised also I am able to save space for important qualitative discussion (which is the key focus for my own study). However, I have at times gone back to the original source to offer a clearer
four broad areas: ‘macro-structural forces shaping education and stratification; the relationship between family background and educational outcomes; school effects; and education’s impact on economic and social mobility.’ (Buchmann and Hannum 2001). I will look at each of these in turn, drawing on their review as well as other empirical studies and theoretical discussions. In order to do that I will be using their broad topics to structure my review and adding topics they have not included. While these broad four areas are helpful to organise the literature some overlap across them is acknowledged.

### 2.2 Macro Structural Forces Shaping Education and Stratification

The first part of Buchmann and Hannum’s review investigates ‘how macro-structural elements, including state policies and global forces, shape educational stratification through their effects on the demand for education or the structure and supply of schooling’ (2001:78). What is perhaps most relevant here in the context of the effort towards EFA in developing countries is the authors’ point on the varied capacity of states; that is, how even though the state may be seen as playing central role in provision of education in various ways (provision, policy, monitoring etc.) the extent to which states manage to successfully address inequality of education varies (also see O’Brien 2013). This in part emanates from the economic constraints within the countries, therefore their dependency on donor agencies, but also states’ weaker positionality in the global system arising from indebtedness causing constraint over investment in their education sector. The combination of these limits developing countries ability to create effective educational institutions (Buchmann and Hannum 2001). According to Buchmann and Hannum, while some global actors such as UNICEF and UNESCO positively influence the direction of nation states, aspects of policies imposed by global institutes such as the World Bank and IMF (for example privatisation, decentralisation, reduced government spending on the public sector) required by Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) have a negative impact. Moreover, these policies ‘disproportionately affect female participation in education’ (Buchmann 1996 cited in Buchmann and Hannum 2001:82)\(^6\).

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\(^6\) For detailed discussion in relation to SAP and gender equity see Assie-Lumumba 2000; for further review of the World Bank see Heward and Bunwaree 1999; Stromquist 1999; Litvack et al. 1998 and specific to the context of Ethiopia see Tekeste Negash 1996 and Yamada 2007).
2.2.1 Rurality and gender

Rurality can be seen as a macro structure that particularly affects girls’ education. A key challenge associated with rural schooling is the availability of schools at a reasonable distance. According to the 2000 Welfare Monitoring Survey\(^7\) cited in Roschanski (2007), ‘one third of the rural sample lived at least five kilometres from the nearest primary school (2007:63). Based on the data from the Welfare Monitoring Survey in Schaffner (2004), over 11% of children age between 7 – 14 lived more than 7km away from the nearest school. When schools are located too far from the home it demotivates families due to their concern over the safety of children, particularly girls. Porter drawing on 30 years of ethnographic observation from Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria, argues that ‘patriarchal institutions and [...] discourse around female sexual appetite shapes everyday social practices and material inequalities’ (Porter, 2011:65). Her insightful observation of everyday life in rural contexts reveals the ways in which gendered mobility discourses and the relative immobility of girls affects their life chances. Distance to school results late enrolment for all children and potentially increases the opportunity cost from their lost labour. It has an even greater implication for girls as when they reach puberty their perceived vulnerability is increased, often resulting in them leaving before they are able to complete primary schools.

Puberty for girls in general and rural girls in particular is a critical transition which brings other concerns such as having a period with limited knowledge and practical resources (Sommer 2009; WaterAid 2009). Embarrassment and fear of having an accident in school deters girls from attending; one survey in Western Kenya reported in Sommer et al. (2013) finds as many as 70% of girls miss an average of three or more days every month as schools are not set up to facilitate appropriate management of menstrual hygiene (Sommer, Ackatia-Armah, Connolly and Smiles 2015; Summer et al. 2013). According to UNICEF (2010), more than half of the primary schools in 60 developing countries have no water facilities and two third have adequate sanitation facilities. Rural schools lack basic facilities such as toilets and water which affects children’s learning. For example 272 million children each year lose school days due to diarrhoea and one in three children have intestinal worms (UNICEF 2010). Girls’ and boys’ toilets need to be separate to avoid sexual harassment of girls in toilets; for example in South Africa 30% of reported rapes in school happened in toilets that were located in isolated parts of the schools (UNICEF 2010).

A lack of concern for rural areas observed by scholars such as Tekeste Negash may be partially explained by the treatment of the rural as largely irrelevant, little more than a pre-modern backwater, which is increasingly peripheral and inconsequential in the urbanised twenty-first century (Pini et al. 2014:453). Pini et al. (2014:453), commenting on the lack of interest in feminist work on rural areas, asserts that rural girls and women are seen as ‘insular and reactionary’ and unfitting with feminist principles of ‘female power’. A recent study Opoku-Asare and Siaw (2015) stated, ‘Rural schools in Ghana lack good infrastructure and facilities, they have low enrolment, less qualified teachers, and fewer textbooks, and other teaching and learning materials, whereas urban schools are generally overstaffed with qualified teachers, are overenrolled, better funded, and monitored, have better infrastructure and adequate resources to work with’ (Anamuah-Mensah 2002 cited in Opoku-Asare and Siaw 2015:1). This is not a new phenomenon as Poluha noted in 1995 that in Ethiopia ‘formal education is encountering great problems at present...Farming needs training from a young age and those sons who have been to school, have neither learned to farm properly, according to their fathers’ ways nor have they learned any new ways. As a result many parents all over Ethiopia have stopped sending their children to school’ (Poluha 1995:11). In similar vein, more than a decade later than Poluha’s observation, Tatek Abebe (2007) also questioned the real benefit of education offered in rural settings. Finally, Tekeste Negash notes that ‘the limitations of the formal education sector have become more clear in the rural areas. The major bottlenecks of the formal education sector are still its irrelevant curriculum and its drastic expansion in relation to the capacity of the modern economic sector to absorb school leavers’ (Tekeste Negash 1996:44).

2.2.2 Poverty and child schooling

Poverty and inequalities are identified as major factors in both qualitative and quantitative studies of education. Poor children living in poor households in poor countries represent the majority of the disadvantaged groups with regards to primary schooling (Colclough, Rose and Tembon 2000). For example in low income countries in 2008 one in four children from poorest quantile had never been to school (UNESCO-GMR 2015). It is estimated that the poorest children are four times more likely not to enrol and five times more likely not to complete primary school (UNESCO-GMR 2015). The proportion of marginalised children
varies between regions with exceptionally high disparities in out of school rates between rich and poor in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example ‘the poorest in Kenya and Malawi are over six times more likely to be out-of-school than children from the richest families’ (UNESCO-UNICEF 2015:42). However, Kabeer (2000) notes poverty does not necessarily stop families from sending their children to school, even if it is part of the explanation. This argument is supported with evidence from Bangladesh where despite the decline in poverty sections of the poor were slow to respond and children remained unenrolled 4-5 years after improvements in living standards (Kabeer 2000). Kabeer explains that this reflects the closeness of the families to the poverty line and ‘differences in the security of their livelihoods’ (Kabeer 2000a:477): ‘one of the things which distinguished the very poor from the moderately poor was the apparent relevance of education as an option in their lives’ (Kabeer 2000:477 citing Leach and Booth 1999 and Kasente 1999). However, in another study focused on urban poor in the slums of India, Banerji found that the perceived quality of schooling rather than the economic circumstances of poor children and their families was resulting in low enrolment and high dropout (Banerji 2000).

Many studies identify poverty as a key hindrance to rural children’s schooling (UNESCO 2005). It is estimated that ‘rural poverty accounts for nearly 63% of poverty worldwide (Khan 2000 cited in Hannum 2005) and poor children represent a high proportion of out of school children (UNESCO 2015). Even though official texts and much of the literature coming from human capital theory propose education as way out of poverty, in sociological literatures ‘education is seen as both a cause, and a factor contributing to the transmission of poverty’ (Rose and Dyer 2008:2). Schools are often a place where status quo is maintained rather than a place of transformation (this is discussed in the later part of this chapter). Whether education gets people out of poverty and offers all the advantages claimed in much of the literature coming from educational economists or organisations such as the World Bank is debatable. This is comprehensively reviewed in Rose and Dyer (2008).

2.2.3 Gender, poverty and child schooling

As described above, children from poor backgrounds are 3 times more likely to be out of school compared to their richer counterparts (MDGR 2010). Poor rural children are at a

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8 This phenomenon has also been noted by economists who suggest in the face of uncertainty families become risk averse (Jacoby 1994; Delap 1998; Lindskog 2011).
particular disadvantage in terms of school completion because they enrol late, leave early and have very low chance of enrolling into secondary school compared to those who are rich or living in urban areas (MDGR 2010). Such difficulties are worse for poor girls as a result of 'complex interplay of relations’ between poverty and gender (Unterhalter 2007:7).

Although it is encouraging evidence to see progress in gender parity across the developing world, this can mean simply that as many boys are out of school as girls. Despite increases in parity, it is estimated that 31 million of the 58 million primary school-age children out of school in 2012 are girls (UNESCO-UNICEF 2015:21) and the majority of these are found in rural areas.

2.2.4 Parental decision making and schooling
Parental decision making features in many studies that engage with children’s access to schooling. As described earlier, Banerji’s (2000) analysis of out of school children in urban India found that instead of parental apathy poor households have in reality spent proportionally more on their children’s schooling. In their analysis not only did poor parents send their children to school, but also sought a way of maximising the benefit from schooling by investing in private tuition and sending children to different schools in the morning and afternoon. However, the need to leave early in search of work gave them little time to ensure their children were going to school and some children preferred earning money to schooling. An additional challenge faced by poor and marginalised parents are negative attitudes towards them on the part of teachers and education officials, which parents may them internalised. For example, parents from scheduled castes reported not having a sense of lack of entitlement for themselves and their children and feeling unworthy of schooling (Subrahmanian 1997 cited in Kabeer 2000; see also Mokibelo 2014 in case of Botswana). In the Banerji (2000) study in urban India, the economic and social distance between the families and teachers exacerbated communication problems between them, leading Banerji to conclude that a large part of the blame for Indian children being out of school rests on the school system rather than on family poverty (ibid:798).

2.2.5 Rural schools for rural people
Following the MDG movement many developing countries have dropped school fees for primary schooling leading to an expansion in the enrolment rate (GMR 2015). This committed developing countries to expanding access by building significant numbers of
new schools to serve rural and underserved areas leading to impressive progress in rural enrolment (GMR (World Bank 2013; GMR 2015) (for example, Ethiopia built over 85% of new schools in what were considered underserved areas) (MoE-ESDP III 2010). There is some debate, however, between those who argue that increase in supply alone will not increase enrolment (Glewwe and Kermer 2006; GMR 2015) and those who show evidence of large impacts on enrolment in response to infrastructural development (Petrosino et al. 2012 cited in GMR 2015). This debate entails important questions over the underlying causes that stop children from enrolling, progressing and completing in school, for example, children who don’t enrol in school even when one of the major challenges of school provision is addressed (Filmer 2007; Kabeer 2000b; World Bank 2005). Banerji (2000) focuses on the multiple ways the poor are disadvantaged by schooling systems, for example, the ‘all pass’ or automatically promotion policy in state primary schools meant many children move grades without learning. Further, ‘there is little by way of serious or consistent remedial measures for those who lag behind academically. As a result the number of children who need extra help and attention to stay at grade level continues to grow as the children move through the primary school’ (Banerji 2000 : 800). In an attempt to have San community children’s own perspectives as to why they drop out of school in Botswana, Mokibelo 2014 carried out in-depth interviews with former students. He found that language, corporal punishment, marriage, and abusive employer-employee relations were mentioned among the reasons for dropping out of school.

2.2.6 Returns to education

Return to education in rural areas are low because of the concentration of lower quality of schools and absence of labour markets (Hannum 2005). For example, the Young Lives study found that in Ethiopia children were unable to read and write after four years of schooling. This challenges the ongoing effort to expand school availability without considering education quality (Hannum 2005; Tikly and Barrett, 2013). Given that rural livelihoods are predominantly reliant on subsistence farming, the associated indirect costs of schooling still act as a hindrance, even when no fees are charged (Rose and Dyer 2008; Sabates et al. 2010).

2.2.6.1 Child work and schooling: Working-child and school-child

Children’s work is recognised as ‘both a symptom and a cause of chronic poverty’ Rose and Dyer (2008:58) and the complex relationship between child schooling, child labour and
poverty is widely recognised (Muriithi 2015). While the exact definition of child labour and work remains highly debated, ILO characterises child labour as ‘work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development’ (ILO 2004:16). Child work is seen as work helping ‘parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays [that] contribute to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience,’ (ILO 2004:16). This view is in line with the UNCRC 1989 article 32 that recognises protection of children ‘economic exploitation and from performing any work […] to interfere with the child’s education’. However, other scholars refuse to classify and recognise that the nature of work and how it is experienced experience determines its effect (Ben White 1999). Within education and childhood studies literatures child work/labour is a contentious area debated between supporters of abolition (‘universalists’) and prevention (‘relativists’) (White 1999). This is especially important in relation to rural children in developing countries where the large majority of children are working to support their family and sustain their own lives, including funding their own schooling expenses (Pacis et al. 2003 ). Child work/labour is expected to affect children’s access to school, attendance, and performance in school (ILO 2004) and there is some evidence on this from Ethiopia, which I discuss next.

2.3 THE IMPACT OF CHILD LABOUR IN CHILD SCHOOLING

The law in Ethiopia imposes a minimum age of 14 for employment, and recognises those under 18 years old as apprentices working under restrictions, particularly in the manufacturing sector (Admassie and Bedi 2003). According to the authors, the labour law disregards the rural economy, and therefore it ‘does not make any references to the problem of child labour in the agricultural sector and agricultural and household employment are exempt from laws’ (Admassie and Bedi 2003:14). Child labour is more prevalent in rural than urban Ethiopia (Admassie 2003, Hyde et al. 2005). It benefits households through direct earnings, by labour input to the household and/or by releasing adults into the labour market for paid jobs. It is commonly associated with poverty and lack of productive assets within households (see UNICEF 1986, 1992; Cockburn 2000; ILO 1995; Rose and Al-Samarrai 1997; Weir 1997). Rural children are often involved in their family’s land and household related work, consequently the rural enrolment rate in schools is very low (Cockburn and Dostie 2007; Admassie 2003).
Children in rural Ethiopia also participate in work that may be exhausting and exploitative, and in direct conflict with their schooling. Many rural children work for long hours (see Cockburn and Dostie 2007) and in harsh climatic conditions, with heavy loads, and dangerous objects (Admassie 2003). Admassie points out that children from poor and landless households are also ‘hired out’ to other households. Some children, particularly girls, work as domestic servants for long hours with no access to school. In some cases girls are encouraged to become good wives, and this requires them to learn domestic tasks, leading them to be absent from class and drop out of school, (Admassie 2003; Cockburn and Dostie 2007). Admassie (2003) reports that rural children’s work absorbs most of their time and energy, making them too tired to concentrate in the classroom and affecting their attainment. As children often start work when they are under school age (15% of the boys and 20% of the girls in Admassie’s study started before age five), this can delay their enrolment. At the age of seven, more than 70% of boys and 85% of girls have not started either formal or informal school. Cockburn and Dostie suggest that interventions including child labour saving assets, such as water wells near the homestead and wheelbarrows, can increase available time for schooling. However, other interventions such as livestock provision may worsen the situation for children, resulting in them working more at the expense of their schooling (Cockburn and Dostie 2007).

According to Admassie and Bedi (2003), 92% of children in school in rural Ethiopia also work and they work 34 hours per week, compared to children who don’t attend school who work 38 hours per week. Boys who go to school work fewer hours than those who don’t, however, for girls they find no difference, as all girls work 35-36 hours per week. The only difference was that the girls attending school spent less time herding (4.4 hours) and did more domestic tasks, while those who were not in school spent eight hours herding (Admassie and Bedi 2003:14). No differences were found ‘in the total time allocated to work by gender, but there were differences in type of work, with boys spending more of their time herding’ (Admassie and Bedi 2003:40) and boys were far more likely to attend school (47% of boys vs. 40% of girls).

The impact of work on schooling is complex. While work and schooling appear to be compatible, Admassie and Bedi found that between 16 and 22 hours of weekly work the ability of a child to read and write began to suffer, even though attendance was not affected. Beyond this threshold reading, writing and attendance all suffered. Given that
60% of children work more than 16 hours per week, there are widespread implications for rural children’s schooling (Admassie and Bedi 2003). They also found that domestic work like fetching water and wood were more compatible with school attendance than herding, farm work and child care activities.

While most children in Ethiopia are engaged in work, children from poorer households do more time-intensive work and are more vulnerable to exploitative and hazardous work situations. Erulkar et al. (2007) found that children as young as 10 migrated from rural to urban areas in search of domestic work and education, ‘especially when educational facilities were not available in their rural areas, were too far from their homes’ (ibid:367). While children move in search of schooling and work to cover their costs, it is unclear whether this increases their access to school. A CSA survey in 2001 showed that a third of Ethiopian children aged 5-17 years combine work and school, while about half of the children reported working without getting the chance to attend school.

Although the prevalence of child labour and work is widely discussed, there is limited discussion of how to address this (FDRE CSA 2001), particularly in the ESDPs. Pointing out that education is central to the state’s poverty reduction strategy, Anker and Melkus (1996), cited in Admassie (2003), note:

When a child is not attending school it is not only the welfare of the child that is endangered, but also the welfare of the nation as a whole. Full time working children could not acquire the necessary human capital, which allows them to have a fair chance in the labour market when they grow up. This translates at the national level into a labour force, which is ill equipped to compete in the global economy where development will be increasingly based on skills and competition (Admassie 2003:171).

Kifle’s (2002) study of child labour in Ethiopia supported the view that the single most important reason for sending children to work is poverty and explored the challenges in addressing this. He highlighted that children often worked in situations where they faced physical, sexual and verbal violence, economic exploitation and loneliness. Kifle states that schools are often working children’s only source of support and information but 35% do not attend school. The study highlights the controversy around enforcement of the existing labour proclamations, and suggests a focus on prevention and treatment rather than
treatment only. In that regard he argues that, ‘prohibiting child domestic labour, without first combating the source of domestic child labour, is ‘suicidal’ [because] it will invite tragedy for the poor children and their families’ (2002:52). Kifle further recommends either raising the income of poor families, or establishing centres in every community for poor children to live and go to school (2002:52).

Children in Ethiopia are yet to benefit from the existing national and international conventions that outlaw the exploitative circumstances they work under. Regarding legal protection around child labour, theoretically the Ethiopian constitution article 36 covers the right not to be subjected to exploitative labour practices. Similarly, the revised Family Code Proclamation No. 213/2000 covers their protection and wellbeing in line with national and international law. In addition, the labour law, article 89(2) of the Labour Proclamation No.377/2003, prohibits the employment of persons under 14 years of age. Sub-article (3) of the same Article prohibits the employment of young workers (persons between 14 and 18 years of age according to Article 89(1) of the Labour Proclamation) to perform work which, on account of its nature or the circumstances under which it is carried out, is harmful to the life or health of the young worker. However, engaging a child in such activities has not been made a criminal offence (ILO 2008:1). While all the above legislation exists, translating them to practical strategies is another matter, and the poverty reduction measures of PRSP, the Ethiopian Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) and the subsequent Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty did not include any concrete measures to do this (ILO 2008). This is an ongoing problem given the complex issues arising from the country’s economic inability to prohibit child labour, the considerable demand for children’s work in rural livelihoods (Bonnet 1993; ILO 1995; Woodhead 1998, 1999a, 1999c), and the relationship between education and child work (see Boyden 1994).

2.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME

The second aspect identified by Buchmann and Hannum (2001) concerns the role of family background on educational attainment and achievement. This is a debate that originated in the global North. According to Buchmann and Hannum two major studies: Coleman et al. 1966 (in the United States) and the Plowden Report (Central Advisory Council for Education 1967) in Great Britain were driving initially the debate and found ‘family background was more important than school factors in determining children’s educational achievement’
(Buchmann and Hannum 2001:82). In contrast, a subsequent study (Coleman 1976) in Uganda found ‘family background to be less important than school factors in determining academic achievement’. Subsequently, Buchmann (2001:82) and other studies have shown that teachers and school quality have a much greater impact on achievement in poorer countries (Heyneman and Loxley 1983 cited in Buchmann and Hannum 2001:82) and I discuss these briefly in section 2.4.

Buchmann and Hannum’s (2001) review indicates marked global disparities in enrolment and attainment associated with socioeconomic status	extsuperscript{9}. It is worth noting here that qualitative education literature drawing on social reproduction theory (discussed later in this chapter) also focuses on family background, but with the aim of explaining the causes of stratification (Reay 1995, 1998; Tomanovic 2004; Li 2013; Mills 2008).

There is a growing interest in intra-household dynamics on relationships, power, resource allocation and decision making. While large numbers of siblings clearly put resource strain on families - what economists term ‘resource dilution’ - a more expanded vision of family relevant to developing countries recognises that other family members beyond the parents may provide resources for children’s schooling (Buchmann 2000). Such sentiments are largely found in studies that have taken a qualitative strategy in understanding the context of African culture (see Katz 2004; Poluha 2007).

In understanding how intra-household decision making over children’s schooling works, researchers have attempted to distinguish the variance in household’s investment by different categories of children. It is noted children in step families are ‘likely to have academic problems, less likely to finish high school, less likely to attend college, and less likely to complete college than children in intact families’ (Case, Lin, and McLanahan 2000:782). In a study looking at resource allocation of households in America and South Africa Case et al. (2000) report reduced investments by step, adoptive and foster households and confirm that genetic ties are the binding element. In the case of South Africa they report ‘that when a child’s biological mother is the head or spouse of the head of household, the household spends significantly more on food [than nonessentials]. The genetic tie to the child, and not any anticipated future economic tie, appears to be the tie

that binds’ (Case et al. 2000:783). Orphaned children or working children living with families other than their own can experience lower investment in schooling (Weir and Knight 1996; Weir 2000 and; Ainsworth et al. 2005; Bennell 2005; Tatak Abebe 2008). Huisman and Smits (2009) confirm advantages for biological children, but emphasise interaction factors that result in differential outcomes across children, between urban and rural areas, and so on. Various societal factors such as how the orphan’s care is provided, the presence of HIV/AIDS related deaths (Bennell 2005; Robson et al. 2007) and critical events such as parental divorce and death also have implications for children (Mack 2001).

Similar investigations of household’s investment in the context of Ethiopia by Koohi-Kamali (2008), drawing on the Ethiopia’s Statistical Authority Ethiopian consumption survey of 2005-06 of 21,299 households, found evidence of bias against girls in allocation of resources, although they didn’t look at biological effects. In the review of Buchmann and Hannum (2001), the results in relation to school dropout and family background varied across countries. For example in the United States single parenthood had a negative effect on children’s schooling with greater probability of dropout (Seltzer 1994 cited in Buchmann 2001), however, an analysis into seven sub-Saharan countries carried out by Lloyd and Blanc (1996) reported ‘children in female-headed households were consistently more likely to be enrolled in school and to have completed grade four than were children in households headed by men’ (Buchmann and Hannum 2001:83). The relationship between family size and schooling also shows a contrasting result between the United States and developing countries, as well as within developing countries (Buchmann 2000). In the United States there is ‘an inverse relationship between number of siblings and educational attainment (Blake 1989, Steelman & Powell 1989)’ however, in developing countries this negative association is not consistently observed’ (Buchmann and Hannum 2001:84). Indeed these variations are not surprising when the different economic, political, social and cultural dynamics are taken into account, however, the findings were important in questioning the established views over family background offered earlier (see Colclough et al, 2000 for Guinea and Ethiopia).

In a study carried out in Kenya on determinants of school enrolment Buchmann (2000) examines the impact of family background and structure, division of household labor, and parental perceptions through interviews with 596 households. Buchmann (2000) reports that their findings challenge the received wisdom about parental decision making in
countries such as Kenya where there is a low level of economic growth as there is ‘little evidence that wage labour or housework competes with school enrolment.’ (Buchmann 2000 cited in Buchmann and Hannum 2001:85). Buchmann and Hannum conclude child labour and schooling are not mutually exclusive and the inconsistent results suggest that social structural factors define the available options for different families thereby influencing parental decision making (Buchmann and Hannum 2001). Buchmann and Hannum therefore call for redefinition of the concept of family to include broader kinship structures (Buchmann and Hannum 2001). Buchmann and Hannum’s findings challenge mainstream explanations of educational inequality in less industrialized societies and suggest that policies focused on demand may be misguided. Buchmann (2000) explains this by drawing on an example of parental decision making in the context of Kenya where ‘educational inequalities are better understood as outcomes due to families’ evaluations of the returns to education for different children than as outcomes due to gender stereotypes or the demand for child labor’ (ibid:1351). Buchmann also notes that there is little evidence (2%) of paid child labour as a factor for school absence or dropout. Instead the majority of absences were due to ill health or inability to meet school related expenses. While child household labour is common and may hinder academic performance, it does not significantly impede school enrolment (Buchmann 2000) as is commonly assumed (e.g. Bequele and Myers 1995).

In contrast to simplistic assumptions made about parental decision making on children’s enrolment and the influence of factors such as child labour, household structures, gender stereotype on enrolment and drop-out (e.g. Huisman and Smits 2009), Buchmann (2000) points to the bigger problems of developing countries such as their economy. Buchmann states that resource constraint of households are often underemphasized in theorisation of parental decision making, for example ‘if parents perceive limited returns to girls’ education due to gender discrimination in the labour market, girls’ school enrolment suffers’ (Buchmann 2000:1371). Buchmann further highlights that many African countries are challenged by rapid educational expansion with implications for the quality of education and realistic chances of paid employment afterwards. Therefore perceptions of the value of schooling in relation to long-term family welfare are most salient in decision making. For example in the case of Kenya, Buchmann (2000:1372) suggests that a more considered and accurate interpretation will note the ‘growing awareness of limited job opportunities for educated individuals [rather] than a reflection of traditional values at odds with formal
schooling. Others have long argued that availability of qualified teachers and basic infrastructure are the most crucial inputs to address overall problems (Duruji 1978) as safety and quality concerns might stop parents from enrolling their children to school as well as encouraging them to withdraw (Lewin and Lockheed 2007a; 2007b). While Buchmann (2000) rightly encourages further research into the generalizability of the findings in other countries within Africa, in the concern Buchmann raised about policy ‘being misguided’, we sense an implicit acknowledgment of the existing debate in education about ‘context’ (Crossley 2001). Buchmann notes that rather than the current preoccupation with demand (focused on parental value of schooling, the push for legislation on child labour) ‘policies should redress the mismatch between educational outcomes and labour opportunities, gender discrimination in employment, and the excessive costs of schooling for poor families. Such initiatives may go the farthest in reducing the great disparities in educational participation in the world's developing regions’ (Buchmann 2000:1372). He concludes in calling for more collaborative studies across disciplines and more qualitative studies to explain the how questions and an acknowledgment of the variation not only between developed and developing countries but also within them.

As was the case in Buchmann and Hannum’s (2001) review, the majority of studies in education take a quantitative approach drawing on large datasets and comparing regions and countries. While these are useful in informing policy makers about specific trends, important explanatory contextual factors may be missed. For example Lloyd and Blanc (1996), examining DHS data from seven African countries, report that household resources, education of the head of the household where the child resides, and the household’s standard of living are determining factors in explaining differences in children’s school outcomes. By contrast, in the findings ‘a child’s biological parents appear to play a less critical role, as demonstrated by comparing the school outcomes of orphans with the outcomes of children whose parents are still living’ (Lloyd and Blanc 1996:266). This, is indeed interesting and contrasts with the above mentioned study (Case et al. 2000) while confirming some of the findings by Huisman and Smits (2009). However, due to their methodological approach Lloyd and Blanc are unable to explain how and why these results occurred. In addition, since their data is collected during different years in each country this questions any generalisation drawn from it.

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Furthermore, limitations arise from the type of data researchers have access to. In the case of Lloyd and Blanc (1996:281) they acknowledge critical data on local availability of schooling were missing for most of the countries in their analysis and had to be proxied with a measure of urbanisation. Given that other studies have shown that ‘disparities in school attendance between urban and rural communities largely disappear when the availability of a local school is taken into account’ (Hall and Patrinos (2006) cited in Lewis and Lockheed 2007b:11) this raises serious questions about the value of their analysis. Additionally, they analyse the effect of the education of head of household on school enrolment status for children and compare those children living in households with an educated household head and those without. While those children living with an educated household head are significantly more likely to be attending, ‘there appears to be no systematic pattern by sex in the effect of the household head’s schooling on children’s current enrolment. Girls benefit relatively more in some countries, boys in others. Interestingly, however, boys appear to gain more than girls in completion rates from the greater education of the head’ (Lloyd and Blanc 1996:283-284). Due to the nature of their study design they are not able to explain why this is. My point here is that such studies take us so far but do not give us a complete view of things.

A further example to illustrate my point is the study by Lindskog (2011) drawing on data from Amhara that investigated household-level diversification of human capital investments and the effects of risk aversion on literacy of siblings by order of birth and gender. Lindskog develops a simple theoretical model drawing on human capital theory that assumes parents ‘invest in education as long as the marginal benefit exceeds marginal costs’ (Lindskog 2011:2). A scenario put by her suggests that in rural areas unemployment rate is higher, especially for those with better education (World Bank 2005), therefore the estimated return (benefit) from investment in this case might not exceed the investment. While a household-level diversification strategy can reduce the uncertainty from risky investment, this in turn will increase sibling dependency. Indeed aspects of this theorisation may hold and the recommendation reached seems plausible. However, there is little acknowledgement of children’s agency and the study proposes that ‘preferences of the parents are most important for initial school entry’ (Lindskog 2011:8). Here Lindskog appears to assume that parents are autonomous, that there is an adult-child hierarchy and that parents make a considered calculation of their investment. Lindskog’s assumptions do
not account for the complexity of life events and the fact that schooling is only one segment of rural people’s life and decision making.

As such we are presented with a child that is a passive recipient, within a household comprised of two parents and their biological children. In reality household structures are complex with direct implications for schooling outcomes. For example, Lloyd and Blanc (1996) report that across six African countries the proportion of children living with neither parent ‘range from 17 to 22 percent for girls and 13 to 19 percent for boys’ (Lloyd and Blanc 1996:279). Rural Ethiopia also has households with complex living arrangements and relationships where children are highly mobile for employment and there is an increased number of orphans\(^\text{11}\) as a result of HIV epidemic (Tate Abebe 2007, 2009; Assefa Admassie 2003). The data used by Lindskog could not account for intra-household relationships and other complex unobservable variables. We also know from feminist economists ‘that the household should not be regarded as a harmonious unit but a site of gender conflict and exploitation’ (Wooley 1988 cited in Fennell 2008:39), indicating that decision making might be more complex than imagined by Lindskog. Therefore these concerns lead me to contend that Lindskog’s study has limited explanatory value in understanding households’ decisions on schooling of children, although it could be contextualised with a qualitative understanding of households’ decision making.

Comparing such data by countries as is often done in large scale quantitative studies raises questions over ‘varying reliability of data collection [and] different political and economic trajectories and varied social and cultural context’ (Vaughan 2015:82). In addition, the nature of quantitative data often means getting a ‘snapshot’ (Fennell and Arnolt 2008) rather than a full account of the phenomenon. So one may get answers to who is not in school and where the problem in most acute, however, the processes and mechanisms that produce these outcomes cannot be explained from a purely quantitative study.

2.5 School Effects

Buchmann and Hannum 2001 observe a school effect in terms of inputs, process, and organisation in relation to educational outcomes for learners. Though this appears to overlap with family background and educational outcomes Buchmann and Hannum explain

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\(^\text{11}\) Koohi-Kamali’s (2008) study in rural Ethiopia reported that 12% of households have orphaned children and 17% have a non-biological child.
its origin is from a concern on schooling facilities and educational outcomes. In developing
country context basic inputs such as textbooks, libraries, and teacher training strongly
While much of the early focus is on basic material level in particular in the
developing country context where there are inadequate and uneven distribution of
educational materials, in more recent studies school effects are looked at in terms of their
responsiveness and flexibility especially in rural context. In supportive and flexible schools,
teachers are actively encouraging ‘drop in’ to school for example in rural Ghana there are
reports that children are given time to days off from school (Sabates et al. 2010). In terms
of research Buchmann and Hannum (2001) highlight some methodological shortcomings in
measuring effects of family factor from school factor have drawn criticism. In the case of
developing country context limitation on available data only few studies have looked at
school effects through variables of teacher quality, classroom dynamics, hours of
instruction and so on to look at school effect which is different from much of the literature
from US and Europe (Fuller 1987 cited in Buchmann and Hannum). Since there are very few
studies especially in rural context I have not given any more space for this topic other than
to say, while such studies are undoubtedly important when school effect is seen from
facilities point of view there will be little surprising findings because of the largely uniformly
impoverished schools concentration in rural areas.

2.6 EDUCATION’S IMPACT ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

An important debate in the education literature related to social inequality is the question
of whether formal schooling can offer the expected transformation of children’s future
lives, as is often claimed by studies from a human capital standpoint. Rose and Dyer (2008)
address the issue of poverty and its reproduction in relation to education, drawing on
theoretical insights from Paolo Freire (1972, 1974), who might agree with their conclusion
that ‘education is seen as both a cause, and a factor contributing to the transmission of
poverty’ (Rose and Dyer 2008:2). They note the importance of addressing chronic poverty
and challenging the reproduction of social inequality within and outside schools. Wells
(2010) argues similarly that,

‘the promise of education is that children will be able to be judged on their
intellectual merit as individuals – their access to desirable work only being limited
by their own ability to gain qualifications. For most (but of course not all) children
this will turn out to be a hollow promise, since the insertion of national economies into the global economy does nothing to erode inequality but simply reconfigures it in new ways’ (Wells 2010:116)

(see also Street 2001, 2007; Katz, 2004; Poole et al. 2013). I come back to this discussion in the last section of this chapter.

2.7 PERSPECTIVES ON INEQUALITY IN SCHOOLING — GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

In the preceding sections I have shown how access and dropout are framed in the educational literature. Here I introduce different frameworks used to address these topics (for example UNESCO 1994, 2015; CREATE and others).

2.7.1 UNESCO – Inclusion and Exclusion

UNESCO (2015) classifies out of school children as those who were initially enrolled and dropped out without completing or learning to read or write, and those who have never enrolled (although some of these may do so in the future). Their recent five dimensional model (5DE) was created as a ‘rich source of information’ (UNESCO 2015:15), recognising the shortcomings of existing data sources. The 5DE is complemented by the Out of School Children Visibility Model (OSCVM) to enhance the visibility of all children that are commonly unaccounted: ‘most often homeless, institutionalized and nomadic children and children with disabilities’ (UNESCO 2015:17).

The 5DE and OSCVM build on earlier work by UNESCO (2006) which identified the most disadvantaged groups of children as those who were ‘educationally excluded’ by being out of school, dropping out before completion of their primary education cycle, and underachieving while in school. This expanded notion of exclusion does only focus on ‘out-of-school children’, but also looks at whether one has the preconditions to be included and progress within the education system. To capture the essence of this conceptualisation I have put the key aspects it raises in the table below.
### Box 2.1: The educationally excluded from UNESCO analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of exclusion</th>
<th>Expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from having the life prospects needed for learning</td>
<td>living under conditions inadequate for health and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from entry into a school or an educational programme</td>
<td>unable to pay entrance fees and tuition fees; being outside the eligibility criteria for entry; dressed in ways considered inadmissible by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from regular and continuing participation in school or an educational programme</td>
<td>school or programme too far to attend regularly; unable to continuously pay for participation; unable to spare time for attending school due to other life demands; school or programme closed down; illness or injuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from meaningful learning experiences</td>
<td>teaching and learning process not meeting the learning needs of the learner; teaching and learning process not corresponding to the learning styles of the learner; the language of instruction and learning materials is not comprehensible; learner goes through negative and discouraging experiences at school or in the programme, eg. discrimination, prejudice, bullying, violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from a recognition of the learning acquired</td>
<td>learning acquired in a non-formal programme not recognized for entry to a formal programme; learning acquired is not considered admissible for a certification; learning acquired is not considered valid for accessing further learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from contributing the learning acquired to the development of community and society</td>
<td>learning acquired is considered to be of little value by society; the school or programme attended is seen to have low social status and is disrespected by society; limited work opportunities that correspond to the area of learning acquired, or limited work opportunities in general; discrimination in society on the basis of socially ascribed differences that disregards any learning acquired by the person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** extracted from UNESCO online, Exclusion in education system [accessed June 2015]

The table is a useful starting point to think about the complexity of inequality in schooling as it gives as an insight into the forms it may take. The complexity of exclusion, the process of coming in and out of school, and the tipping points in relation to this are captured in the work of CREATE, as discussed below. CREATE’s expanded vision of exclusion begins to address the **how** questions. The following section looks at gender inequality, which brings in the **who** and **why** aspects of problems related to educational inequality. It also offers insights into the **how** by providing a framework that considers various conceptualisations in international development.
2.7.2 CREATE – expanded vision of access

The Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) is a major project that looked at school access and completion in four developing countries. In terms of thinking about access to education the expanded conceptualisation of access as set out by Lewin (2007, 2009) is a helpful place to start. CREATE employed a multi-method approach encompassing reviews of access in each of the studied countries (Ghana, India, South Africa and Bangladesh), household surveys, school surveys and interviews with teachers and students, secondary longitudinal data analysis and interviews with those who had dropped out or were at risk of dropping out. In addition there were many doctoral projects, working papers and journal articles looking at specific country issues (CREATE website; Lewin 2007, 2009; Little 2008). While the context for each studied country varied, methodologically CREATE devised a common set of questions and research tools and applied CREATE’S zones of exclusion for data collection and analysis (CREATE website). At the heart of it they understand access as a sustained and meaningful access beyond the initial enrolment of individuals (Lewin 2007). This entails a focus on dropout because the processes of drop out is integral to our understandings of educational access (Hunt 2008).

CREATE identifies five aspects of access as important, which link attendance, progress, learning and outcomes:

1. Secure enrolment and regular attendance;
2. Progression through grades at appropriate ages;
3. Meaningful learning which has utility;
4. Reasonable chances of transition to lower secondary grades, especially where these are within the basic education cycle.
5. More rather than less equitable opportunities to learn for children from poorer households, especially girls, with less variation in quality between schools

(Source: Lewin 2009:21)

Much of CREATE’S work focuses on children’s vulnerability and issues of meaningful access in developing country contexts. The analysis is based on what they characterised as the module of zones of exclusion (see table 2:1) and they use the zones to develop an argument for an expanded vision of access to schooling. Using the seven zones CREATE identifies children that have no access, are excluded after initial entry, are at risk of
Table 2.1: CREATE Zones of Exclusion 0-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREATE Zones of Exclusion12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zone 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 2</td>
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<td>Zone 3</td>
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<td>Zone 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Lewin (2009)

CREATE argues that access extends beyond enrolment to include inequalities in terms of ‘educational quality, resource inputs and measurable outcomes’ (Lewin 2007:3). The project links development and equity, and suggests that stress educational access and attainment defines people’s social and economic status (Lewin 2007). Many of the works associated with the CREATE project also raise issues of educational inequity in the context of social mobility and intergenerational transmission of poverty. As such it provides a contemporary understanding of the production and reproduction of social inequality in education.

While CREATE are not against the development initiatives such as EFA and MDG, they highlight the improbability of their aspirational rhetoric13 (Lewin 2007:7) and the risk of

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12 While the findings of this study touch on other zones of exclusion in context of schooling experiences of the studied group, the specific concerned categories of children studied fall into CREATE Zone 1, 2 and 3.
13 Generally targets and indicators are not contextualised or related to different starting points, realistic assessments of capacity, and recent rates of progress. This can result in increasingly unrealistic goals,
achieving EFA goals ‘but development more broadly defined may not take place’ (Lewin 2007:4).

As shown in table 2.1 CREATE conceives of exclusion in terms of ‘zones’. This implicitly characterises exclusion as a fixed rather than fluid state, but is helpful for categorisation as the six zones provide a more expanded understanding of access. CREATE’s approach highlights points in the child’s life and in a school system where there are particular forms of vulnerability, which opens up interesting questions about how children drop out of school. While this expanded vision of access is helpful to help us think beyond initial access/enrolment to also consider the materiality of access; the term *zone* implies distinctive division of being in a specific space or state. However, in actual terms each of the zones can be viewed as linked. As CREATE also points out, exclusion or inclusion in zone zero will have implication for children’s trajectory of schooling. Indeed it has long been recognised that an investment in early childhood, e.g. by expanding access to pre-primary schooling (zone-0), is an effective means of addressing social inequality (Woodhead 2005; Myers 1992) intergenerational poverty and inequality (Arnold et al. 2006). The recent World Bank strategy 2020 called for investment in early childhood to establish life time learning and emphasised that investing in primary school would mean leaving that challenge too late (World Bank 2011). Notwithstanding the concern over quality, access to early childhood educational experiences such as pre-school is seen as a positive input that fosters successful transition to primary schooling (zone-2). The benefit for children can be maximised particularly in situations where harmonised relations exist between early childhood and primary school teachers (Hoot et al. 2004; Woodhead 2005, 2007; Haque et al. 2013). Provision of pre-primary schooling is noted as all children’s right (UNCRC 1989; Woodhead 2005, 2007), while Haque et al. 2013 have argued that it is even more instrumental for children in poverty context where uneducated parents may be unable to prepare children for formal schooling (Haque 2013, also see CREATE 2010 Policy brief 1). According to Haque et al. (2013), children who have been to pre-primary schools learn more rapidly and interact with other children more effectively. Early pre-school exposure can also act against early dropout. Similarly, lack of progress in zone 3 (those enrolled in primary stage but learn little and are at risk of dropping out) and issues that remain unaddressed at this zone would have implication in further zones and this is important

unsustainable efforts to expand access at rates so high, quality degrades seriously, and steeply rising costs for marginal gains as thresholds are approached’ (Lewin 2007:7).
particularly in the current policy environment where all children progress through grades, despite being ‘silently excluded from worthwhile learning’ (Lewin 2007). The expanded definition adopted by CREATE therefore ‘includes admission and progression on schedule for age in grade, regular attendance, achievement related to national curricula norms, appropriate access to post-primary opportunities, and more equal opportunities to learn’ (Lewin 2007a cited in Lewin 2009:154). The CREATE framework thus provides an expanded base to think about access and draws attention to various aspects of access and schooling process (accessibility, school systems and practices, class size, conditions of classroom, teachers’ training, behaviour and practices, curriculum and languages, lack of resources) while at the same time alerting us to the importance of thinking in terms of transition and progress through schooling. This approach is consistent with the view that suggests an integrated approach that can address the whole system (Lewin 2007; Arnold et al. 2006). In this way CREATE’s work moves us beyond the simplistic understanding of access and measurement such as Gross and Net enrolment rates to a more expanded view that also pays attention to those supposedly enrolled but ‘silently excluded’ (Lewin 2009).

2.7.3 Gender and Education beyond access

While CREATE sensitises us to think in terms of categories of exclusion, and attempts to also capture aspects of process in terms of how children move from one category to the other, the writings on gender equality in education developed by feminist scholars provides us with valuable insights to deconstruct existing conventional approaches in thinking about gender and education and address pertinent issues of equality on a conceptual level and in policy and practice (Stromquist 1995, 2006, 2007; Tomasevski 2003; Leach 2003; Leach et al. 2003; Rose 2003; Colclough et al. 2003; Ames 2005; Unterhalter 2003, 2007; Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, 2013; Dunne and Leach 2005; Fennell and Arnot 2008). As a project concerned with schooling of rural children, these works are directly relevant to this study because of the specific focus on gender and the more nuanced way of understanding inequality in education. Secondly, this scholarship usefully draws attention to the different ways in which we conceptualise forms of inequality, including how they may become resources for transmission. I also draw on the work of Aikman and Unterhalter (2005) to bring macro level concerns such as the MDGs to micro level aspects of education reflected

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14 As part of the education sector reform many of the developing countries have introduced measures of automatic promotion Ethiopia too introduced this in 2008 to reduce repletion rate but implementation is not universal (MoE 2010).
in local practices such as the ‘deep rooted and often widely accepted forms of gender discrimination that limit girls educational opportunities’ (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005:12).

How best to frame issues of gender inequality is a matter of some debate\textsuperscript{15}, for example, Unterhalter (2012:67) draws attention to the conceptual confusion ‘with regard to what is meant by gender inequality and equality and the particular sense of education that is evoked’. Moghadam, 1990 (cited in Keels et al. 2012:160) states that ‘gender refers not only to the conditions of women and men but to a structural relationship between the sexes which is linked to the state, the economy, and other macro- and micro-processes and institutions’. Unterhalter’s work draws on data from Kenya and South Africa to analyse aspects of global initiatives that are implemented in these countries and the way in which ‘conceptual distinction between different meanings of gender and equality and forms of international framework have a bearing on the forms of implementation’ (Unterhalter 2012:1). She identifies four different frameworks and various metaphors (namely line, net, and fuel) that are useful in analysing the relationship in these initiatives. Using the metaphor of line (or ‘gender as a noun’) means the emphasis in the first framework is on the proportion of girls and boys at a particular stage of schooling. She highlights that such a narrow understanding of equality means that fundamental issues that produce and maintain inequality are missed. However, this is widely employed in, for example, the GMR report on education or UNDP data on poverty (Unterhalter 2012, 2015). According to Unterhalter when ‘gender is understood as a feature of interconnected household, community and national power relationships’ (Unterhalter 2012:68) here it is possible to utilise the term ‘gender as adjective’. In this view structural aspects of inequality are recognised beyond just a focus on enrolment or proportion of boys and girls in school. The focus is extended to also consider processes within school and outside of school that work to ‘transform’ or ‘reproduce’ inequality. For example it considers the implicit and explicit expression of social values and suggests exploring gendered relations between men and women, societal values that mediates relations between boys and girls within the school, biased curricula, gender violence and so on. From this perspective a discussion on gender and schooling necessarily entails discussion of poverty conceptualised in its political sense to mean not only ‘level of earnings, but rather the structural relationships of subordination, exploitation and exclusion’ (Unterhalter 2012:68). To capture this notion of poverty

\textsuperscript{15} For detailed discussions on international initiatives and debates on notions of gender and education see Aikman and Unterhalter (2005, pp.15-35), Unterhalter (2007, pp.3-19) and Fennell and Arnot (2008, Ch 2-4). Also see (Unterhalter and North 2011).
Unterhalter employs her second metaphor: ‘a net’ of relationships of power. It is possible to see the net as a mesh constituting political, economic, social, gender relations within school, home, community and wider society that acts to trip or constrain progress through schooling even when access is secured. From this perspective the emphasis is on ‘a process of both naming and changing the relationships of inequality’ (Unterhalter 2012:68) as well as the importance of recognising the difficulty of transforming gender relations through schooling alone.

Unterhalter explains how ‘Discourses, evident in policy, media, and everyday talk, set limits on how it is possible to think and act with regard to gender relationships, identities and the possibilities of change’ (Unterhalter 2012:69). Using the notion of ‘gender as a verb’ in a sense of people ‘acting out’ a particular form of gendered identity, and drawing on the notion of poverty as ‘a fuel’ that connotes both its ‘toxic’ form as well as its ‘energising’ form, she draws attention to even more expanded ways to think about the processes associated with gender, equality, inequality and education. A fuel in its toxic form may cause poor people to internalise an idea that they are unworthy, or to feel satisfied with substandard school provisions for their children. In contrast a fuel in its energising form may invoke communities to identify forms of injustices and unite to challenge and change their condition of existence or reject a particular form of identity that precludes them from realising their wellbeing. In this approach the emphasis is on ‘setting the conditions and processes that allow people critically to review processes and to act’ (Unterhalter 2012:70) for an outcome that favours them.

In addition to the three approaches explored above, Unterhalter suggest a fourth framework to create a space where all of the approaches complement each other. This is because while each standing alone serve a purpose towards thinking about gender inequality in education their reach is limited. The fourth approach recognises the multidimensional nature of inequalities and gender inequalities in education and draws on the notions of capabilities and empowerment. Unterhalter uses this fourth framework to explore the implementation of existing international frameworks in the context of Kenya and South Africa. Her analysis reveals numerous problems and significant difficulties in each country that limit the achievement of the intended global development goals. While for

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16 See Walker 2006; Walker and Unterhalter 2007; Nussbaum 2006; Vaughan 2007; Raynor 2008, Tikly and Barret 2011; Unterhalter 2008
example the Beijing 1995 declaration\textsuperscript{17} is more comprehensive and has explicitly engaged with multifaceted forms of gender inequality\textsuperscript{18} it entails complex process and is thus difficult to implement. In contrast the EFA and MDG have a relatively simple process and are easier to implement, for example, by reducing concerns about equality to ‘parity’. Even though the detailed engagement with issues of equality in more procedural frameworks are welcome, in practice they are difficult to implement. Unterhalter proposes that effective implementation will require the critical examination of the issues set out below.

(i) different meanings and aspirations concerning gender equality and education,

(ii) the institutional forms to realise these and

(iii) the shifts in power and practice that might need to take place, through participatory processes, institutional assessment, and rich flows of information

Unterhalter (2012:81)

Unterhalter and the work of others in this area provides an important input that this study builds upon. One way in which it is useful is in preventing a shallow analysis of inequality in schooling and providing ways of asking questions that are beyond access and parity and address questions of equality within and outside of the education system. Particularly as dominant institutions such as the World Bank establish themselves as knowledge hubs (World Bank, 2011) and indeed as ‘the global architect for educational policy reform in developing countries’ (Klees et al. 2012:228) a more nuanced understanding of educational inequality as offered by Unterhalter and others is vital. While the dominant policy discourses amplify ways to address inequality in education, in practice measurement tends to focus on access, leading scholars to argue for better measures such as the actual level of attainment in gender equality and empowerment (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005). The section below takes this argument further through a focus on aspiration, opportunities, and institutions (including dynamic school and classroom environments and power relations).

\textsuperscript{17} Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)

\textsuperscript{18} The declaration enlists a number of areas concerning gender equality with education and schooling processes also explicitly noted e.g.#261 states ‘Gender-biased educational processes, including curricula, educational materials and practices, teachers’ attitudes and classroom interaction, reinforce existing gender inequalities’ (UN 1995:110). \url{http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf}
2.8 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.8.1 Sociological view of educational inequality

Bourdieu’s sociological theory of the reproduction of inequality extends my analysis of educational disadvantages and inequalities and understanding of the underlying processes and mechanisms through which rural children’s disadvantageous trajectory of schooling are produced and reproduced. Bourdieu’s thinking tools, particularly *habitus, field* and *capital* offer a comprehensive framework to analyse a social problem and capture aspects that are hidden from view.

Social reproduction theory developed in the wake of post-World War II in the context of United States and Europe (Collins 2009). However, the prominent French social philosopher Pierre Bourdieu’s work was initially based on his ethnographic work on Algeria in the 1950s and subsequently on his account of social differentiation in France (Grenfell 2008). Drawing on aspects of Marxist traditions of social analysis, Social reproduction theory primarily suggests ‘schools are not institutions of equal opportunity but mechanisms for perpetuating social inequalities’ (Collins 2009:33, see also Ritzer 2008; Giroux 1983; Grenfell and James 1998). Many scholars contributed to the literature on social reproduction in education including with reference to culture, class, language, gender and race to theorise and highlight the ways in which education and schooling has a role in producing and maintaining social inequality (Apple 1992; Bernstein 1975; Bourdieu 1977, 1991, 1993; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Collins 2000, 2009; Grenfell 2006, Grenfell and James 1998; Giroux 1983; Gould 1993; Reay and Ball 1997; Reay 2006, 2008; Mills 2008; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Willis 1977). Some of the works have also shown that school based learning affords individuals hierarchical positioning in society. Among the social reproduction thesis that remained relevant for study of education and inequality is the work of Pierre Bourdieu to which I will turn next in a bit more detail.

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19 It is important to note social reproduction theory as developed by Bourdieu had rejected ideas of structural Marxism that employed ‘a narrowly materialist conception of power and inequality’ (Grenfell 2008:88) instead by developing the concepts of cultural, social and economic capital he claimed ‘Power and dominance derive not only from possession of material resources but also from possession of cultural and social resources’ (Grenfell 2008:88).

20 For a recent short and comprehensive overview of different theoretical perspectives of social reproduction in education, and a critique of the differing conceptual, methodological and analytical accounts of these work see Collins (2009).
2.8.2 Pierre Bourdieu: Social reproduction and educational inequality

Bourdieu has had a major impact in the sociology of education, ‘to challenge the optimistic liberal perception of the school as an instrument of social reform and equality’ (Nash 1990:432). His work provides ‘a particular understanding of the link between theory and practice, and how these should feature in social science research’ and a ‘unique individual set of conceptual terms to be employed in the course of analysis and discussion of findings’ (Grenfell 2008:2). As his study evolved thought an analysis of empirical social problems Bourdieu developed a number of concepts to explain the social phenomena among which Habitus, field and capital are considered his primary ‘thinking tools’ (Grenfell 2008). The development of these tools was followed by a number of empirical works that confirmed ‘the basic thesis that schooling as a system rations kinds of knowledge to class and ethnically-stratified student populations’ (Collins 2009:35).

2.8.2.1 Bourdieu’s key concepts: habitus, capital and field

While habitus was the primary concept and is used in most educational inequality analysis (Mills 2008; Grenfell 2008). Bourdieu intended his concepts to be interconnected in their usage to clarify practical problems and to explain a particular social phenomena. Stressing this point Grenfell adds ‘the concepts are not standalone, but rather need to be understood as integrative, as different facets of the same social process’ (Grenfell 2008:217). Maton (2008) suggests \[(\text{habitus}) (\text{capital}) \] +field=practice and this is unpacked as ‘practice results from relations between one’s dispositions (habitus) and one’s position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field) (Maton 2008:51).

Habitus is considered ‘the most significant generator of practice’ (Nash 1990:431). The way individuals operate in the social world, how ‘they perceive, understand, evaluate the social world’ (ibid:531) depended on the structural principles of their social world. Through prolonged socialisation in specific social and cultural environment (structural conditions) individuals develop a set of dispositions (habitus) ‘which reflect central structural elements [...] and therefore behave in ways which reproduced those structural elements’ (Nash 1990:434). Thus habitus ‘refers to a system of embodied dispositions which generate practice in accordance with the structural principles of the social world (Nash 1990:432-433).
What is also important for Bourdieu is the link between structure, agency and practice as critical aspects that explain how social practices and cultural productions are framed and get reproduced while at the same time there being room to accommodate change. The concept of habitus is introduced precisely to address this gaps that Bourdieu saw as lacking in the social theory he considered ‘deterministic’ at the time (Nash 1990). With reference to what the concept of habitus captures ‘to effect the mediation of agency and structure’ (Nash 1990:434).

As an illustration based on this perspective we can imagine members of social group from the point of this thesis (rural children, teachers and parents) acquire a set of dispositions that reflect structural elements in their society and they act appropriately within the expected boundaries therefore continue the reproduction of the structural elements that characterises their reference society (community). Therefore in a society that is highly hierarchical (in terms of gender, class, and ethnicity) individuals will have developed a disposition that takes the social relations structured by the principles of gender, class, ethnicity and so on as the norm. Even though these principles are not explicitly enforced on them their internalised cultural code mediates their practice. Indeed there is an element of determinism there (discussed below) in the section on criticism of Bourdieu’s work.

Maton explains habitus as both experiential and a sociological puzzle,

‘Experientially, we often feel we are free agents yet base everyday decisions on assumptions about the predictable character, behaviour and attitudes of others. Sociologically, social practices are characterised by regularities – working-class kids tend to get working-class jobs [...] yet there are no explicit rules dictating such practices’ (Maton 2008:50).

This is an appropriate point to introduce the concept of field which is one of the most important concepts in Bourdieu’s theoretical framework (Grenfell (2008) sees habitus and field as expressing the subjective and objective aspects of human existence). For Bourdieu the notion of field along with habitus and capital are central to understand the social world. In his terms ‘The social field constituted of positions occupied by social agents (people or institutions) and what happens on/in the field is consequently boundaried’ (Grenfell, 2008:69). This denotes the field as always seen in relation to actors (social agents) who occupy specific positions within the field according to the capital they possess. However we
understand the social field to be in motion as social agents/players exist in a competitive field and employ a strategy to either preserve or advance their position through accumulation of capital (Grenfell 2008) while at the same time being ‘constrained by the structure of the field’ (Ritzer 2008:532). Bourdieu outlined various forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) that individuals bring to the field; however, their position in the field is determined by the amount and weight of capital they bring (Ritzer 2008:533). According to Bourdieu, there are three fundamental forms of capital:

- **Economic capital** ‘which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights’

- **Cultural capital**, ‘which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications’

- **Social capital** – ‘made up of social obligations (“connections”), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility’ (Bourdieu 1986:243 in Richardson 1986).

A potent property of capital is ‘its property of conversion and reconversion’ (Nash 1990:432), by that Bourdieu means that people that have economic capital can convert it to cultural capital and vice versa. This is of great relevance in context of the sociology of education as it highlights through their economic capital wealthy people can employ a strategy to carve out an advantageous position for their offspring (for example buying quality education/cultural capital). As such, ‘for Bourdieu the family is the site of social reproduction’ (Grenfell and James 1998:58). Drawing on Bourdieu’s theses of *Reproduction* (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) and *Distinction* (Bourdieu 1984), Grenfell (2008) elaborates that, ‘children from culturally wealthy backgrounds inherit that wealth, in the form of embodied dispositions which are recognized and valued both by teachers and by the institutional procedures of the education field’ (Grenfell 2008:95). In practice, schools operate to legitimise social differences as they reflect the culture of the dominant social group thereby giving advantage to the children of the middle class who have a ‘pre-existing
capital to play it to their advantage’ (Grenfell and James 1998:25). Often this systematic rejection of the lower class group happen within their supposed ‘choice’ as:

‘objective situations [...] class distribution of educational opportunities, are known to working class communities and inform their culture [...] as they live within the framework of opportunities and constraints that structure their life chances, is internalised and lived in such a way that “naturally” shapes the perceptions of those socialised within it[...] culture is produced in which ‘settling for what you have got’, ‘not pushing your luck’ becomes the common-sense of the culture [...] for an individual to make choice outside this construction of common-sense means to break with the culture [...] for unknown destination [...] the opportunity costs of which are pressingly apparent while the benefits are vague and indeterminable’. (Nash 1990:439).

Further most privileged students’ habitus closely approximates that of schools however, ‘such social privilege passes as a natural fact or given state of affairs because the founding principle of equality of aspiration and achievement is made legitimate by common tacit agreement. In fact, parents are also unknowing collaborators in the process of legitimising social distinctions as ‘natural’ differences [...] ‘parents own judgments are made by recognizing what is legitimate and thus misrecognizing which fundamental processes of social differentiation are being operationalised’ (Grenfell and James 1998:24).

2.8.2.2 Key Criticisms against Bourdieu’s theory of social reproduction

Bourdieu’s critics claim that his theory is too abstract, distant both conceptually and empirically from actual schools and classrooms (Giroux 1983 cited in Collins 2009:35). Moreover, much of his early work is seen as ‘deterministic’ for its apparent lack of treatment to agency and change (Giroux 1983 cited in Collins 2009). Bourdieu himself, and his advocates, state that the charge of determinism misinterprets his work (Mills 2008).

Alongside constraint, there is also some freedom, as ‘people do not simply respond mechanically’ instead, habitus’ is adopted by individuals who are constantly changing in the face of the contradictory situations in which they find themselves’ (Ritzer 2008:532). Bourdieu himself has responded to the charge of determinism by refuting a ‘strictly structuralist standpoint’ and emphasising resistance:
'I do not see how relations of domination, whether material or symbolic, could possibly operate without implying, activating resistance. The dominated, in any social universe, can always exert a certain force, inasmuch as belonging to a field means by definition that one is capable of producing effects in it (if only to elicit reactions of exclusion on the part of those who occupy its dominant positions).’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:80).

Bourdieu disregarded works that had a sole focus on structural constraints as he saw structuralism as limiting. Similarly while he subscribed to the idea of actors as creators of their social worlds he disagreed with works that ignored structural constraints at the same time (Ritzer 2008). In contrast to the deterministic charges put against some of his work; others argued that ‘dynamic change is at the heart of his theory’ (Grenfell 2008:215). Indeed he ‘offered a distinctive theory of the relationship between agency and structure within the context of a concern for the dialectical relationship between habitus and field’ (Ritzer 2008:536), also see (Bourdieu 1990; Jenkins 2002; Mills 2008; Wacquant 1998; Grenfell 2008; Kenway and McLeod 2004) for more discussion on this).

In brief, three key aspects have emerged from my review of works that draw on social reproduction theory.

First, from a neo-Marxist perspective it is used as a theory to explain the production and reproduction of inequality. From a structuralist perspective, schools were seen as perpetuating class inequalities and serving the demands of capitalism: ‘the pedagogical experience was about learning to take one’s place in the capitalist system (Dolby et al. 2004:2). Many examples are cited in Collins (2009) review where both Althusser (1971) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) implicated school and school based knowledge as an instrument to transfer ideological practices in preparing its subjects to take up their rightful social position as ‘dominant or the dominated’. From this perspective ‘schools operated on what they called a “correspondence principle,” and were anything but a meritocracy (Dolby et al. 2004). One’s class position was determined by family income rather than one’s achievement in school. Schools helped, more often than not, ‘to create and justify the illusion of meritocracy, but not its reality’ (Dolby et al. 2004:2). This approach was widely criticised for giving ‘little room for transformative action, for an understanding of human agency, or for the rearticulating of ones circumstances’ (Dolby et al. 2004:2).
Second, works that extended the reproduction theory by taking the middle ground, therefore counteracting overly deterministic approaches through recognising both social structure and agency and highlighting class situated practices and resistance. Here the classic ethnographic work of Paul Willis Learning to Labour (1977) on working-class English ‘lads’ school behaviour and disengagement from their education with ‘choice’ presented clear examples of ‘class-situated practices of resistance’ (Collins 2009:36). As such it revealed a unique insight into ‘oppositional culture’ (Willis 1977:14) and class conflict, but with a shift away from the earlier approaches used in this field towards recognition of social reproduction based on resistance. His analysis revealed fresh way of looking at the process of reproduction through the ‘lads’ actions in their rejection of school authorities and their assertion of their masculine identity. Willis’s work showed that ‘lads’ knew that their prospect of social mobility was constrained and acted accordingly through resistance; hence they exercised their agency by drawing on their working class culture even though this ultimately reproduced rather than transformed their lives. Willis’s work continues to resonate in the literatures concerned with the interplay of racial segregation and poverty and implications for particular categories of people in particular neighbourhood (See Dolby et al. 2004; Noden 2001). Much of the recent works point to the neo-liberal educational policies of marketization (Reay 2004) and privatisation that intensifies existing inequalities ‘as middle and upper-middle-class (typically white) parents—and some from the working class—that is, those with the social and cultural capital required to negotiate systems of choice—ensure that their children benefit from the new schools while leaving the most economically and socially disenfranchised students to languish in the poorest schools (Dolby et al. 2004:120; Gewirtz et al. 1995; Reay and Ball 1997, 1998; Reay, 2004).

Third, social reproduction theory has been used in works that shifted emphasis from a deterministic approach towards consideration of transformation and change possibilities. Here the recent work drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of habitus explores the transformational potential of his theoretical construct (Mills 2008). Mills suggest seeing students’ habitus ‘as constituted by reproductive and transformative traits’ (Mills 2008:79-80) and viewing teachers as armed with their respective cultural capitals for their potential ‘as agents of transformation rather than reproduction (Mills 2008:80). Whilst agreeing with the overall criticism levelled at Bourdieu for his relative neglect of human agency and restrictive notion of habitus, Mills points out that unlike his earlier formulation of habitus the recent ‘texts provide more space for agency’ (2008:81). According to Mills the
restrained conception of agency in Bourdieu’s work can be regarded ‘as a strength, reflecting its relationship with an equally restrained conception of structure’ (2008:82). From this perspective ‘there is no such thing as pure agency; but a kind of (limited) agency can be identified...[S]ubjects are able to negotiate the rules, regulations, influences and imperatives that inform all cultural practice, and delimit thought and action, precisely because fields dispose them to do so. (Schirato and Webb 2003:54 cited in Mills 2008:82).

This view understands that while habitus may set boundaries, agents are ‘free’ to practice within these boundaries, therefore their actions and choices are not determined but shaped by their habitus (Mills 2008). Hence, in the field of school ‘on some occasions students will recognise the constraint of social conditions and conditioning and tend to read the future that fits them, while on others they may recognise the capacity for improvisation and tend to generate opportunities for action in the social field (Mills 2008:80). With regards to the role of teachers as agents of transformation more emphasis is put on their capacity in transforming the school experiences of the marginalised group as opposed to seeking to change students by ‘projecting onto them identities without regard for the communities they embody’ (Mills 2008:83). Considering the school as a field with specific rules and regulations where the rules of the game are understood by some rather than others ‘teachers can be involved in transforming the field rather than seeking to preserve the status quo’ (Mills 2008:87). This perspective offers a more balanced approach than the first two positions on social reproduction. While the proposition Mills puts forward is plausible, some questions arise from a rural school perspective given that teachers are diverse individuals with different backgrounds with their own struggle to understand and fit in with the rules of the game and form a strategy to their own advantage. I envision the challenge from this view will be teachers’ agentic capacity in surpassing various forms of constraints and the circumstances in which they might or might not succeed in their struggle. I will discuss this in the empirical chapters of the thesis.

Finally, while Bourdieu’s thinking tools are regarded as useful for social analysis, researchers that employ them are accused of using them as ‘hair spray’ or abstracting a single concept without integrating the concepts that were intended to make them meaningful (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:80; Grenfell 2008). In chapter one I outlined how I will avoid falling into this trap. To conclude it is not surprising that social reproduction theory and Bourdieu’s theoretical thinking tools attracted considerable interest in education. His accounts of social inequality and reproduction as explained by the concept
of habitus addressed the structure or agency debate and created space to consider it in its duality. Notwithstanding its emphasis on the reproduction of inequality, from this theoretical construct people are not considered ‘fools’ that follow the rules as there is also potential for transformation and change (See Mills 2008). In this thesis, the three steps of Bourdieu’s theoretical framework will be applied in the analysis section enabling me to ask not only why poor, rural, girls are not in school, but also to see the power relations and underlying processes that enable or inhibit their access and progress in schooling. Moreover, the concepts of symbolic capital and symbolic violence will be used to highlight various mechanisms that are subtle and hidden from view. In the next section, I review studies that looked at rural schooling problems through a Bourdiesian lens.

2.8.2.3 Studies that draw on Bourdieu’s theories in the context of rural schooling

Arnot and Naveed (2014) conducted research in rural Pakistan using Bourdieu’s concept of habitus in analysing family-schooling cultures. They used quantitative data to identify three case study families that had no schooling, had schooling but limited to primary, or had schooling at secondary and beyond. They use the concepts of rural habitus, rural family habitus, and gendered habitus to draw attention to issues beyond rurality as location or as identity to present a more considered understanding that incorporates ‘a way of being, seeing, thinking and subjective positioning within a rural environment’ (Arnot and Naveed 2014:508). They state that the study draws upon the ‘habitus listening guide’ developed by Naveed21 (2014) which was influenced by the work of Brown and Gilligan (1992). This encouraged them to focus on:

- **Educational biographies of parents, youth and focus on the intergenerational dynamics of schooling and poverty**
- **Gender dynamics within the family and the role schooling plays in relation to ‘masculine domination within and across generations**
- **Changing dynamics of the rural field, seen from the perspective of two generations**

(Arnot and Naveed 2014:514).

Arnot and Naveed state that through the three forms of ‘listening’ they are able to get to the foundations of the rural family habitus, while at the same time considering the

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21 This was not available for review in public domain or personal contact therefore impossible to account for in this discussion.
‘tensions between the reproductive and transformative tendencies of the family and its members’ (2014:514). This allowed a focus on ‘educational dispositions, aspirations and outcomes of schooling’ (2014:505) and raised questions about challenges and opportunities for children and their family in their pursuit of social mobility via either schooling or leaving the rural area all together. They have developed the notion of ‘rural family habitus’ by drawing on Reay’s (1998) concept of ‘family Habitus’ and Funnell’s (2008) of ‘rural habitus’ (Arnot and Naveed 2014:511). What stands out in this work is their recognition of the diverse experiences of young people that are based upon ‘family social status’ and ‘social stratifications of the rural field, including cross-cutting social inequalities of ethnicity and caste and religious traditions that shape the notions of family honour, duty and service’ (Arnot and Naveed 2014:506). More importantly the notion of ‘rural habitus’ and their extension of that to ‘rural family habitus’ is aimed at addressing the concern over homogenous assumptions of gender order raised by feminist theorists such as McNay 2000; McLeod 2005 and others by considering the ‘complexity of power, agency, subjectivity and its effects on motivation and self-understanding’ (McNay 2000:85; McLeod 2005 cited in Arnot and Naveed 2014:509).

The questions of intersectionality and integration of structure and agency in girls’ and women’s education were a focus for Kirk and Winthrop 2007 who tried to show how ‘individual agency is negotiated and medicated through norms generated and defined within the particular social, cultural and political environments of the school, community and state’ (Kirk and Winthrop 2007:xxii in Maslak et al. 2008). Drawing on their study in West Africa (Guinea and Sierra Leone), Kirk and Winthrop examined girls’ education in terms of sociocultural forces enabling or disabling their agency by considering their wishes, aspirations and actions. They too draw on feminist theorists such as Goetz 1997, to ‘articulate the gendered relationships within institutional structures in development contexts’ (Kirk and Winthrop 2013:162). Drawing on Bourdieu’s concept of ‘field’ and taking the classroom as ‘field’ they note the classroom as a complex field where there are ‘configuration of objectively defined positions, imposed on agents or institutions by their present and potential situation (situs), in the structure of the distribution of species of power’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:978 cited in Kirk and Winthrop 2013:170). This illustrates the tension between addressing challenges for the sustainability of girls’ schooling in the face of the positioning of the teachers and classroom assistants. They also note the tension and hostility that extended to relations within the school environment, for
example, the introduction of the classroom assistants whom the teachers considered ‘sex police’ that will report on them and the limited roles the classroom assistants were able to play in terms of challenging teachers. This work raises important considerations for development interventions promoting girls education in spaces and context of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ (Kirk and Winthrop 2013:174). The consideration of teachers own embeddedness in the social context is an important aspect in studying why children are not enrolled or leave early from school. As shown in this study even though the teachers were seen as a solution, their own assumptions about the female students (e.g. ‘the problems lies with them’) limited the extent to which this was the case. They conclude by calling for long and short term strategies that are inclusive of actors within the school field (teachers, head teachers, administrators, students) to create ‘more gender-responsive schools, classrooms, and communities’ (Kirk and Winthrop 2013:177).

As illustrated by the works reviewed above, various considerations are important in studying schooling for rural children in general and girls in particular. As illustrated in the work of Arnot and Naveed 2014; Kirk and Winthrop 2013 and others, framing their analysis in Bourdieu’s concepts allowed a deeper insight into the social context under study. I will particularly note the heterogeneity of communities, the agency of children and specifically of girls and female teachers, and the contextual factors that are at play in the ‘field’ of schooling and field of power.

### 2.9 Gaps, The Contribution from the Thesis and Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed relevant works that are pertinent to children’s schooling in developing countries. I examined a range of works that offer particular conceptualisations of the problem and have discussed these conceptualisations more broadly. As the literature that engaged with the issue of access in terms of enrolment, non-enrolment and dropout is largely framed in terms of inequality, I discussed different scholars’ conceptualisations of inequality. In this brief review I have given specific examples of some of the dominant ways of looking at rural schooling problems and pointed out their usefulness and shortcomings. Most of the studies I reviewed have been quantitative, which have clear strengths in terms of identifying patterns and trends, but do not tell us why and how things happen. I am not disputing what these studies are saying, however, I argue for research that goes much deeper, as proposed by Crossley and Vulliamy (1997). What we need to do is to look at education qualitatively in a way that recognises the politics of schooling rather than seeing
problems in education as simply technical matters that require technical fixes. An important part of this will be more in-depth fieldwork and increased sensitivity to local cultural contexts (Crossley and Vulliamy 1997).

I also looked at frameworks that offer a more nuanced understanding of the problems rural children face with regards to schooling access and completion. Both the CREATE and gender and education work I draw on gives a good base for my study. While each usefully provides a more expanded view of educational inequality that helps us understand the persisting problems of non-enrolment and dropout, this thesis is able to extend this further by bringing together the notion of the social, relationality and context to offer an enhanced understanding of the schooling problems from the perspectives of local people.

CREATE’s conceptualisation of zones is helpful because it enables us to view how children are and how they move between different subject positions and between different relations in the school. It moves us beyond thinking in a categorical way that this child is enrolled or dropped out and encourages us to recognise children’s relationships in school as much more fluid. This highlights some of the issues in quantitative work and the way it looks at people as being slotted in one category or another. What the CREATE framework enable us to see is that children move between categories and there are critical transition points and critical factors that enable one sort of movement or another through supportive factors or undermining factors.

The work on gender and education draws attention to how gender is used in many different ways. Often in the literature a ‘very limited meaning of gender emerges’ (Aikman and Unterhalter 2008:25). This is evident in the large body of quantitative literature I reviewed and occasionally also in qualitative literature (Aikman and Unterhalter 2008). The gender and education literature was helpful in providing a critical perspective on the mainstream literature and the ways it constructs gender in particular. This led me to reflect on the process and the how in the context of my own study, which is why I go to Bourdieu.

For me Bourdieu builds on some of the ground that the scholars in gender and education opened up such as the importance of moving beyond the technical to more political and process oriented considerations. The perspective offered by the work of Bourdieu resonates with this study as an explanatory theory because his dialectical perspective
captures a sense of interrelatedness through the concept of habitus, field and capital that shapes how people act and react. Through the notion of habitus Bourdieu’s theory acknowledges that individuals do not make educational choices through conscious calculations. In fact, inequality is often reproduced as people respond to a situation in accordance with the expectations of their society and culture. It also provides a perspective on how people’s own positioning within the field is determined by the capital they are able to employ and deploy and how school systems play a role in consolidating social hierarchy by privileging the dominant group culture. According to Bourdieu, habitus inculcates specific tastes that shape individual’s dispositions, perceptions and responses and therefore influences how they position themselves in relation to others and across different fields. In other words it shows the process by which things happen.

There are three specific contributions that this chapter is making in relation to this thesis.

Firstly, it demonstrates the value of ‘seeing the social’ by paying attention to the dynamic process of perspectives, interactions, connections, responses, reciprocities, hierarchies, forms of relatedness, experiences, and tensions. The messy and demanding accounts of process outlined in the qualitative studies reviewed here are essential to account for underlying issues as they allow us to consider the overlapping nature of the challenges and individual responses in a particular context.

Secondly, the complexity of the relationships between the factors identified in the study reinforces the utility of the ethnographic oriented approach employed in this study which allows us to see the interrelationship of people and its effects. This means to see people in context, in relation to each other and the interactions between them. The study draws on the theories reviewed earlier to account for social reproduction through the process of interactions such as schools with the community, teachers with the community, parents with children, teachers with children, children with children and so on. This is possible when we have in-depth and detailed data that is grounded on people’s own view, but more difficult to do in a purely quantitative study, as I have demonstrated in the review. Accounting for relationality, as emphasised by Bourdieu’s work, means seeing people (children, parents, teachers and so on) within particular fields such as the home, the school and the community. This shows the interrelatedness of things within in a particular context, and the social embeddedness of all things.
Thirdly, to my knowledge at the time of this study there were no ethnographic studies that are focused on primary schooling in rural Ethiopia, which is one of the empirical gaps this study intend to address. By putting emphasis on the social aspects as well as seeking the perspectives of children, parents and teachers, this ethnographic study will make an original contribution to knowledge about children’s schooling trajectories. In relation to this, the next chapter will discuss the notion of voice with respect to research methodology by drawing on literature from childhood studies. Finally, as I will demonstrate in the coming chapters, I argue that if we want to understand why children are still not in school or unable to complete even when they have initial access despite the ongoing and longstanding efforts; we need to understand how people operate in relation to one another and in relation to the context where they are therefore what I termed as - seeing the social. The next chapter will discuss the methodological approaches I have taken with this regard and the practical applications of it.
3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

*The one who rides a donkey does not know the ground is hot*

(Ghanaian proverb in Holland and Blackburn\(^{22}\) (1998:2)

This chapter discusses the ways in which the problem of schooling for rural children can be researched and provides a detailed explanation of the research process undertaken for the current study. Although rural children’s education has gained considerable prominence as a key agenda for actors in the education sector at both national and global levels, the constructions of rural schooling problems and analysis of these remain lacking. In this thesis I explain that this is partly due to the lack of space given to the people’s own views and consider how their views can be better represented.

I chose an ethnographic oriented research approach as there was no better way to fulfil my objective of understanding issues related to rural children’s schooling (enrolment, non-enrolment, dropout) from the perspectives of the local people themselves (children, parents, teachers) than immersing myself within the community. The methods I used include participant observation, interviews, photography and an exploratory survey. The study was carried out in two sites; one peri-urban and the other rural. I carried out a household survey of the two sites to offer an overview of the schooling status of their children, the results of which are presented in chapter four.

This chapter is in two broad parts. The first locates my research in the context of broader methodological debates. The second describes my own research practice. In Section two I outline the broad epistemological and ontological issues that point to the value of listening to the voices of children and their significant others, including their teachers, as a means of addressing the research problem. In Section three I outline my methodology and the

\(^{22}\) Dogbe explained the gist of this saying as ‘meaning that the rich man cannot know or feel the poor man’s problems unless he gets off the donkey and walks on the ground or unless he asks the poor man’ (Dogbe 1996:1).
research design in particular the relative roles of ethnographic and survey based research in addressing my research questions. I also draw on the new sociology of childhood to consider its methodological relevance in relation to children’s voice and adult-child power relations. In Section four I discuss the concept of wellbeing in terms of its methodological implications and utilisation for the design of this study (see subsection 3.6.4). Section five contains discussions of reflexivity and addresses the insider-outsider issues including my own position in the field of the community and the school. In Section six, I describe the journey of the research as a two phase study including selecting the study sites, issues of access and the rationale for the research design. In section seven I discuss carrying out ethnography in practice, and elucidate on my experience and interactions at both research sites. In Section eight I describe the actual fieldwork and methods used to obtain data and the analytical process. Section nine considers various practical and ethical issues I anticipated, experienced and dealt with and Section ten contains the conclusion.

3.2 Knowledge and The Research Process

I begin this section by providing a discussion of the broad epistemological and ontological issues that point to the value of listening to children and their significant others in addressing the research questions. I then examine sociological perspectives on the voices of children (and others).

3.2.1 Epistemology and Ontology

Chambers’ work ‘Whose reality counts?’ raises important and enduring ontological questions for researchers, development practitioners, governments, institutions and policy makers on the construction of ‘reality’. He is critical of the ‘methods and analysis that feeds into myth that supports policies, projects and programmes’ (Chambers, 1997:30). In his view, people’s ‘professionalism’ (a certain way of learning), ‘distance’ (physically, organisationally, socially, and cognitively), and ‘power’ (position in hierarchy), can combine with vested interests to offer resistance to new insights (Chambers, 1997:32). Consequently, he calls for a research method that allows for the realities of poor people to be known in their own terms and not interpreted by those of higher in status (‘uppers’). Advocating an approach of self-critical epistemological awareness (SCEA) he suggests one has to be constantly ‘examining and reflecting on how and what one learns’ (ibid:203) and that through this process a gap will open for relearning by the researcher, as well as the researcher coming to an understanding that realities are multiple (ibid). Types of research
that ought to be avoided include projecting one’s own values, power, and preconceived ideas. Instead the researcher should seek to empower subjects by enabling them to give voice to their own reality.

Chambers’ views have clear resonance with the new sociology of childhood. James and Prout (1997:7) highlighted that ‘the history of the study of childhood in the social sciences has been marked not by an absence of interest in children [...] but by their silence’. There has been increasing call for researchers and policy makers to attend to children’s own views on matters that affect them ‘even to the point of carrying out research themselves’ (Lewis 2004: in Fraser et al. 2004; also see Mayall 2002; Lewis et al. 2004). Related to this view, Morrow (2001) noted the shift towards using participatory research methods with the emphasis being ‘on generating knowledge from the perspective not only of the researchers but also of the researched’ (Morrow 2001:256). Similarly in development literature, it is increasingly acknowledged that traditionally the views of the poor, uneducated and rural along with those of women and children, have been neglected (Chambers 1983; Hart 1992; Fraser et al. 2004; Cornwall et al. 2007). This also involved foregrounding considerations of power relations arising from age, gender, and socioeconomic differences, including the ethical issues they entail (Panelli, Punch and Robson 2007; Morrow and Richards 1996). Boyden and Ennew (1997) argued that the implications of this view for policy and interventions are that ‘research about children’s lives is essential if policies and programmes are to become more responsive and relevant to their concerns and needs’ (Boyden and Ennew 1997:10 cited in Morrow 2001:256).

In listening to the voices of children it is important to adopt a subjectivist ontological position, which means that I try to see ‘reality as made up of the perceptions and interactions of living subjects’ (O’Gorman and Macintosh 2015, :56). The implications of this are that individuals’ responses to similar situations, for instance, the school setting, teachers’ treatment of the child, differ depend on their own background, including cultural, economic, social and gender aspects. For example, the rural school environment and the education system in general claims to be or may appear to offer universal service to all children, but in practice the experience of the boys could be different from girls, and the experience of working children may be different from those who do not work for reasons that might be overt and observable, but also for reasons hidden from view (Nieuwenhuys 1994; Woodhead 1998, 1999). Responses to their school level experiences may be
structured by societal expectations as well as their individual personalities, attributes or social place. Therefore in my attempt to understand the schooling problems of rural children it is important to avoid simplifying the range of factors that influence schooling trajectories.

As a study committed to draw on peoples voice, while elements from post-positivists, constructionist and critical realist positions are applicable to my own view, no one position captured it\(^2\). As outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:6) ‘it is not uncommon for researchers to work between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms’, provided this is not attempted between contrasting paradigms such as the extreme version of positivism with that of constructivism. I also had to consider the fit between my positionality, theoretical framework for analyses of my data.

As an overall epistemological approach I favour a critical realist position. Mayall (2002:39) describes how, in the sociology of childhood, critical realism ‘sets out agency and structure into ontologically distinct entities.’ This enables one to pay attention to distinctive aspects of structures (for example policy, school rules, institution culture and practices, social practices) (Mayall 2002). On agency, Mayall highlights that:

> ‘critical realism identifies motivating forces stretching from the past into the future: established dispositions, reasons and experiences, feelings on the day, wishes and goals for the future. This analysis is useful again in drawing attention to processes across time, and in providing a method for considering children’s experiences and encounters with adults and other children. (Mayall 2002:39).

In contrast to a strongly social constructivist position, critical realism recognizes that the number of the children who are out of school and the number of girls relative to boys can be counted and reflects reality at any given time. However, in applying the ‘critical’ side of critical realism I am also of the view that reality is layered and complex making it difficult to claim certainty.

\(^2\) I have provided extended discussion addressing my considered epistemological and ontological issues in appendix 3.1.
3.2.2 Childhood Studies and the Importance of Children’s Voice

Since the 1990s the new sociology of childhood has advanced the way children’s lives are being understood and studied. This argued against the traditional view that ‘represented childhood and children as natural, passive, incompetent and incomplete and in doing so foreclosed a series of important questions for theory and empirical research’ (James and Prout 1997:Viii; also see Prout and James 1990; Qvortrup, et al. 1994; Jenks 1996; James, Jenks and Prout 1998). The new paradigm suggested key tenets including the notion of childhood as a social construction and the idea that children, their social relationships, cultures and matters that concern them are worthy of study in their own right, ‘not just in respect to their social construction by adults’ (James and Prout 1997:4); Children are perceived of as active agents that have a point of view and are able to contribute to society at large (James and Prout 1997). These theoretical perspectives although contested shaped sociological thinking and empirical studies involving children (Wells 2009; Mayall 2002). Several authors have criticized the universalized rhetoric of ‘the child’ or childhood (Wells 2009, Woodhead 1998), often based on white urban middle classes (Boyden 1997; Panelli, Punch and Robson 2007) and have called attention to the plural specifics of sociocultural aspects of childhood (James and Prout, 1997) and implication for researching their lives in different places and contexts (Morrow and Richards 1996; Punch 2002). Others have asserted that children are ‘agents’ (Mayall 2002:21), without underplaying the biological (age) physical, and developmental differences between them (Wells 2009) and practical implications of this for research, policy, and intervention.

Taking this debate beyond the biological aspects of childhood, Klocker in her study of child domestic workers in rural Tanzania applied the term ‘thin and thick agency’ to recognise how ‘poverty and various socio-cultural factors’ (Klocker 2007:85) put pressure on rural girls. According to Klocker (2007) ‘thin’ agency refers to decisions and everyday actions that are carried out within highly restrictive contexts, characterized by few viable alternatives. ‘Thick’ agency is having the latitude to act within a broad range of options (Klocker 2007:.85). Furthermore: ‘structures, contexts, and relationships can act as ‘thinners’ or ‘thickeners’ of individuals’ agency, by constraining or expanding their range of viable choices’ (Klocker 2007:85). This enables recognition of children as agentic, but also acknowledges the parameters within which children exercise their agency (e.g. Punch 2003; Panelli et al. 2007).
Until recently children’s accounts of reality have been widely ignored by adults and policy makers (Boyden and Ennew 1997; Poluha 2004), for their youth has led them to be considered as immature and hence their perspectives unreliable (Lewis et al. 2004; Hart 1992; Kehily 2008). In addition, it is commonly acknowledged that children rank at the bottom of the population hierarchy due to their age (Morrow 2011). Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000:61) argue strongly that children must be listened to in their own terms:

The meanings that [children] attach to their experiences are not necessarily the meanings that their teachers or parents would ascribe; the subcultures that children inhabit in classrooms and schools are not always visible or accessible to adults.[...] Without listening seriously to the recipients of schooling, the ostensible improvers may simply get it wrong.

The above discussed body of work has influenced my own approach in studying rural children’s schooling. In particular it has directed my attention to the power relations between myself and the subjects of this study (rural children, parents, and teachers), the generational gap between myself and the children, the cultural attributes of age, and the multiple experiences of childhood. Most important in all this is the issue of children’s voice. The notion of voice may be conceptualized in various ways, including political empowerment (for detailed discussion see Alderson 1995; Morrow and Richards 1996; James and Prout 1997; Davis 1998; Katz 2004; Komulainen 2007; Wells 2009; Thomas 2009). Moreover, I am aware despite the increasing popularity of voice in social research and development discourse there are many questions over its practical application and at times it remains a rhetorical device (Wells 2009:182; also see Komulainen 2007). Commitment to voice should not blind us to the importance also of going beyond the immediate social worlds of children to theorise how children’s everyday lives are shaped and reshaped through globalization as well as political and economic conditions (see Katz 2004; Boyden 1997; Hart 2008). I recognise in addition the potential ambiguity of children’s voice, as well as the practical and ethical challenges associated with it (Morrow and Richards 1996). In relation to this study I am using voice as a way of ‘hearing and taking into account what children say’ (Thomas 2009:172; Komulainen 2007) rather than in a sense of empowerment or agency (i.e. in order to challenge and transform their condition) (Thomas 2009).
The desire to enable children’s own voices to be heard has led some academics to pursue a participatory research method in which children participate in various forms, from setting out the research agenda, to collecting the data, analysis and even writing up (see Morrow and Richards 1996; Morrow 2001; Boyden and Ennew 1997). Similarly, I sought to present children’s reality from their own perspectives. However, I differed in my approach from these other scholars, because the children did not do research with me and neither were they consulted in the formation of my research agenda. However, even though I did not follow a fully participatory method, my research design did allow children to contribute in a meaningful way to influence its shape. Moreover, as in some of the extant literature (Morrow and Richards 1996; Morrow 2001, 2011; Clark 2004), I sought to minimise the power difference between myself and my subjects, recognising the age gap and possible perceived difference in my status amongst them, as discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, to achieve the desired research goals it was essential to capture children’s everyday lives and their schooling in a holistic manner, which required exploring their socioeconomic status, their views, experiences, the micro-politics of households, and their interaction within the community and schools.

Whilst considering children’s social context and their voice as vital, in the case of rural children in Ethiopia, I also accepted that they are a subordinate group because of their age and social positioning. Moreover, I gave special consideration to girls whose experiences, I believe, are shaped by their inferior position in the social hierarchy. This acknowledgement of such a subordinated group, however, should not be mistaken as counting children (particularly girls) as passive entities. It is rather to highlight that in Ethiopia, children (and particularly poor children), are a group with lower social status (Poluha 2004; Heinonen 2011). However, there is a paradox in that while children’s low status means generally their view/perspectives and experiential knowledge have been largely overlooked, at the same time a considerable range of responsibilities and expectations are placed on them: childcare, earning to cover the cost of their schooling, caring for ill members of the household, leaving the family home in search of jobs and more (Poluha 2004; Poluha et al. 2007). It is only by talking directly with children and understanding their lives from their own points of view that this contradiction can fully be appreciated.

My own commitment to children’s voice or giving a hearing demanded a lot of balancing out and reflexivity on my side, which was dependent on context, social positioning of the
children and my own place in the social structure (Ansell 2005; Wells 2009). Perhaps the most significant challenge (as discussed in the ethical issues section of this chapter) from being committed to hearing local level voices, including those of children, has been the dilemma of handling what I hear (ethically, morally, practically) rather than how to facilitate listening.

3.3 Mixed Methodologies

3.3.1 Quantitative versus Qualitative Approaches

While there are studies undertaken from different epistemological premises, many studies about rural children’s schooling in general and specifically studies in Ethiopia, fall within the positivist tradition ‘a position that affirms the importance of imitating the natural sciences’ (Bryman 2004:11). With regards to specific methods, the focus of existing studies is largely on measurement and quantification by generating statistical analyses derived from secondary sources such as administrative data or large surveys across regions. While this quantitative analysis of variables is useful to configure aspects of high concentration of unschooled children or low level educated communities, as well as for statistical generalisation it cannot account for contextual differences within regions and communities (Wiseman et al. 2014). Moreover this approach alone cannot capture people’s own subjective accounts of experiences as a child, parent or teacher and their position within the schooling system.

I employ a qualitative approach which reflects the nature of my research problem and the best means for gaining knowledge about it. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) define it, qualitative research is:

> a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible [...] qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, [...] phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:3).

My core concern was thus to place myself as close to the situation and the people whose perspective and priorities I aim to understand. In doing so I utilise a mixed method
approach. While surveys are typically identified with quantitative research, they can also provide important insights to the qualitative researcher. As Denzin and Lincoln clarify,

Qualitative researchers use [...] statistics, tables, graphs, and number [...] they also draw upon and utilize the approaches, methods, and techniques of ethnomethodology, [...] ethnography, interviews,[...] survey research, and participant observation, among others. (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:6).

While both qualitative and quantitative researchers may use similar data collection methods such as surveys and interviews, they differ in what they seek to do with the data and how they report their findings. In addition, the criteria by which they evaluate the quality of their work differ as quantitative researchers focus on reliability and validity while qualitative researchers seek trustworthiness, authenticity, and relevance (see Bryman 2004 chapter 13). I follow Bryman in maintaining that, although there are differences between qualitative and quantitative research, the divide is unnecessarily exaggerated (Bryman 2004). Qualitative researchers may employ instruments often associated with quantitative research, and quantitative research using social surveys may employ analytical instruments that helps them address meanings (Bryman 2004:441). In reality ‘research methods are more autonomous in relation to epistemological commitments than is often appreciated’ (Bryman 2004:449).

3.3.2 Mixed Methods: Survey and Ethnographic Research

Ethnography has expanded since its use in the early 20th century in comparative cultural anthropology and now there is a ‘lack of orthodoxy in ethnography’ leading to ‘pluralistic approaches’ (Creswell 2007:69). In essence, a good ethnographer is expected to reduce the distance between herself and the researched by staying in the field for a long time and ‘acknowledg[ing] his or her impact on the people and the places being studied’ (Creswell 2007:72). In addition, in ethnography the focus is on how the culture works, ‘what people do (behaviours), what they say (language), the potential tension between what they do and ought to do’ (Creswell 2007).

Practically speaking my choices reflect an ethnographic approach, including, immersing myself in the communities for an extended period of time, the commitment to conduct the study in its natural place (school, community), the documentation of my observations in the
forms of: diary, photographs, and open-ended interviews, as well as the continuous and consistent reflection of my own social position and role as researcher (Bray 2008).

While my overall approach was ethnographic, my research question guided my approach in choosing mixed methods as a way of addressing it. As discussed in the introduction and literature review, while I am aware of low enrolment in rural Ethiopia, this considerably varied by region and there were questions over the quality of this official data (Schaffner 2004; Kedir Assefa Tessema 2006). I used a survey in my primary phase to determine the status of children’s schooling was specifically relating to the two selected sites. However, my manner when undertaking the survey was akin to ethnographic approaches in that it was slow going and involved multiple meetings with my respondents and post survey note taking. The survey became a further source of narratives collected from the various stakeholders involved in primary education. In addition to providing reliable descriptive statistics, the survey therefore also served to inform the qualitative investigation as well as aiding access to the respondents. My analysis survey responses then served to identify the key themes to be followed up in phase two and helped in the selection of households for this process. Recording the coordinates (GPS) for each surveyed household was valuable as I was able to map and take into account how far/close children’s homes were relative to their school, and how many times they climbed high hills and crossed rivers to get to school. Participant observation in classrooms, school compounds and staffrooms, and the community yielded rich data that was recorded in journals whose contents were regularly revisited during the analysis and writing up.

A key question often asked of qualitative research is whether it can serve as the basis for broader generalisation. In my case there is no intention to make a generalisation from the findings of the study to Ethiopia as a whole, and I am aware that the two sites are both quite specific and incomparable on many levels. However, in choosing to study one rural and one peri-urban site I have opened up the opportunity to explore in particular, spatial dimensions of disadvantage that influence educational outcomes. In addition, I believe that while some particularities of my findings will be specific to these sites, the general questions they raise are of much wider relevance to the literature on rural children’s schooling careers in Ethiopia and other parts of the developing world.
3.4 Wellbeing

3.4.1 Wellbeing approach for survey design: seeing beyond the external measures of welfare

My aim to see social phenomena holistically is consistent with the wellbeing framework as developed by WeD (see White 2008, 2009). As introduced in chapter one, the WeD approach to wellbeing recognises that people’s lives should be probed in a multidimensional way and this was therefore the approach I utilised in the design of my survey questionnaire. That is, rather than trying to abstract the children and their schooling from the context, the objective has been to recognise the multiple dimensions in their lives, to situate them in their relationships and to look at them in a holistic manner. This helped to provide understanding of the relationships and processes that shaped and transformed children’s lives as well as their schooling trajectories. This is particularly important when studying rural children in Ethiopia, given that they belong to a society that is known to be collective and highly interdependent (Poluha 2004). The wellbeing perspective I have drawn on in designing the survey questionnaire is illustrated by the framework in Figure 3.1 below.

*Figure 3.1 Wellbeing framework adapted from White (2008)*

By considering the children holistically, I have been able to uncover both observable and obscured issues relating to schooling. As depicted in the above triangle, it was important to pay attention to the subjective, the material and relational dimensions. That is, looking at respondents in a more rounded manner. Beyond the survey, the concept applied to children would entail not just talking to adults about them, or observation of them and their everyday surroundings but also soliciting children’s own views by enabling them to voice their concerns, share experiences, their hopes and fears that is similar to some of the points raised above in the new sociology of childhood (see also Thin 2008). In this way
there is also a space to avoid the common pitfall in research about children of ‘looking at their deficits alone’, i.e. their vulnerabilities, instead of also seeing their resilience in equal measure (see Boyden and Mann 2005; White 2008, 2009). Consideration of a wellbeing approach thus enabled me to do precisely this.

3.5 PERSONAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL REFLEXIVITY

As introduced in relation to Chambers’ SCEA approach above, continuous reflection is required on the part of the researcher and her role.

Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining “outside of” one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research (Nightingale and Cromby 1999:228 cited in Howell Major and Savn-Baden 2010:82).

The question of researchers as ‘insiders’ or ‘outsiders’ is a lively debate in both development studies and education (e.g. Sumner and Tribe 2008; McNees et al. 2013). Issues discussed include legitimacy and ethics, the relative value of studies by insiders and outsiders (Berg 2007) and whether being an outsider is necessarily the same as being ‘detached’ (McNees et al. 2013). For Sumner and Tribe (2008:43), ‘all researchers particularly those in the social sciences are almost always ‘outsiders’ in some sense.’ While the issue is undoubtedly important to consider, I believe the boundary is less rigid than commonly presented. In my case, for example, I am partly an insider as I am studying my own culture but I am different in some respects. Being positioned as an insider had many advantages but the concern over power relations applies to me as much as it does to ‘outsiders’.

With respect to my own reflexivity, from embarking on a PhD on the topic of education at a specific research site, my decision-making was shaped by my own values, beliefs, experiences, interests, personal commitments, opportunities and my identity. Consequently, I cannot claim to have been completely free from these while carrying out the data collection and analysis. My own background, being the daughter of the first
generation of parents who were able to get to university meant that both my parents knew people left in rural villages, particularly old schoolmates, who physically appear a lot older than themselves, owing to hard manual work in rural Ethiopia compared to the urban lifestyle afforded by people with education and regular income. This and my own life trajectory, that of my childhood friends and extended family in rural Ethiopia (educated in private schools, urban state schools, and those growing up in villages with or without education respectively), no doubt has informed my beliefs and in particular conditioned my view about forms of inequality, education and schooling. However, I do not think this limits my capacity as a researcher, instead I believe personal and epistemological reflexivity on this encourages me to reflect on my assumptions about the world and my knowledge of it (Willig 2001; Nightingale and Cromby 1999). The rich, contextual and plural perspectives I encountered as an Ethiopian, development practitioner and as a researcher based in Europe gave me an insight into the complexity of the questions I was asking in this study.

As mentioned so far in this chapter, I am aware that in research there is a concern of ‘being too familiar’ when a native researcher goes back to their own place to carry out ethnographic research (Bryman 2004; Denzin and Lincoln 2000). However, my familiarity doesn’t make my study any less rigorous, objective or systematic, just because of my ‘nationality’ in a sense of going back home to study my own culture. I take this as an advantage, for my familiarity with the area and the culture meant that I was able to establish a rapport with the people relatively easily and channel this familiarity to encourage people to talk freely and honestly. Moreover, my cultural understanding meant I was attuned to peoples’ expressions, gestures and emphases of a non-verbal nature that are all important features for capturing people’s points of view. At the same time, having lived the majority of my life outside of the country, albeit with frequent visits, as any non-native researcher would, I also had many gaps to fill, mistakes to make and learning to acquire. In particular, my association with children for the significant time of my stay made this learning easier as they were as keen to learn from me as I was from them. The research design I employed led to suitable data being collected and analysed for addressing the main research question regarding schooling in rural Ethiopia, in a bottom up manner of bringing the perspectives of rural Ethiopian children and adults to the fore. In this way, the objective I prioritised is accomplished. The limitations in relation to these matters are discussed in the conclusion of this thesis.
3.6 SELECTING THE RESEARCH SETTING (WOREDA²⁴ = KARA-KORE)

KaraKore

I address the practical aspects starting with a brief description of the research sites. Detailed description and the demographic aspect of the study sites are found in chapter four.

The total population of the KaraKore at the time of this study stood just over 100,000. It is divided into thirty small villages of which some are situated close to the main road while others are far. Most of the villages have primary schools of either the first cycle grade one-four or the whole cycle grade one-eight. There is only one secondary school and a few satellite schools offering grade one schooling. This is a small setting, run by one teacher in a one room. It offers basic reading and writing skills to children particularly the older children with a flexible system compared to formal schools. The majority of the KaraKore community are subsistence farmers that are living outside of the main road area.

3.6.1 Access

An overriding pragmatic reason for my choice of KaraKore, as advised by Bryman (2004), was ‘gaining access’ to the field, which was facilitated by my previous contact and familiarity with the chosen region. Regarding access to the local administration, I benefited by knowing people in the education department who could act as gatekeepers. I knew these people through my work in development and other individuals with extensive contacts among education professionals both in Addis Ababa and elsewhere. At the federal and woreda level, I encountered much enthusiasm when I expressed my interest in researching primary schooling and spending time there. Despite the requirement of much paperwork generally there was a positive outlook and I found gaining permission, and access easy. However, at the kebele level, while people were willing they lacked systemic procedures and relevant records to share with me, which hampered my progress slightly.

Selected sites

²⁴ A woreda is a town level administration that governs many kebeles. A kebele is the smallest local administration level identified with a unique number when it is urban/semi-urban and in the case of a gebere maheber (farmers’ association) in a rural area, they are identified by the name of its specific location (also commonly referred to as kebele). The next level up of administration from the woreda is regional and above that, federal.
I refer to them as:

- **Site 1** = Kara (peri-urban kebele named - kebele 05)
- **Site 2** = Kore (rural kebele named – Gebere Maheber (farmers’ association))

The selected research sites are close to the capital city (Addis Ababa) and comprised semi-urban and rural communities approximately 20km apart from each other. In terms of ethnicity Kara was mainly Oromo mixed with some Amhara, Tigre and Gurage people and few other ethnicities in it. In contrast Kore was predominantly Oromo with very few Amhara and Gurage mixed among them. As is the case for many Ethiopian people, identification of people by ethnicity in a clear-cut way is difficult, because many have mixed backgrounds. In terms of religion, the majority were Orthodox Christian with some evangelical Christians and Muslims found in the peri-urban area. In terms of economic development, both sites are resource poor, predominantly agricultural, dependent on rain fed agriculture, and experiencing high unemployment. This is changing with the arrival of new horticultural industries along the main road, more accessible to some villages but not all, and poor infrastructure, albeit there was considerable improvement to many villages during the study time e.g. electricity, new roads, health posts and schools.

The two selected sites vary significantly geographically, Kara, where the first school is situated is right by a main asphalt road on a level field. Most of the households have access to electricity, water from a pipe or well and capped spring that is developed and protected and suitable for drinking. However, there is still a need to use river water due to the frequent stoppage of main water. There are some government institutions like electricity and finance offices, municipality, water, health clinic, telecommunications and a bank as a means to formal employment. Kore, where the second school is located, is far from the main road and has uneven terrain with many hills. At the time of the study and still in 2016, the village had no electricity, or piped water so people use uncapped springs and water from rivers. There were no formal jobs available apart from teaching, Tena Kela (the health post), Orthodox Church priest and Kebele administration work.

A change for people in KaraKore is private flower farms that have been emerging near the peri-urban site. Since their arrival many living in the peri-urban and some rural
communities who are able to commute have found employment. The differences between the two sites made it possible to investigate the impact of spatial differences on schooling access and experiences.

3.6.2 Rationale for case study schools selection

In my search for two suitable schools to participate in the fieldwork, I set out a number of criteria that I believed would generate the most fruitful outcome, these being:

1. Have a full primary school duration, grade 1-8

2. Government school (Note All schools were run by the government except one new fee paying school set up by teachers)

3. Oromigna language as a medium of instruction (MOI) for the schools (Most schools had Oromigna Language as a MOI while some used Amharigna and the secondary school used English)

4. Under the same local administration (There were 30 schools under the woreda administration.)

5. I had no direct personal or professional relationship with them prior to my research

Having met these criteria, I selected two schools. Following policy directives, like many other rural schools, both schools practised a door-to-door approach where teachers go out knocking on doors to encourage parents to enrol their children in late summer and chase absentees throughout the year. I have discussed this in chapter six. I obtained this information from representatives of the local authority whilst seeking permission to carry out academic research in that woreda and visited many other schools before selecting these. Given the research aims, I was convinced that investigating the school environment along with the surrounding community would generate deeper understanding of the problems faced. Regarding the criterion of no previous contact, this was necessary so as to avoid having preconceptions from my development work in Ethiopia that could have led to misconceived interpretations of what I encountered. Moreover, this was important for it allowed me to engage with the school community as a researcher and not as a development practitioner.
3.6.3 Fieldwork design, Survey contents, List of participants

Seasonality affects people’s day to day lives: traveling further to fetch water, intensive labour demands during harvest time and so on. To furnish me with the relevant context I planned fieldwork to cover most months: harvest time, holiday seasons, and school times (see fieldwork period in table 3.3) and in this chapter tables 3.3 and 3.4 for time and calendar respectively). I was to be able to observe key periods in children’s lives covering holiday times, school enrolment times, milestones in schooling e.g. exam times, certificate days, sport days(school celebration day), as discussed in the empirical chapters.

3.6.4 Survey content and design

As explained above, the survey questionnaire (see appendix 3.3) combined the material, relational and subjective dimensions of wellbeing with variables commonly associated with child schooling in wider literature. It comprised nine sections as presented in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Survey sections and content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Key focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>Demography (parents education and occupation, ethnicity, religion, age, siblings, relationship to head of household (HH))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2</td>
<td>Pattern of school attendance (dropout, never enrolled reasons and re-registration path, opportunity, support)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td>Relationship &amp; provision (child un/related, invisible children, maids, shepherds, adopted), and orphan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4</td>
<td>Child Health and access to health treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5</td>
<td>Child work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6</td>
<td>Parents’ perspectives on school and their level of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7</td>
<td>Parents’ perception of the value of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8</td>
<td>Aspirations, expectations, hopes and fears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 9</td>
<td>Wealth and poverty of HH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After gaining a reasonable idea of the population size I sought to survey 5% of the population (see table 3.2 below) at each site in order to produce a statistically representative sample of the two sites. Accessing accurate data regarding the population figures was problematic. Not only did it take time to find the right people at their desks but
when I did catch up with them they were not able to provide me with such figures for each of the kebeles. The woreda level administration has different departments within it (health, education and so on) and the available officers initially produced inaccurate lists. Unsure of the way data seemed to be handled I then sought to solve that problem by visiting the health and education sections with the aim of comparing between the data gathered across sources in order to reach a reasonable estimation. The respective desk officers gave me different numbers of inhabitants and household lists and they informed me that was not the whole population. The data was conflicting in terms of who was included on the list (land owners, land tax payers or land revenue receivers). The Karakore health desk too had various lists with conflicting numbers of households and in Kore only those who had participated in the immunization campaign were on the list. Neither the kebeles, nor the health centres in Kore had computers, only paper records, with no spare copies or a photocopier available making it difficult to maintain an effective system for noting these records. In Kara, although they had computers, a further complication explained to me was caused by the active displacement of people owing to the expanding flower farms and other developments that had yet to be accounted for in the figures. Land was being distributed (leased) free in the area for horticultural and flower farms by investors, including foreign ones. Failing in my aim to compare data across the sectors, I decided to go back to the first administrative level data I had obtained and decided to survey slightly more than 5% of the population for each site. For Kara I increased the household number to account for the newcomers in the area. This resulted in a total of 133 (73 in Kara and 60 in Kore) household surveys being carried out with heads of households. See table 3.2 below showing total inhabitants and household numbers gathered for two years.
Table 3.2 *Population numbers obtained from local administrative sources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Official data 2000</th>
<th>Official data 2001</th>
<th>Site level Data 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>HH#</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>5253</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kore</td>
<td>5693</td>
<td>1186</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Ethiopian calendar (ETC) 2000 = (2006/07 EU) and 2001 ETC= (2007/08 EU)

**Source:** Population and household list: woreda level and kebele list in site 2

The research was in two phases. The first covered administering surveys and observation while the second phase was predominantly observation along with unstructured and semi-structured interviews, documenting young adults (parents) schooling life trajectory, and photography of each community day to day life, including lending my camera to teachers and children to take, with consent, photos of themselves. I have provided in Appendix 3.4 and 3.5 lists of the research tools employed along with a list of the participants. However, GPS readings of the surveyed households and most of the photographs, even though I had consent to take and permission to use them, are not included in the thesis due to the ethical consideration of protecting anonymity.
3.6.5 Administering survey and looking ahead to phase two

After establishing the total numbers for the survey as explained above, I decided to pick the households on the basis of their having at least one child in the official primary school age group (seven-eighteen years old). However, age in school was much more complicated as I will discuss in chapters four and six. At the initial stage, with the help of my local fieldwork assistant, I went to every other house and on the occasions of a household not fulfilling the criterion or refusing to participate I went to the next available house. The difficulty of doing this across the peri-urban site where I started soon became apparent, because, whilst the houses on the road side and the adjacent rows as well as new settlers were all in straight lines, the rest of the kebele houses were randomly distributed. What I classed as settlers were those families displaced having lost their land to investors, e.g. the flower farms. Consequently, we spent a day walking the area to be able to sketch a map of roads and houses, which we then used to choose participants. The rural site had only a few households in a row near the village market, the rest were either in clusters, or far apart from each other. So as with Kara, we drew a simple map of the houses and roads, from which we identified potential survey participants such that there was clear sampling coverage of the whole kebele. In addition, matters were further complicated by there being families within a family. These appeared as one household in the official register, but were in fact two households as a father and son lived in the same compound heading different households. In these cases I interviewed whoever was available providing the house had school aged children.

For the qualitative interviews with children and parents at Kara I picked every third house on the surveyed households list, so as to avoid selection bias owing to the reality that I was already getting to know some children and parents. However, not all the children or parents selected in this way were available for interview, and on occasions I had to also use purposive sampling selection. For example three households that I came across during the initial survey but were not initially selected were added because the household head had died after the survey and the house then became a child headed household. However, I was only able to interview two child headed household in Kara. The third one I had selected was in Kore but, the child soon left the area after his father’s death.

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25 There was one occasion where a household fulfilled the criteria and the widowed woman initially agreed to take part, but 20 minutes into the interview she asked me to leave. It was difficult to probe more her reasons. She had grievances with the local authorities and schools for mistreating her sons that were out of school.
Near the end of my study, I found I had many stories of children who were not registered in school and decided to focus on those in school. I purposefully picked grades four and eight as my focus mainly because these form a significant milestone in primary schooling in the Ethiopian education system. I went through the register with the respective teachers to identify an equal number of boys and girls, and sought consent from the children and their parents to speak with them. I interviewed some on more than one occasion.

3.7 Ethnography in practice

Regarding the location, I had visited the area from a very young age and was able to capitalise on my knowledge of the social norms and practices of the community. Living among the community meant I was able to develop a substantial social network with children and adults. In particular, during my second phase fieldwork I was able to share a room with a local civil servant and this led to focus group discussions with some teachers which were not planned for in the original research design. This was because these people who were few in number tended to gather together in the evenings. Living in the same small room with the local civil servant as her guest I was automatically invited to their gatherings. These were often coffee ceremony events and sometimes shared meals and involved the different teachers hosting in turn. This friendship was also practically useful as, for example, by staying in one room they used fewer candles each night. For me this arrangement was useful as they helped me charging my mobile phone, camera, laptop, getting me drinking water and other essentials when they went for the weekend break or to receive their salaries from the peri-urban site.

In terms of carrying out the survey, owing to the difficult terrain and limitations on the participants’ available time, in some days as few as two were completed. For instance, to reach some people, rivers had to be crossed and hills climbed, which also made me appreciate the salience of topography in accessing schooling, as discussed in more detail in chapter five. Moreover, there were often breaks in the survey as the respondents carried on with daily work and domestic responsibilities. The surveying was consistent with an ethnographic approach rather than a conventional one. The prolonged contact with many of the participants in the survey was a deliberate strategy aimed at eliciting a comprehensive understanding of each particular context and contrasted with carrying out a

26 I have changed the profession for this person from specific to general term of professional and civil servant as an extra measure to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
tick box questionnaire. That is, every respondent was encouraged to provide as extensive a contribution as they wished. Moreover, I didn’t want to miss things that could not be recorded in the survey, such as the gestures and attitudes of people and therefore I opted against having enumerators and carried out all of the 133 household surveys myself with the help of my field assistant.

Another positive aspect of being embedded in the communities was the amount of time I had to learn people’s names and be sensitive to the local practices. Regarding this, to begin with I used to take notes and describe people using phrases to aid my memory such as the place I met them, like passing the awaki\textsuperscript{27} house, owns the mill, lost three children from TB, and so on. Finding out adults’ names and addressing them respectfully in accordance with their cultural expectations needed careful attention. For instance, the custom is to call someone ‘aba X, ‘hada X, which means a father of X or a mother of X, respectively (X=usually is the name of their first-born and this is used even after the child has died).

Indeed there was a lot I had to learn too. For example, I was surprised when I discovered the usage of an Amarigna (working language of Ethiopia) term ‘ye sengo mata lij’ ‘the Monday evening child’ despite my familiarity with some traditional sayings that have hidden meanings. I was aware of the Amarigna term ‘dikala’ that is a pejorative term to categorise children born out of wedlock, however, despite being an Amarigna word I was not familiar with this term that refers to children in a similar category but in much less derogatory manner. \textit{Sengo mata} (Monday evening) in a manner of speaking normalises what could be an embarrassing situation in conversation, especially when children are around. During my fieldwork cases of sengo mata emerged frequently in conversations with men in the rural site during the survey. Fathers sometimes included or omitted children that were born to another woman in the neighbourhood from their list of household members, and when asked about relationships of other children they would say but ‘he is a \textit{Sengo mata lij}’ implying not fully their child. When I was growing up in Addis Ababa, such children were clearly identified as ‘dikala’ which is a pejorative term. As the omission of their names from the household head’s list of children suggests that such children are viewed as less than those born within marriage. In addition to being born out of marriage their mother’s social status is also considered lower than the average women as they are a

\textsuperscript{27} Awaki is a knowledgeable person who is feared, because they have the power to predict futures, heal or curse people. Locally, the spirit is believed to pass from generation to generation within the same family.
'wushima’ or ‘mistress’ for men holding high position and wealth in the village. These women are engaged in selling cheap alcohol in the villages and are usually unmarried but with children. This tension of who is a ‘proper’ child and who is not was an important insight I observed particularly in the rural site where the community knew each other very well. The specific identities children bring, associated with their social and historical background, has implications for their own social positioning in the school context as discussed in chapter two with reference to Bourdieu’s theoretical tools.

As time went on, I came to realise that the place I rented at Kara, represented a microcosm of peri-urban life. The nearest available place to the school was a large compound with the main house at the front and at the back a row of rooms which each have a window, a door, a single light bulb, and a single socket point, which were built for renting out. The cost per room varied between 100-300 Ethiopian birr depending on the quality of the build. Exchange rate fluctuated from 15-18 Ethiopian birr (ETB) per £1 in 2008, to 20 ETB in 2009, 25 ETB 2010 and 29 ETB in mid-2013, 30 ETB in 2014, 32- 33 ETB in 2015 and 30 in 2016. Everyone living there shared a water pipe situated near the front door and a room for making injera (staple bread). All other activities, such as cooking and washing happened in the individual rooms or just outside. Everyone cooked over a kerosene stove or charcoal and used wood as fuel for making injera. There were two types of toilet provision, a poorly maintained pit latrine with a plastic roof, woven cane walls and no door, for those paying lower rents, and a pit latrine shared with the landlord’s family with a corrugated iron door and solid wall for those paying more. Living in the compound were eight lodgers including me, two of whom were teachers and the rest were young male civil servants. Some of these small rooms had double occupants, as girlfriends, helpers or colleagues were living together. Children, mainly boys from outside the compound, frequented the place, running errands for the lodgers or just coming to play on the grounds with the grandson of the landlord. When I told people that I was living there, many commented that I had found a good place and that the owners were highly respected in the area. It was resourceful in many ways as I found children who helped me to expand my social network. A detailed description of this observation is noted in appendix 3.6: Experiences of immersion time with Saba.

At the second site, there was no place for me to rent. Many people in the community lived in huts with their families, but some relatively well-off families had built houses with
corrugated iron and mud walls of good quality. There were three pit latrines in the entire community one located in the health post (shared by all the civil servants), a the second one and an unused one in the school (with no door, half a wall and on unsafe ground) and a third one that I did not see, which one household built for their son’s visit from the United States, but did not use. There was no one renting out rooms, or houses. Even some of the teachers had to share rooms build by the kebele and at the time of the fieldwork, teachers and health extension workers were negotiating for their own individual room(s) to be built. Two of the health extension workers were living in an abandoned and dilapidated house and were attempting to fix it using plastic and cardboard. The first time I went to the site the local health professionals were sleeping in the same room in which they consulted patients during the day. Eventually, with the help of the neighbourhood, they fixed up an abandoned room close to the clinic. This is where I also stayed, initially sharing the small room and bed with one female member of staff, then having my own small bed in one corner. Both beds were used as chairs during the day and when she had visitors.

Here too, I learnt much from my interaction with the children and adults that I will discuss more in chapters that follow. Further entry to the community was mediated by the health professional in the village who was a highly respected and trusted person with responsibility for a large catchment area. In order to reach the areas of their catchment health professionals borrowed horses from the neighbourhood or walked to far villages. I frequently accompanied them on these visits.

3.7.1 Fieldwork assistance

I had one main assistant in the field, but I also had a primary school teacher initially helping me carry out piloting of the survey and others who helped me from time to time by going to places with me or arranging interviews. In my original design for the fieldwork I thought I would not rely on anyone to help in the data collection, as I had previous experience of analysing data from a project that had used multiple enumerators and translators and had found many inconsistencies in their work. However, I became aware that I needed a fieldwork assistant in the rural site. This was because even though Amharigna, my first language, was widely used, the majority of the people spoke Oromigna of which I had very little command and so I realised I would need help. However, as I become confident and got to know more people I made a judgment whether I required an assistant or not on a case by case basis depending on the household’s fluency in Amharigna. On occasion, using an
interpreter was challenging and slow as even though I could understand some Oromigna
my inability to express myself properly was frustrating. Having an assistant was helpful at
both sites, for as a lone female from outside it was not perceived safe to wander alone
when visiting households. He was with me during nearly all the surveying as well as when I
carried out some of the interviews with children and adults after of the survey period.
Towards the middle of my fieldwork at Kore, during the second phase, for about a week I
had to bring in an Oromigna speaking graduate assistant from a different region who was
already trained in doing research. This was because my assistant whom I had trained had an
education commitment and so was unavailable to work with me and I had planned to visit
households for specific interviews. This proved fortuitous, because in the evenings we
worked together\textsuperscript{28} transcribing some of the interviews, going through my notes, working on
my lists and sorting out the GPS coordinates of the houses.

3.7.2 Experiences of immersion and utility of time

I divided the fieldwork period in a way that allowed me to spend a full growing season,
including when schools were open and closed, between 2008 and 2009 (see tables 3.3 and
3.4 below). I was able to supplement my data collection with an extra visit to the field sites
in 2010. In general, spending a long time in the field allowed for some stories to emerge
that would not have arisen and this also assisted with validation of the data collected. For
instance, in one case an ex-teacher responding to my survey questions during phase one
told me that the girl living with him was his sister and stressed the importance of girls
receiving an education. However, over time it emerged that he was in a relationship with
her and consequently she fell pregnant and so had to leave school. If I had not stayed so
long at this site I would probably not have detected the false statement given to me by this
respondent.

\textsuperscript{28} As he came from different part of Ethiopia unlike the local assistant, it was my responsibility to find him
accommodation. I asked the male teachers to give him a space in their shared rooms and he slept in their
rooms, participated in the evening coffee ceremony and generally had more time to spend with me.
### Table 3.3 Time spent on fieldwork (excluding Feb, Oct and Nov)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EC</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETC</td>
<td>Tir</td>
<td>Yekatit</td>
<td>Megabit</td>
<td>Miyazia</td>
<td>Ginbot</td>
<td>Sene</td>
<td>Hamle</td>
<td>Nehase</td>
<td>Meskerem</td>
<td>Tikimt</td>
<td>Hidar</td>
<td>Tahesas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*EC – European calendar; ETC – Ethiopian calendar (runs from Meskerem (Sep) - Nehase (Aug))

*Note:* X denotes the times I was not on site

### Table 3.4 Schooling times and Key events in the rural calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EC</th>
<th>ETC</th>
<th>Key rural activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Meskerem</td>
<td>School starts one day after the Ethiopian new year normally 11th/12th September. Some rain, sowing chickpeas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Tikimt</td>
<td>School time - green and some crops are growing, grazing is plenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Hidar</td>
<td>School time - crops nearly ready for harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Tahesas</td>
<td>School time, dry months, harvest time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Tir</td>
<td>School time, Christmas 7th Jan, water shortage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Yekatit</td>
<td>School time, dry season, grazing much more difficult, children invest in small enterprises like rearing chickens, fattening lambs, water shortage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Megabit</td>
<td>School time, some rain. Easter fasting period - some children and adults fast until 3pm from water and food, the whole 40 days from dairy products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Miyazia</td>
<td>School time, some rain. Easter fasting &amp; celebration of one of the major holidays, children sell chicken, sheep, sowing sorghum, maize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Ginbot</td>
<td>School time – and end of May final exams time, Dry month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Sene</td>
<td>Final exams time and school closes, many teachers away for courses, some self-supporting children get jobs like domestic work, Rainy season, ploughing sewing (barley, wheat, peas, beans, teff, lentil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Hamle</td>
<td>School closed, many teachers away for summer courses, some self-supporting children get jobs like domestic work, Rainy season, sewing sunflower flux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Nehase</td>
<td>School closed but school teachers will go out attendance campaigning, some self-supporting children get jobs like domestic work or grow eucalyptus seedlings and sell them, Rainy season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8 DATA COLLECTION, MANAGEMENT, ANALYSIS AND REFLEXIVITY

The data collection, analytical process and reflexivity were linked aspects of the research and the way I have presented them here reflects this linkage. The methodological tools used in my ethnographic work produced rich data in the form of survey responses, interview transcripts, participant observation notes, journal entries, photographs, as well as short video clips capturing children at school, play and working. All my activities were given consent by the school, parents and the children. For each case study child I kept a photographic profile, as an additional source of data and to help stir fieldwork memories (Bryman 2004). Bryman stated ‘the difficult aspect of qualitative research is that it very rapidly generates a large cumbersome database because of its reliance on prose in the form of such media as field notes, interview transcripts, documents’ (2004:388). He further cited Miles (1979) describing qualitative data as an ‘attractive nuisance’, because of the difficulty of finding an analytic path through its richness.

Despite my familiarity with scholars’ warnings regarding data processing, initially everything in the field felt relevant. What was helpful in managing the data was having multiple chances to digest the information I gathered. By the second phase, I had moved on from carrying my rather cumbersome written survey data with me around in Ethiopia, to scanning around 1000 pages of responses to the questionnaire onto my PC in Bristol (UK) before data entry and clearing. In this processed state I could transport it conveniently on a laptop or USB. Revisiting the accompanying photographs and making simple tables to describe participants all aided my memory but more importantly helped me to manage the data in a systematic way.

In comparison, managing the quantitative data and the analysis was easier. Whilst recording the responses onto the survey, I was electronically recording the voices of the respondents. This was important for recording the responses to the semi-structured questions that were subsequently transcribed. After taking time to clean the data for which I sometimes went back to the recording, I used SPSS software to generate some basic descriptive statistics. I also used chi-square tests to check for the significance of degrees of difference that I discovered. The results are presented in chapter four.

In terms of analytical software for the qualitative analysis I was aware of some concerns around the use of computer software such as NVivo. For example, Bryman lists some key
concerns regarding the usage of Computer-assisted Qualitative analysis software (CAQDAS). These particularly concern its tendency to fragment texts resulting in loss of the narrative flow of interviews and the de-contextualisation of data (Bryman 2004). The importance of context to qualitative research makes this of particular concern.

However, using NVivo makes the coding and retrieval process faster and more efficient. As the survey also contained the responses to some semi-open questions that were transcribed, this qualitative data was entered into NVivo. It was useful as the structured nature of these responses were short and hence it was suitable for generating preliminary themes through coding. However, I only used NVivo for the survey qualitative responses, because I wanted to avoid fragmentation of voices and this was important for my study as my paramount aim was to contextualise responses. Therefore, for the most part, my analysis of interview transcriptions and my notes were carried out using word and excel manually by systematic coding, putting the context intact in thematically divided folders and files that linked individual transcribed interviews, stories from my notes, photographs to help me stay in the moment and a hyperlink to the voice and full transcripts, as well as the original scanned survey (which had notes) enabling me to go back and forth to different sources of data relatively easily and systematically. I took so much time reflecting for the voices to speak themselves. I subsequently created a profile of cases to apply Bourdieu’s three step process for analysis of empirical data discussed below. The process was similar to narrative analysis in a sense of it being concerned with capturing people’s [stories] experiences and perspectives (Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002:329) but also paying systematic attention to the positionality, structuring structures, and ‘relationship between field and habitus’ (Grenfell, 2008:224) in examining the data. Essentially I was a learner of people’s positionality, personal experiences, learning about such matters as being a child without school, a student, a dropout, a teacher, a child employee, a migrant, returnee, a parent or caregiver and so on in a particular context. This indeed was critical part of attending to the voices of people, and recognising their own meanings and developing nuanced understandings of people’s own perspectives rather than making assumptions regarding the meanings of everyday words such as ‘being enrolled’ or ‘school dropout’. I have given a particular example of this in chapter five with regards to the concept of dropout.
Following Bourdieu’s (1977) ‘habitus/field framework emphasises the importance of situating children and parents’ aspirations, hopes and actions in the context of the social, economic and cultural structures and to attend to the ways that these produce a particular outcome of reproduction or transformation in the schooling of the children at each site. As discussed in chapter two, Bourdieu (1977) insisted on an integrated application of his concepts (habitus, field, capital) with a three level process for the analysis of empirical data. As the first level I therefore took the school, home and community as comprising the fields in which activity takes place. The second level involved mapping the positions of individuals within the field with respect to the type and volume of capital they possess and are able to deploy and their ‘background, trajectory, and positioning’ (Grenfell 2008:223). The third step was then to apply the concept of habitus to help understand the kinds of decisions and actions I observed.

For example, whilst recording and analysing the responses from children on their experiences of schooling, such as corporal punishment, I paid close attention to how they narrated their side of the story with their focus being on their personal experiences as individuals with little or no reference to the structures that enabled the practices of corporal punishments to continue. While I sought and valued their perspectives, I was sensitive to their lack of awareness about the relevant politics and policies that were in place, at least in theory regarding corporal punishment. I sought analytical rigour when privileging their authentic voices, but also placed these accounts of their experiences in context by applying my knowledge of the prevailing policies around this matter.

### 3.9 Ethical Issues

#### 3.9.1 Trust, sensitivity and politics

At the beginning of my survey asking for consent in some instances required me having to explain my intentions and give assurance that there would be no comeback on participants. Once they agreed, for parents who could not read and write I read out to them the consent and then I put ink on their thumb using my pen, they then pressed it on the paper. Those who could write their own names did so. Some responses to my initial discussions with parents suggested strongly that I was seen as a representative of the government and consequently, many were uncritical of them, and were giving the government high praise. However, eventually, people accepted I was actually independent of any government
department or aid agency’s influence and that my work was partly for my own interest and partly a requirements I had to fulfil as a student.

Nevertheless, an easy going rapport was not achieved right from the beginning in many cases for some potential respondents, understandably, had significant levels of fear. They would often ask me questions after my introduction and would turn to my fieldwork assistant, a young man from the community, for his assurance as to who I was. I was sensitive to this, for I was keenly aware that in Ethiopia it is not a distant memory that many paid a high price for speaking out. Consequently, I was always prepared to describe my work extensively, knowing that spending plenty of time in this way would build mutual trust.

In terms of building trust with children, at the beginning of the fieldwork at each site I spent several hours making friendships and building contact so that over time, my relationship with the children deepened. As a consequence, although at the beginning contact was very formal, by the end, it had become quite the opposite. Moreover, initially, many were wary of me as a person who they regarded as one of the teachers. As I sought to establish an identity distinctive from the staff, I deliberately decided not to call the teachers by their first names and used the prefix ‘teacher’ before their name, both in and outside school. I also referred to them as ‘teacher X’. I am sure at first, the teachers were surprised at my addressing them in a formal way but over time, they too got used to me doing this. My concern was that if I was included in the teachers’ group publicly by association, I would be feared by the students and they would become reserved towards me. Parents and students also addressed the teachers as I did, therefore it was not that unusual in general conversation. Most of all, this ensured I was not seen as one of the teaching staff. Some teachers attempted to include me in their group but I often feigned ignorance so as to not have to take part in conversations and activities that I didn’t want to be dragged into. My aim was to be involved on my own terms and my inclusion in the aforementioned ad hoc evening meetings and talks over coffee allowed me sufficient access to the teachers. This behaviour helped me to remain ‘a ‘local’ student in a foreign country’, thereby providing me with the opportunity to pay as much attention as I liked to the children and spend time with them in the village. Further, I was aware that being too friendly with the teachers would mean being invited to go on visits for weekends in the next town, which I knew
would prevent me from truly immersing myself in the environment as an ethnographer should do (see Bryman 2004; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

I ensured I took part in things that other adults, particularly those who were economically independent, would not normally do, such as fetching water. The girls and boys in the neighbourhood usually collected water and made injera for the staff, for which they were paid. Some children received 15 birr a month for water collection of 20 litre jerry can, and some received 20 birr a month for making injera in an open fire. However, most earned money on an ad hoc basis, just doing work for their teachers when asked and it was completely up to the adults how much they paid. I was also offered the same service by the children working for my host. They asked me if I would like them to collect water for me, wash my clothes and so on but I would say, ‘oh let us go together’ and I would accompany them as this provided me with opportunities to get to know them better. They too found this odd at the beginning, as they really did not like to see me carrying water or going to the valley to collect it. Often, as we got near the spring, before descending into the valley, they would ask me to take rest while they went to fetch it. Eventually, they knew I was serious and did not want special treatment. This type of activity was not physically easy for me; the walk was difficult and the temperature was high and even harder was climbing back up the hill carrying a heavy load of water. Nonetheless it helped me appreciate first-hand the reality, regularity and intensity of child work.

In general, I had to work with the children in a way that reduced the different status between me and them, so I asked them to teach me the relatively newly used written Oromigna language called Kuba, thereby putting me in the role of a learner, just like them. This became a regular feature of my time in the school at Kore during the second phase of the study when I was asked to teach English. I volunteered to run a language swap class, where the children exchanged their skills in teaching me to read and write Kuba. We opted to swap simple meanings such as names, pronunciations and spellings months, seasons, songs and other key words, and I taught them the same things in English. In addition, I worked on role-play and dramas for learning basic comprehension in English and this allowed the class to be different from their regular class in that it was less rigid and more fun. With great difficulty we attempted to put the chairs in circles so we all sat in similar positions, except for the persons acting or writing on the blackboard. In addition, to the seventh and eighth grade I usually carried out these activities when I took absent teachers’
classes to interact with more students. I still followed the principle of swapping knowledge as this was crucial for handling potential issues regarding power by endeavouring to maintain the idea of exchanging learning on equal terms.

3.9.2 Relationships with teachers

It was in my interest to get along with the teachers even with those whose practices I questioned or who showed resistance to my approach to communicating with the children. Some of the teachers commented that I took my relationship with the children too seriously. Some expressed views such as ‘these children don’t know much, they won’t tell you anything useful, you are thinking as though they are like those in Addis’. Those ‘in Addis’ here is meant to refer to the manner of confidence and articulateness of urban children. At times also they described students as ‘dureyes’ (hooligans), particularly those resisting the cultural norm and expectations, as discussed in chapter six. I sensed formality and distance from some teachers, especially at the start of my study, making it challenging to hold an open conversation with some of the male teachers in the rural site. Although rare, I also noticed for children, sometimes merely talking to researchers could carry repercussions, such as falling out with their teachers. A detailed example is in appendix 3.7 Researcher duty and politics of fieldwork time with Yonatan. Under these circumstances, where I sensed a teacher was feeling somewhat threatened by my interactions with students, I concluded that my primary duty was making sure that my research subjects were not put in harm’s way.

In contrast, many of the peri-urban teachers and the female teachers in the rural site were completely open and engaging, both in responding to my queries as well as encouraging my interactions with their students. I feel there were three possible reasons why a few male teachers in the rural site behaved differently: first, as they often said to me openly, they lacked confidence in Amharigna and English, and second, they were young, many of them being younger than myself, and third, they were early career teachers weary of continuous evaluation of their work being made by visiting officers from the education desk. Thus they were not used to researchers who attempt to be non-judgmental and who pursue solely academic interests. Of course, the rural female teachers were also young and in their early stages of their careers, however, corresponding with the cultural expectations of us being female, they might have found there was less distance, between us, as I did, than was the case with the male teachers. The peri-urban teachers were much older than me, more
experienced and therefore perhaps less wary of my presence among them and less formal in their engagement with me.

3.9.3 Validity
The main goal of the fieldwork was to get children to speak 'their truth' rather than tell me what I wanted to hear and the challenge was identifying effective strategies that made them comfortable enough to tell me their views on issues as they saw them, which sometimes differed from their parents or teachers’ perspectives. Interviewing children together in a group was effective as they would bounce ideas off each other. In contrast, interviewing children in front of adults often resulted in the latter providing the answers or making corrections as well as making the responses from the children short and polished.

I was aware of the issues of validity when gathering the perspective of children. Regarding this, Clark asks ‘how do we know if the material we gather is true?’ (Clark 2004:159). As with some of the adults, there were occasions when children also gave me answers that they thought I wanted to hear, particularly at the start of my fieldwork. However, I anticipated this could be the case beforehand as children may try to ‘second guess’ what adults hope they will say, as pointed out by Hart (1992), (also see Clark et al. 2003). However, by spending a long time in the area and having multiple conversations with the children there were many opportunities to validate any claims with due regard to sensitivity so as not to cause any embarrassment to respondents. In fact, I considered the first of the interviews I had with them as the start of an iterative process or like starting to draw a circle. By the time I had met with them several times and spoken to their parents and teachers, observed their surroundings and had yet more discussions, I left feeling that I had completed the circle. By so doing, as well as observing their day-to-day lives, I was able to ascertain their expressed views as well as my interpretations. In this vein, Clark reported that she used multiple methods to allow for triangulation of results noting, ‘a multi-method approach allows several takes at gauging young children’s views and experiences’ (Clark 2004:159-160). More generally, it was my experience that children tended to be honest and where mutual trust was established their responses were guileless.

3.9.4 Data gathering arrangement: the practicalities
In this section I outline relational and practical considerations taken before setting up an interview and during an interview. I also show how age, gender and category, in terms of
the social place people occupy, for example, a working child being interviewed in the workplace, require a careful approach that addresses the moral and ethical obligations placed on the researcher.

As noted above I knew being an Ethiopian wasn’t going to allow me to blend in as I would still stand out as an outsider. Equipped with lessons learnt from working with other communities, I began my investigation gently; testing the ground, breaking some rules as I went and also changing myself in some senses (e.g. my clothing) to fit in. My own familiarity as development practitioner and adherence to Robert Chambers’ (1983; 1997) philosophy equipped me well. I anticipated how people expected me to interact and the stereotypes held regarding fellow ‘educated persons’ interacting with locals. I reflected on my learning from my undergraduate course in development studies where I tried to interpret what it meant to ‘empower and work in community’ in relation to my own practice in rural development. Empowerment is not used in a ‘political sense’ (see Sumner and Tribe 2008:123) but refers to allowing as normal as space as possible for individuals to fully engage in an open discussion by creating opportunities so they can contribute. Their contribution is valued, and participants are fully assured that there will be no comeback as a result of their cooperation.

As I became a regular face around the village in Kore, I felt comfortable with dropping by peoples’ houses, but I avoided busy times like market day. I also learnt to take part in their work tasks as we conversed, for example, clearing grain, accompanying them when they went to fetch water, collecting soap leaves for washing or carrying children as the mother worked. Dropping by, once a relationship had been established is not considered an imposition culturally as the saying goes ‘ye set engda yelewim’ ‘there is no such thing called female-guest’. This was also a pragmatic measure I took as I learnt that I could not arrange ‘a time’ with adults or children for an interview because there existed no such thing as ‘free’ time. However, I was careful to not disturb everyday routines which was why I tagged along and helped out where I could. What also helped was that once I began to learn the routines of life for many of the households, I was able to select times and spaces convenient for talking to people, for instance, during the long walk from market to the village or sitting with women while they cleared stones from grain. For men, the best time for interviews was the early evenings before the family meal as they would have finished their daily jobs and were normally waiting for food and coffee to be served.
With female children the best times were while they socialised doing each other’s hair, which often took hours. Trips to water sources and waiting turns were suitable times for discussion with both girls and boys. It was relatively easy to access the boys as much of their time was spent outside of the home, shepherding, weeding, or playing and I was freely mobile like them. As time went on I knew when my respondents would have to stay still and chose those times to approach them. In general, milking hours or when making injera were suitable times for private conversations with older girls and mothers, whilst hair braiding (for girls), bird watching, shepherding, fuel wood gathering, water walks and water queues, or queues at the mill were good times to speak to both boys and girls.

*Girls working on family land*

*Source:* Tigist Grieve fieldwork 2008-2009

When I was meeting a child for the first time for an interview, even if I had spoken to them several times previously, I would start with an icebreaker exercise. This involved them making a proximity drawing of the people most important to them (see figure 3.2). This is a simple tool that I learnt during my MRes study and which I had used previously in 2006 with other sets of children. It is similar to the drawing exercise in research with children reported by Clark (2004).
Figure 3.2 Ice breaking exercise, ‘the people who are most close to me’

Drawing this picture would usually yield quite a long conversation that could be steered towards talking about home and school relationships. It was an opportunity to draw out the different experiences of a child that had dropped out, one that had never been enrolled, a child worker or a child living with caregivers other than their biological parents. An interesting dimension I found was that saints invariably were put close to the centre of the drawings, but the name of the saint they wrote varied depending on the geographical location for the children showed affinity with the church closest to their homes. For example, those children that lived close to St Mary’s Church would put Saint Mary close to their mothers and describe Mary as one of their protectors.

After talking to individual children for some time on general aspects of life, starting with what they did yesterday and today, I generally used simple open questions so as to create a dialogue with them. This changed depending on their responses and circumstances, for example according to whether they were in or out of school, and if they were not, the reason for this. See appendix 3.8 for the general set of questions employed. When they raised an issue that concerned them I would ask them if they wanted to talk about it more and they respond accordingly.

In Kore just before it got dark and everyone went to their homes, I would sit with the young children and, at times, young mothers nearby my living place and they got used to asking
me to tell them stories, painting their nails, playing games they knew or new ones that I taught them. With the older children (fifteen years or above), we would focus on their aspirations, plans they had made, challenges they faced and their means of addressing them as well as the people they could count on for help. In sum, hearing these strategies proved effective in me marking out their life trajectories across all aspects, especially in relation to their schooling status.

Morrow and Richards proposed that ‘respect needs to become a methodological tool in itself’ (Morrow and Richards 1996:100). In accordance with this I always showed respect to the children and endeavoured to observe local customs during my interviews with adults. For instance, I bowed my head to older people, addressed them in plural terms ersow (you) rather than singular (he/she). In addition, I took my sun hat off as I approached adults on pathways, even if I didn’t talk to them, I sat and dressed in a gender appropriate way, accepted food offers if appropriate and paid visits when women gave birth or neighbours fell ill. Similarly, when approaching employers of children I showed the expected level of respect towards them. I took further care when I interviewed working children in domestic settings, or those situated in various forms of living arrangements. I was keen to avoid undue intrusion (Morrow and Richards 1996). That is, it was clearly important to hear their views but also to safeguard their employment or living arrangements because speaking to them could have been mistaken as spying on the employer, or the child could have been accused of telling tales. To facilitate this process I always made a point of developing a good relationship with the employer or caregiver before seeking permission to interview the children. I explained the purpose of my study and emphasised my identity as a student. Children too had their own chance to give me consent with ample opportunity given to them to withdraw from the study with no repercussions for them. Despite facing some unexpected issues as mentioned above, my pre-fieldwork preparation, in studying and learning from other people’s ethnographic studies and preparing the research design for approval of the ethical committee in my university proved invaluable.

3.9.5 Duty of care and moral dilemmas
Owing to my age it was expected that the children should respect and obey me, but I was not required or expected to reciprocate this. Consequently, I had to explain clearly to the children what I meant by me respecting their views as adults, my use of terms like anonymity and confidentiality as well as outlining the boundaries I operated within as a
researcher. That is, I made every effort to help them understand that everything they told me was in complete confidence and that when I wrote their stories no one would know who was who, or who said what, thus achieving informed consent, as best I could.

A dilemma sometimes arose whilst discussing consent with parents in relation to their children. After giving me their permission, when I expressed my interest in asking their children whether or not they were willing to take part, most of them responded ‘of course he/she would’, ‘you don’t need to ask them’, ‘I will tell him/her’ I accepted gratefully the parental permission. However, I did not want the children to feel they were being forced to take part in my research. As a consequence, before my initial interview with each child, I explained about the child’s right to withdraw and that the parents did not need to know.

Having the participants grasp the meaning of the terms consent, right to withdraw and confidentiality was easier said than done, because it did not sit comfortably with many of them, particularly with the children, who were not used to being empowered in this way. Regarding this, the pace of the overall research design being unhurried was useful as I was able to have sufficient time to prove to them that withdrawing or refusing to take part did not mean we were no longer friends, which was what some assumed. I also explained how my research would be written using general references rather than specific ones saying ‘even my own teachers (supervisors) will not know what the name of the child actually is’. I am of course using pseudonyms for all people and places referred to in this work.

Occasionally I had ethical dilemmas that required much reflection. First, when two siblings had an eye infection and were visibly suffering from having had no medical attention, I capitalised on the fact that I knew the health professionals and asked one of them if she was happy to treat them. She knew the family and she offered to help and I covered the cost of the eye drops directly without the knowledge of the parents or the children. I wanted this to stay between her and me so that I did not blur the boundary regarding the nature of my relationship with the community. It was not unusual for her to notice and help out children so there was no compromise for her in doing this. The second occasion was when a child who I knew came from a very poor household told me about losing his school book. He would not get his certificate if he failed to pay the fee for its replacement. He had not told his mother for fear that ‘she will beat me’ and anyway ‘she has no money’. I then went and asked the teacher who confirmed that he was indeed on her list and had lost not
one but two books. Given the book shortage in the school, it was important for this teacher to retrieve as many as possible at the end of the year so the books could be passed on to the other children coming to that grade in the next academic term. I felt that after hearing from the boy and his teacher and already knowing his mother’s economic circumstances, it would be unreasonable to ignore this problem, so I settled the book bill for him.

I think the above instances were ethically defensible. If I stood aside, despite my privileged position in accessing the local health professionals, or paying the fees for a child from a poor female headed household, for fear of compromising objectivity and opting to just update my diary journals, I would have felt extremely uncomfortable. An insightful discussion of this is offered by Malin Arvidson (2014) in Camfield (2014). In such moments reflexivity was very much to the fore. I did not take my intervention lightly as I agonised over various questions of power relations, the way it could impact on my participants, and my attempts and in some respects succeeding in building a non-hierarchical relationship with the community I was researching. In some ways, the fact that the book issue occurred at the end of the school year was helpful. My action was embedded in the positive outcome for this child with him being able to get his final certificate, avoid physical punishment and inflict a financial burden on his mother. If I had remained in my objective space as a mere cataloguer of events, I would still have been implicated in the outcome but it would have been a bad one.

It was not unusual for me to witness children being beaten by adults. I discuss this briefly in the conclusion chapter. If I had reported these incidents to the local police, who were located far away, it would have been most unusual and I do not imagine they would have dealt with it any differently than the school leaders. For example, ‘negerun mabred’ meaning ‘to calm the situation’ was the word used frequently by the deputy head when in my view, he hesitated to blame a teacher involved in such a beating. At the same time, he affirmed that corporal punishment was not allowed. These points are raised here as there are very few scholarly discussions on how a researcher should respond in the context of weak institutions, such as those found in rural Ethiopia, and the researcher’s sense of helplessness, as well as the ethical and moral dilemmas this can raise.
Finally, I am aware of the debates about the ethics of rewarding interviewees for taking part in research with respect to this commercialising the researcher-researched relationship. In this regard, Hammersley and Traianou (2012) pointed out that the ‘research process can also disrupt people’s lives in various ways and to varying degrees. Given this, what, if anything, can participants reasonably expect in return from researchers; and what should researchers offer them?’ (Hammersley, and Traianou 2012:3). While I did not offer the participants any prior incentive, I did however think it was appropriate to thank them and show my appreciation to the school for hosting me, as well as to those who took part in my study (children and parents). At the end of my study, I gave all of the children exercise books, pens and pencils and to each adult a small colourful shopping bag. On my return to carry out the second phase of fieldwork, I took printed photographs of each family and the individuals who had given me their consent to keep a photographic diary as a source of data. The day I left, I also gave one of the schools a football and disposable camera, teaching aid cards, and red pens because I knew that teachers lacked these. Pens of different colours and multicolour chunky chalks were also given to the staff at the other school as an expression of my appreciation for the time they had spent with me.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has considered aspects of undertaking ethnographic research that creates opportunities for rural children, parents and teaches to share their own views and experiences of schooling. I have paid considerable attention to the study design, data collection, and analysis in order to ensure the aim of the research to capture people’s own perspective was achieved. The chapter also described the painstaking measures that were taken to ensure the participants are respected, protected, and their contributions valued. An account of dealing with asymmetric power relations between myself and the participants by applying reflexivity consistently from the design to the execution of the study has been presented. As the detailed information included in this chapter indicates, I collected rich data. However, I recognise one challenging task of a researcher is to communicate this and show how all the various elements fit together. In order to do this I have carried out careful analysis stripping of my data to discern the key issues. I acknowledge how the rich data went through stages from recording the lived reality of the children and their parents in their sites to finding a way of looking at them in a broader context so as to explain the key themes that emerged, and considering the data through a Bourdieusian lens. In doing so, I have remained close to my main objective of hearing
narratives from the people themselves and these writing up in a form that is as close as possible to their own accounts. The discoveries that I have made through this approach are presented in the following three empirical chapters (chapters four, five and six).
4 FEWER THAN IMAGINED AT SCHOOL

In spite of challenges faced along the way, we have made significant progress towards providing access to education for all particularly in the area on primary education. [...] we have addressed the problem in a concerted fashion in the recent past. As a result more than 85% of the primary schools we have built over the past decade and a half have been built in the rural areas. As a result over 95% of school age children are now enrolled in primary schools...we still have the challenge of access to education for pastoralist communities but we have designed innovative programmes to address the challenge and I am confident that we will achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to education.

(Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, UNESCO speech extract Feb, 2010:2)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The issue of interest in this chapter is the degree to which the considerable attention and effort that the Ethiopian government has put into the education sector has translated into bringing the children of KaraKore to the primary schools. As summed up in the above quote, the dominant view in Ethiopia at the time of this study stands that the education sector through its reforms has effectively resulted in many Ethiopian children in school, with the main exception being those from marginal communities, and is therefore heading towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Education by 2015 or even earlier. Alongside of the late prime minister Meles Zenawi taking this as a priority of his premiership the Ethiopian government was not alone in its optimism. Others such as the World Bank and UNESCO also noted Ethiopia’s remarkable achievement and identified Ethiopia to be on track to achieve the MDGs in relation to education.

In this chapter, I present the survey findings that illustrate the level of child primary school status (enrolment, non-enrolment and dropout) in KaraKore. KaraKore consists of two sites called Kara (peri-urban) and Kore (rural) that come under the same regional and local administration called KaraKore, geographically situated in close proximity to the capital city. These findings offer an opportunity to examine the achievements and challenges that the

29 Including putting his own money towards girl’s education as widely reported in the media at the time.
education sector still currently faces. The aim of this chapter is to address part of the main research question using the collected survey data, namely, **what is the status of primary schooling in KaraKore?** This is achieved through the collation of specific items of information collected that encompass three sub questions:

- **What is the pattern of primary school enrolment?**
- **Who are the never enrolled and dropout children?**
- **What are the key reasons that influence enrolment and completion of primary school?**

The survey data commonly used in schooling studies often tends to capture the state of children at a given point of time and therefore by default imagines their life as static. However we know ‘educational participation occurs on a continuum and enrolment is a discrete event’ (UNESCO 2010:8). This is further complicated if we take account of paper enrolees who were technically enrolled but had not turned up to study or were not attending school regularly. As my analysis of both the survey and the ethnographic data in both sites shows, sporadic attendance is particularly common for working children and girls. In this study, owing to the lengthy duration of the fieldwork it was possible to capture the fluid nature of the schooling status of many of KaraKore’s children. As already highlighted in chapter three, the survey was not administered in a conventional fast data elicitation method, but instead it was a slow and deliberate process aimed at recording people’s voices alongside the compilation of the empirical statistical data. That is, the qualitative design of the study allowed me to observe the status of children over an extended period of time. The school level and household level data I gathered, guided the detailed investigations into the main issues regarding schooling at the two focal sites covered in chapters five and six.

While I am aware that schooling and education\(^{30}\) can be referring to different aspects in other studies, in this thesis the words schooling and education are used interchangeably as this fits with the specific context\(^{31}\) and the ease with forming sentence. This stance is consistent with the data content, whereby the interviewed parents interchangeably talked about their child/children’s schooling and education, with the same meaning. By way of

\(^{30}\) Also that learning is not reserved as something that happens in school.

\(^{31}\) Also considering the etymology when transcribing terms from a specific language to an English reader.
explanation for this interchangeability, the Amarigna\textsuperscript{32} word \textit{timihert} translates to education and the word school to \textit{‘timihirt bet’}, which literally means home of education. Moreover, this linguistic construction is similar\textsuperscript{33} in the Oromigna language predominantly used in the rural site of this study. In summary, parents, children and other people I spoke to during the study all talked to me using both words indiscriminately and this chapter reflects this.

The results presented in this chapter are simply descriptive, apart from the Chi-squared tests, with no further statistical analysis. This reflects the fact that the primary objective of the study is the qualitative representation of people’s own perspectives. However, the numbers offer an accurate picture of the state of child schooling for the surveyed sites and form a useful springboard for the subsequent in depth analysis on the drivers that lead to varying patterns of schooling.

4.1.1 Brief Overview of the Ethiopian Education System

I provide here a brief description of the Ethiopian education system necessary for an understanding of the analysis in this chapter. This study is about primary school children which according to the Ethiopian education system refers to children aged seven to fourteen. Table 4-0 shows the normative age for school as stated by the Ethiopian education system. This however is what the state notes as ideal and not necessarily expected to correspond in every region. This model is much closer to the reality of the urban community as I will go on to show in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{32} Amarigna is the working language of Ethiopia, in this study most people spoke Amarigna (particularly in the peri-urban site) the regional language however is Oromigna.

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Barumssa} = Education, \textit{Mana Barrumssa} = Home of education. Moreover, both languages use related words related to education to refer to student in Amharigna it is \textit{temari} and in Oromigna it is called \textit{Barataa}. 
Table 4-0 Normative schooling age progress following the ideal trajectory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>First cycle primary</th>
<th>Second cycle primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Preparatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Grieve 2008, compiled from Ministry of Education directives.*

I decided to show the results for a wider age range from under the age of seven and up to eighteen. Strictly adhering to the range considered as in the education system would mean excluding a substantial number of children from the survey that were attending primary school. In some parts of Ethiopia even though the numbers are very low, some children start school before they reach age seven. As I present later in this chapter, significant numbers of children appear to stay on in primary school beyond their fourteenth birthday and this is particularly true for rural children.

4.1.2 Outline of the chapter

After a brief descriptive account of the two settings, I begin this chapter clarifying the boundaries for its analysis. I offer here the distinct ways that such matters as poverty, schooling age, educational cycles have been considered for the analysis in this chapter with attempt to make it relevant for the Ethiopian context. I will then briefly discuss the place of the survey data in the context of the thesis as a whole and offer the demography of the studied two sites in the third section. In section five, I will present the results on the education level of the household heads (HHH) as well as those for all adults covered by the survey so as to shed light on the state of education over the generations at the two sites. This will offers a valuable insight into the adult’s educational background of the two communities in which we need to place the children that are a concern of this study.

Section six onwards concerns the children’s enrolment, non-enrolment and dropout. It begins with pre-primary school age children (4-6) and primary school age children (7-14 and until 18). However, in light of the difficulty of applying a strict age limit as emerged in the survey, I provide below a justification for extending the official primary age of between seven and fourteen years to include those young people up to the age of eighteen. Section seven, draws on the qualitative notes gathered during the survey and interviews and
discusses how the notion of school readiness is constructed by the studied community in particular the rural site where late enrolment is an issue. Section eight has the analysis on all school aged children survey between seven and fourteen, as well as seven-eighteen year olds. Here, the variables of, gender, location, wealth ranking of households, and relationship to the household head are examined respectively in relation to, enrolment and non-enrolment, the experiences of schooling (stopping in the middle of study as a proxy or dropout experience) and the current state of schooling as being In or Out of school. The final section presents discussion and conclusion drawing on existing literature also indicating that the key themes that emerged from the survey will be taken further in the subsequent empirical chapters for more contextualised and detailed discussion.

4.2 BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE TWO RESEARCH SITE SETTINGS

In the peri-urban site, Kara, most of the households have access to electricity, water from a pipe or well and capped spring (suitable for drinking). As a means to formal employment, there are some government institutions such as the electricity and finance offices, municipality, water, health clinic, telecommunications and a state owned bank. Geographically, this site is flat area with a main road cutting from Addis Ababa to the East of the country and along the road there are small businesses such as hotels, butcheries, mills, local bars, large clinic, large market, hair dressers, tailors, metal work, woodwork, photo studio and so on. There are several orthodox churches, a mosque and a few Pentecostal churches. Many NGOs come and go to this setting and some are still operating. At the time of my fieldwork in 2008-2009 there were four primary schools, a nursery, and one secondary school that serves many of the nearby villages. The school I have chosen for the study has modern concrete relatively well-furnished classrooms, reasonable size staffroom, a computer and typewriter. It also offers classes to disabled children with two trained teachers in special needs. It also has drinking water (albeit often not working) and pit latrine cubicles even though it is not enough nor of adequate quality.

In the rural site, Kore, at the time of the study and today (2016), the village had no electricity, or piped water so the community rely on river and uncapped spring water source. This is a major cause of illness as confirmed by the health professionals in the

---

34 I have a responsibility in protecting the children and adults taking part in this study and if I was to describe it accurately it would be easy to identify it therefore I have changed the names of places, people and other aspects in the way that doesn’t affect the analysis but ensures confidentiality and ethnical obligations I carry as a researcher.
community. The health post is there for preventative measures i.e. health workers’ provision is limited to family planning, vaccination campaigns and minor injuries. All other illness are referred to Kara (ill people including women in labour with complications are carried by a wooden stretcher all the way to main road (one hour walk) and then wait to beg a lift from passing transport. There were no formal jobs available apart from career in teaching, ‘tena Kela’ (small health post worker), Church priest and Kebele administration. During the phase two horticultural business is set up that specialises in seedlings and many children living near the tarmac road work as casual labourers stuffing polythene bags with soil. The place is located far from the main asphalt road that passes through and has uneven terrain and there is very little exposure to outside people until recently. There is a small Orthodox church and a little further there is a Pentecostal church newly set up. There are very few NGOs working with farmers. There is only one primary school, and a satellite school situated a little outside of the village itself. There was and until now there is no secondary school or other primary schools that opened up. The classrooms are made of mud and grass, very old and poor quality furniture, broken blackboards, a hole on the ground part covered by a grass and sticks as a toilet that is not used anymore, there is no water. The ‘hole’ is not fenced off and is hazardous for small children. School is accessed via narrow foot paths Depending which direction children walk, some have to cross rivers, which is unsafe to cross during the rainy season with no proper bridges, but fallen trees in one section and makeshift bridges made by local residents in other locations. I am told of incidents during flood times of children and animals drowning.
Local rivers used for drinking and washing  
Source: Tigist Grieve fieldwork 2008-2009

The new change for people in KaraKore is the emerging private flower farms that are situated near the peri-urban site and are more accessible to those in Kara because of the available transport. Since the arrival of the flower farm and horticultural sector many living in the peri-urban and some in the rural community are being employed, including children.

Table 4-1 shows the total surveyed population of children at the two research sites. Of the survey data there were 521 children age between 0 to 18 years old with 45.3% (n = 236) living in the peri-urban site and 54.7% (n = 285) of them living in the rural site respectively. The primary school sample of 7 – 14 year olds is 277 and of 7-18 year olds is 402 (277 + 125).
Table 4.1 Sample details of study sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel A: Sample by Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel B: Ages of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Poverty and its measurement

As discussed in chapter two poverty is recognised as a major issue structuring children’s school or non-school careers. How poverty is defined and measured, however, is a matter of much debate (see Glewwe and Van der Gaag 1990; Pritchett, Suryahadi, Sumarto 2000; Ruggeri Laderchi et al. 2003 and in context of Ethiopia see Bevan and Joireman 1997; Shiferaw Bogale, Hagerdorn and Korf, 2005, Rose and Dyer 2008). Inapplicability of commonly used poverty measurement instruments such as consumption and expenditure for rural economy is well established (Shiferaw Bogale et al. 2005). Considering these facts, studies have emphasised adoption of a sociological approach taking into account ‘non-economic forms of capital, such as social and human capital’ (Bevan and Joireman (1997) cited in Shiferaw Bogale et al. 2005:102). Keeping the above discussion in mind and in keeping with the view that people’s own voices should be involved in defining their economic status, I adopted a particular stance in order to rank the wealth of households participating in the survey. First, one survey question asked respondents to assess how they ranked their own household and whether life had improved or worsened in the past five years. Second, I had further discussions in each community aimed at gathering insights into how they constructed their own perspectives on wealth and poverty. Such an approach was the underpinning principles of the concept of wellbeing in that it recognises people in holistic way rather than for example using the poor–rich positions in narrow objective...
monitory terms alone. Table 5.1 below was generated from my notes on talks with community elders and other adults in the area such as, teachers, health workers, two young mothers and individual adults, both men and women. I asked them to tell me their categorisation about the poor and rich people living in the two community respectively. This is clearly a simplified version of how people constructed such categories rather than being an accurate state of wealth and poverty in the communities. In sum, the objective was to explore ranking of each household in a sense of wealth and poverty status, according to the communities' own definitions of different living standards. This is similar in some ways to what Camfield and Roelen (2012) describe in their study on child poverty dynamics in rural Ethiopia on ‘creating an analytic taxonomy based on distinctions important to children and their carers’ (Camfield and Roelen 2012:7).

Table 4.2 Characteristics of household type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RICH</th>
<th>MEDIUM</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is commonly a man</td>
<td>Married/divorced/widowed</td>
<td>Divorced/widowed or a couple but very old with no children able to care for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys are ready to participate in farming</td>
<td>Man or woman</td>
<td>Lost children (grownups to death)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has wife</td>
<td>With grown up boys</td>
<td>Ill health (particularly husband)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too old</td>
<td>Not too old</td>
<td>Has some land or have none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has educated children which are now supporting him</td>
<td>Has children ready to participate in farming/gets income from paid permanent /government job</td>
<td>Income may come from selling alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has plenty of land (or a well paid job)</td>
<td>Has plenty of land/livestock</td>
<td>Has too many children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has plenty of livestock</td>
<td>Is healthy</td>
<td>Has too many children by different fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is healthy</td>
<td>Has a paid job</td>
<td>Very poor: has all of the above (no land), could be a mobile maid, living in rented small house/kitchen, eats at work (children are taken to be fed at work and they also work with a parent) and relies on daily but unpredictable income to survive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a good business or/and wife also has a well-paid job</td>
<td>Has a small business or/and wife also has a paid job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs people</td>
<td>May have servant/s, a shepherd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: characteristics of household type according to community classification

**Source:** Grieve 2008, composed from communities own construction of wealth ranking in the area pre-survey.

Having an understanding of this local classification of living standards became instrumental in two ways. First, a few people were too modest when they were asked in the survey to rank their level of wealth. That is, when I asked each of these respondents ‘compared to
other households in this village how would you describe your household at the moment?’, they replied average/poor, but in a material sense in terms of the resources they had and their category according to the table 4-2, they belonged to the rich or richer than most HH categories. Under these circumstances, which were rare, rather than overriding their views and clandestinely recording my view of their wealth level, I would ask them to reflect on their responses by further discussing the resources, possessions and job roles they had when compared to others in the locality. In most situations the responses on perceived wealth when compared to the categorisations above were consistent and hence, demonstrated that my prior understanding of the different wealth levels was quite accurate.

Second, table 4-2 was useful on occasions when interviewees during the earlier part of the survey had already mentioned clearly how poor they were and so it became too awkward to ask them the last question to rank their wealth against that of their neighbours. In such instances the question regarding this was not put and an assessment was made using the table. In my view, both decisions relating to asking the rich to reconsider their too modest responses, or, in not asking the poor directly to classify their households, were consistent with getting people’s own perspectives (giving a hearing as discussed in chapter three) in an ethical way. The process of collecting the respondents’ perspectives on their wealth, having a classification as in table 4-2 and using a single interviewer (myself), meant that a form of triangulation could take place at the time of interview, rather than retrospective judgments being made after the event. Table 4-3 shows the survey result on how people categorised their own household.

Table 4.3 Surveyed households’ categorisation of their economic status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Rich</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td>33 (24.8%)</td>
<td>13 (9.8%)</td>
<td>27 (20.3%)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>18 (13.5%)</td>
<td>26 (19.5%)</td>
<td>16 (12%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>(38.3%)</td>
<td>(29.3%)</td>
<td>(32.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 Survey

35 For example a significant revenue generator resource such as a mill or grain trading activities, multiple properties.
It is important to draw attention here however, that at the time of my survey in 2008, by any measure food inflation was the highest it has been in Ethiopia and arguably in the world (Mohajan 2013). Almost everyone in the surveyed households of both sites said that life was getting harder than it was 5 years ago. Many household heads also pointed out chronic hunger that they themselves and their children experienced. They also gave the rising price of food and fertiliser; lack of rain water and the environmental degradation; lack of employment and income as some of the key factors affecting their children’s schooling (see Lefort 2010 on rural Ethiopia economy and poverty).

4.3.1 Clarification on the scope of the analysis

Before moving more on to the result of the survey analysis, I will give two clarifications on some of the decisions I have made about the classifications of age, school grade and school cycle in the context of this study.

For instance, I found many children that had never been enrolled when I first met them, who then became enrolled and subsequently went on to become dropouts. Some of these even re-enrolled again and afterwards dropped out, whilst others never re-enrolled. In addition to being in and out of school constantly their attendance was also intermittent as characterised by long-term absenteeism, at times it was like chasing a moving target and made me appreciate more the problems around accurate data collection. Consequently, it is helpful to view the state of being enrolled, dropout or never enrolled as a dynamic process that many individuals engage in rather than their being fixed to one status or another, in other words it is seen as a provisional status (for example see the case of Kaba section 5.5.2). I will expand this point in chapter five covering how this is imagined from the perspective of children and parent. As indicated in the introduction, even though this study is about primary school children (officially 7-14 in the Ethiopian education system), I decided to show the results for a wider age range as strictly adhering to the range considered as in the education system would mean excluding a substantial number of children from the survey that were attending primary school. In terms of the actual figures, out of the 125 children in the age group fifteen to eighteen who were enumerated in the survey, 73 (58.4%) were still attending lower and upper primary level, as compared to 20 (16%) having never enrolled and 32 (25.6%) who were in secondary school or above. I thus decided to use two classifications in the first part of my analysis, that is, both the seven to fourteen (as consistent with the official system) and seven to eighteen year
cohorts. This dual approach is followed in the section that covers enrolment and non-enrolment, intermittent enrolment and dropout. Once these differences have been established, however, the sections that follow discuss all of the children surveyed with the focus on issues such as gender, location, wealth, living arrangement (relationship) and so on, rather than age.

Given the relatively small sample size of the survey, I have used the official education system classification that splits primary and secondary school into two cycles (lower primary and upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary) to group different grades together, rather than treating each grade separately. This gives sufficient numbers in each cell to allow me to carry out statistical tests, such as chi-square tests in SPSS. The main variables I have examined are:-

1. **achieved education level** (measured as never enrolled, first cycle (lower) primary, second cycle (upper) primary, first cycle (lower secondary), second cycle (upper secondary), and upper secondary or higher

2. **discontinuous enrolment** (measured as having interrupted their study)

3. **dropout** (measured as current schooling status in or out of school)
### 4.4 GENERAL DATA ON SURVEYED HOUSEHOLDS

**Table 4.4A Surveyed households sample size**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Population size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>437 (46.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kore</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>494 (53.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 survey

### Table 4.4C Ethnicity of household survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Kara</th>
<th>Kore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oromo</td>
<td>95 (71.4%)</td>
<td>37 (50.7%)</td>
<td>58 (96.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amhara</td>
<td>32 (24.1%)</td>
<td>30 (41.1%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurage</td>
<td>5 (3.8%)</td>
<td>5 (6.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopian*</td>
<td>1 (.8%)</td>
<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133 (100%)</td>
<td>73 (100%)</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 survey

*Note: A respondent refused to be identified on the basis of ethnicity and instead asked to be put down as an Ethiopia

### Table 4.4D Religion of surveyed households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalicha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 survey
Most child education literature indicates that religion and ethnicity are factors in child schooling. With this in mind, I added these variables in the survey. However, the population are fairly homogenous in religion terms 97% Christian majority Orthodox Christian, particularly at the rural site (see table 4-4 D). Similarly, ethnicity (table 4-4 C) was not a substantial factor to warrant further analysis and hence neither of these aspects receive any further attention.

Table 4.5 Main occupation of surveyed households (main source of income)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main source of household income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent on own children or other adults – regular or irregular remittance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled labourer (maid, listro (shoe shiner) shepherd, guard), petty trading (gathering &amp; selling wood or dung, making alcohol), porter</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small business activity/semi-skilled (selling everyday goods, mending clothes, small carpentry/mechanic, mills, butchery)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofessional but office employment with regular small salary (guard, cleaner, priest, pastor, flower farm etc.)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government job or regular income from a permanent job/NGO/formal pension</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owning substantial sized business selling clothes, grains or owning a mill</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 Phase 1 data collection

Note: None of the households had just one source of income so this is simplified categorisation to illustrate the range of activities households were engaged in.

As evident from Table 4-5, many of the people in the community, particularly in rural site, were reliant on farming. The majority of remittance is from children to the family and in
most cases the children have migrated for work to Addis Ababa and very few outside of the country. Reliance on remittance ranged from those who completely relied on it and received it on a regular basis (7.5%), to those who received a remittance but were not reliant on it (included in other main sources of income). This flow of support was often dependent on the availability of jobs, the health of the helper (often children) and the frequency of visits by family members.

4.5 The adult education makeup for the two surveyed sites

In general, adult education in relation to child schooling is clearly an area that has generated a lot of interest in child education literature, which has elicited that uneducated parent’s lack both the ability to support their children’s education in a sense of practical help due to their ignorance about schools as well as regarding their attitudinal aspect. Parental education also has been seen relevant for children’s educational achievement (Buchmann 2000; Kabeer 2000; Buchmann and Hannum 2001) however there is also an important argument made for expanded view of parental involvement (Desforges and Abouchaar 2003) in context of what counts as involvement as noted in chapter two. It has also been highlighted that uneducated parents are usually economically poor and therefore constrained in their ability to support their children in financial terms (Banerji 2000). Moreover, as discussed in the literature review, prior research has indicated that educated parents are more likely to send their children to school compared to those who are not (Stevenson and Baker 1987) because of their potentially better economic status as a result of education and in terms of providing stimulating environment (Davis-Kean 2005) as well as in relation to positive parent teacher contact (Desforges and Abouchaar 2003).

Since it is widely noted that educated parents are more likely to have educated children I therefore decided to investigate the educational level of household heads in the study sites. Under the various living arrangements, not all the household heads were the biological parents of all the children in the households, but except where this distinction is addressed, in rest of the discussion parent/caregiver are considered synonymously I recognise I am simplifying this as sometimes in the cases of women for example they may be the main caregiver but not necessarily the head of the household (chapter five discuss more on politics of household in more depth).
In general, household size ranged from two to thirteen members and the total number of adults on the survey was 410 (defined as age nineteen and above). The household surveys yielded data on the education and general demography (table 4-4 A-D above) of households according to the Household head’s perspective.

Figure 4.1 The education level of head of household survey respondents

Source: Grieve 2008 Phase 1 data collection

Note: Only one household head responded as currently studying. 20 (15%) of the respondents that had had schooling experience said they never stopped in the middle of their studies as they aspired to have an education and different lifestyle than they have now but they were unable to sustain it and progress to higher level partly hampered by lack of available (upper primary or secondary) schools where they lived. However 90 (67.7%) reported stopping then and returning to school on several occasions and 23 (17.3 %) said they had never been enrolled in any form of schooling.

As can be observed in figure 4-1 above, generally, there was a low level of education achieved by the Household heads, with the majority of them having only completed lower primary level and only a few having studied to secondary level or beyond. Of those total surveyed household heads 42% reported their educational achievement was limited to lower primary level. However, of this the majority (68%) were from rural sites. As the note explained above especially when the household heads were in school many of the rural
sites have not had schools that went above grade 4. Table 4-6 Panels A and B, show that differences in the education level of household heads in the two sites were statistically significant. This suggests that the household heads in the peri-urban area had achieved significantly higher levels of education than their rural counterparts. Interestingly, the effect of location is greater than that of gender. While difference by gender for the same groups is also significant, the level is a little below 10% p=0.017.
### Table 4.6 Household head education level differences by location and sex

#### Panel A: All Head of Household \((N = 133)\) by site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Enrolled</th>
<th>Lower Primary</th>
<th>Upper Primary</th>
<th>Secondary or more</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>(\chi^2 (3) = 40.613)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td>P &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Cramer's V = .553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Panel B: All Head of Household \((N = 133)\) by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Enrolled</th>
<th>Lower Primary</th>
<th>Upper Primary</th>
<th>Secondary or more</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>(\chi^2 (3) = 10.245)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>P = .017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Cramer's V = .278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Panel C: All adults (Age 19 plus) \((N = 410)\) by Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Enrolled</th>
<th>Lower Primary</th>
<th>Upper Primary</th>
<th>Secondary or more</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>(\chi^2 (3) = 79.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>P &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>Cramer's V = .439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Panel D: All adults (Age 19 plus) \((N = 410)\) by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Enrolled</th>
<th>Lower Primary</th>
<th>Upper Primary</th>
<th>Secondary or more</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>(\chi^2 (3) = 29.310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td>P &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Cramer's V = .267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 Survey

Panels C and D of Table 4-6 focus on all adult household members. Generally, people at the peri-urban site have received higher levels of education in comparison with their rural
counterparts. For example, out of the total of 209 people at the rural site, 23 (11%) have reached the level of secondary or higher as compared to 75 (37.3%) out of 201 for the peri-urban one. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, it is revealed there are nearly 36% of those adults at the rural site have never enrolled, whilst the proportion for peri-urban dwellers is less half this at 17%. To ascertain whether the observed differences are statistically significant, Chi-squared analysis was conducted and confirms that there is a statistically significant difference by site and education level, $p < .001$). Regarding adult education level by sex, the results show that there was a significantly lower level of adult female education compared to adult males (see Panel D of Table 4-6), which was to be expected as the raw data indicates that 37% of the former had never enrolled as compared to 15.6% of the latter. This too was statistically significant $p < .001$). This difference according to sex is consistent with other research that reported low levels of adult female education in Ethiopia (Mammo Kebbede Shenkut 2005).

In summary, this section has addressed the issue of the education levels of adults in KaraKore and has generally revealed that this is low, particularly for the rural site inhabitants and females. The focus of the next section is to explore the data on child schooling to examine how those in KaraKore have been faring across the two sites. While presenting the data on the children’s achieved level of education, dropout rates and non-enrolment, there will also be consideration of the strategies families have employed in terms of, actions taken by the parents and the children’s initiatives, rather than just focusing on the negative side of the too familiar constraints they experience as characterised by much of the related literature.

**4.6 The Child Education Makeup of the Two Surveyed Sites**

Going by the MoE’s own account of well served areas classification KaraKore belongs to the relatively well served areas$^{36}$. Therefore since the insinuated low enrolment is a problem of the peripheral regions, one would expect to find a reasonable number of children to be in school at the appropriate age (see Table 4-0 for details of expected grades and different ages). Primary school availability and increased enrolment is one of the areas in the education sector that has seen a steady increase (ODI, 2011) with 85% of new primary

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$^{36}$ The definition of this being a school provided for every *kebele* and farmers association including satellite schools, not situated in what are considered the marginal areas of the country (such as Afar, Somali). In fact, the sites for this study are situated in close proximity to the capital city Addis Ababa.
schools being built in the rural areas and indeed KaraKore too had benefited from this policy as many of the schools that were lower primary were upgraded to offer up to upper primary and some satellite schools were upgraded to upper primary school. Regarding these changes in the country, it has been said, ‘Ethiopia has gone from having one of the lowest enrolment rates in the world during the 1980s and early 1990s to potentially achieving UPE within the next decade’ (ODI, 2011:6; also see UNESCO-GMR 2008). By contrast, the findings reported below from my survey show the number of children never having been enrolled are unexpectedly high (in the rural site) and high dropout also reported for both sites under this study. Indeed this is not surprising when we consider the analysis offered by Carr-Hill 2012, 2013; Stuart et al. 2015 and Elizabeth Mulugeta and Bizuayehu Feye 2010 for Ethiopian context).

The total number of children\(^{37}\) (boys and girls) covered by the survey comes to 521, with Kara having 236 and Kore 285. The breakdown by gender for each age group and location is shown in table 4-7 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Site Kara (Peri-urban)</th>
<th>Site Kore (rural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 (49 children)</td>
<td>M 9 F 9 Total 18</td>
<td>M 19 F 12 Total 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 (70 children)</td>
<td>M 15 F 13 Total 28</td>
<td>M 21 F 21 Total 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-14 (277 children)</td>
<td>M 61 F 66 Total 127</td>
<td>M 70 F 80 Total 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18 (125 children)</td>
<td>M 34 F 29 Total 63</td>
<td>M 30 F 32 Total 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>236 (45.3%)</td>
<td>285 (54.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child population sex ratio</th>
<th>(Male 49.7%), (Female 50.3%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total (0-18)</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve 2008 Survey

\(^{37}\) When I refer to ‘children/child’ for simplicity sake I am following the UN definition of child, therefore, up to 18 years old. When relevant I have given specific age that I am referring to. I however recognise the arbitrariness of such definition as debated in childhood studies in particular with reference to children’s rights (Thomas et al. 2009; Cobbah 1987)
In the next section I present the data that shows the overall status of child schooling for all of KaraKore. I discuss in turn pre-school, primary school and secondary school attendance, corresponding with the current Ethiopian education system.

4.6.1 The status of child schooling in KaraKore: the case of pre-school

Although this thesis is about primary schooling, the point of this discussion is to point out the current unmet demand for pre-primary school at the peri-urban site of this study, the lack of pre-primary schooling at both sites and the recent unintentional exclusionary set up of the existing pre-primary school. These and the absence of pre-schools in both communities stands as a concern in relation to the national and global aspiration to expand primary schools. The wider literature sets pre-school availability as key input for Education for All initiative (for more on pre-primary discussion and its significance for children’s schooling (see Woodhead 2006, 2007 and Lewin 2007, 2008). Recognising this MoE also promoted its Strategic Operational Plan and Guidelines for ECCE which was facilitating the provisions by private sectors and NGOs mainly (MoE 2009/10).

The Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE: 2003(EC)), show the normative age for child schooling as shown in Table 4-0. Children age four to six attend preschool where available (also see explanation of the education system in chapter one and two). It is also customary for families to send their young children to Kes school (religious school), where they normally learn their alphabet and numbers for a very low fee.

The importance of pre-school is recognised as a precursor to primary school enrolment. Stressing the view that this is an area of education that cannot be ignored and that investment in early childhood is essential to counteract the dominant negative images of Ethiopia, Hoot et al. (2004) argued that ‘the best hope for changing this vision is to invest scarce resources where they are most likely to result in maximum benefits in the education of children during their early years’ (Hoot et al. 2004:1). The education sector recognising this important deficit in its provision stated due to financial constraints the state has encouraged the involvement of the private sector to provide this service (GoE 1994, MoE 1996 ). Whilst many of the pre-schools in the cities mainly serve the middle classes some NGO and religious institutions provide preschool free or at low cost however most provision remains in cites. The findings of this study is consistent with the observation made in Hoot et al. (2004) that said ‘ only a very small number of parents [...] can afford
tuition for their children to attend such programs’ (Hoot et al. 2004:4). Nonetheless, the provision level of pre-schools in areas like KaraKore is negligible as there was only 1 at the time of the study.

What is notable in the findings of this study was that the parents at the peri-urban site pointed out that the only pre-primary provision was previously provided free of charge when it was run by the kebele. However, recently local teachers had organised themselves to take it over, and improved the pre-school facilities but made it a fee charging ‘community’ pre-school owned by individuals including teachers. Many parents had pulled out their children as they were now unable to meet the cost following the change from kebele to private. This suggests the limitation of assumptions made about pre-school provision as a gap to be filled by private sector. The lack of cash income clearly not inducive to private investors in these areas and lack of pre-school availability is a major issue in both studied sites.

While the quality of provision has been reported by parents as much better than when it was under the administration of the Kebele, the newly introduced fees meant the young children from poor households in the peri-urban area were unable to enrol. However, the teachers saw this as a strategy in line with the government guidelines that not only benefited the public giving an improved service but also supplemented their low income. There is a paradox in this case since provision of pre-school is considered beyond the means of the state instead left for private sector and NGOs to fill the gap when subsidies by the Kebele stopped it naturally went to a group predominantly teachers as a social enterprise hence no more free. This move clearly stands in stark contrast to the education sector pro-poor stance (MoE 2010). The parents at the peri-urban site bitterly complained that the kebele had ‘sold it off’ and ‘ceased to teach our children’, ‘the new one is not for us poor’. The key points parents raised included their lack of income, their own poor health stopping them to earn enough and afford the fee. Some also said they couldn’t justify to pay for a pre-school that children go to play and not progress in grades as in the regular schools therefore given their financial constrain they didn’t see the point of paying for a play while children can play for free at home until they are school age. This is seen by some people among the Kara community as a provision for those who are salaried or have a regular income and need to send the children as a place for child care than to learn.
The survey results for four to six years old children show (Panel A of Table 4-8) that 81.4% of this group have never been enrolled and that some children whose parents are able to pay the fees and live in the peri-urban area are enrolled, however there is no provision in the rural area not even the traditional Kes School. It was also the case for the neighbouring rural areas adjuvant to the sites I have researched. Parents did point out this lack of provision in discussing about other school aged children that are not enrolled because of caring for younger siblings. This was particularly the case for young girls whom commonly covered this duty owing to the cultural division of labour. This low level of preschool enrolment in KaraKore is not surprising given the extremely low rate of pre-primary enrolment reported for the country ((2.2% in 2004/5) (UNESCO, 2006)) and more recently increasing the gross enrolment rate of 34% in 2013/14 (MoE 2015:14). This considerable improvement clearly is encouraging sign that the ESDP plans on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is gaining results, however, as the views of the parents in both sites indicate free provision of pre-school could open up more opportunity to many children regardless of their family economic circumstances. Moreover it is noted by recent study in Ethiopia by Tassew Woldehanna and Gebremedhin (2012) that stated enrolling to preschool would mean reduction in dropout and having a higher chance of primary school completion.

Panel B of Table 4-8 shows that at the peri-urban site, few children (12) of four years old were enrolled in preschool or primary school and only one at the rural site (enrolled in the primary school). This low number of children’s pre-school enrolment (42.9% in the peri-urban) is not surprising, for as pointed out in the literature review (chapter two), this is an area of the education sector that has been neglected in the past despite it being identified as critical (MoE 2010; Hoot et al. 2004; Lewin, 2007; Woodhead et al. 2009) in preparing children for primary schooling as well as freeing older girls from childminding duty (Hoot et al. 2004).
### Table 4.8 Four-six year olds (pre-school age children) pattern of school enrolment

#### Panel A: Enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never Been Enrolled</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KG/KES</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Panel B: Comparison of Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-Square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Enrolled</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic/Lower Primary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Enrolled</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>97.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic/Lower Primary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey 2008/09

As mentioned in chapter two, there is a recent encouraging development with this regard. The new ESDP 2015/16 - 2019/20 action plan published by the MoE proposes a change to the schooling system by introducing grade 0 into the existing government schools (therefore fee free pre-school provision). This is intended to operate in all regions in addition to the ongoing encouragement of private sector provision of pre-primary schools (MoE 2015). As I discuss further parental and children’s perspective suggest such provision would be filling an important gap especially in the case of the rural areas where provision is largely non-existent and low in some cases.
4.6.2 The status of child schooling in KaraKore: the case of primary school

This section directly addresses these concerns of access (enrolment and non-enrolment), the experience of access (as regular or intermittent), and dropout by drawing on the survey results and the views of the Household heads.

When the survey data for the seven to fourteen years old children that are anticipated to be in primary school level is considered (see figure 4-2 below shaded in light grey) it can be seen that the majority of children 132 (47.3%) are in the lower primary cycle (grade 1-4). While this data is useful for getting a general picture for primary school children, it does not provide information about how children fare in their progress through the schooling system according to their age (as illustrated in Table 4-0 showing the ideal school trajectory).

Figure 4.2 Education level by schooling cycle for children in KaraKore

![Graph showing education level by schooling cycle for children in KaraKore.]

Source: Grieve Survey 2008
Figure 4-2 groups the level of education for all of the surveyed children found in KaraKore by cycle. This bar chart distinguishes by achievement official primary school aged children (seven-fourteen) and those up to the age of eighteen. That is, included in this figure (on the lines showing the schooling cycles) are both children that are currently in school as well as those who are currently out of school, including those who have dropped out and those who never enrolled.

Breaking down the seven to fourteen years old by age group (as shown on table 4-9 below), it can be observed that few children are progressing through their schooling at the expected age, with the majority lagging behind the educational achievement considered appropriate for their age. In fact, there are considerable numbers of children age twelve and above still in the first cycle of primary schooling (for example at age fourteen there are 33.3% still in the first cycle) when the preferred progress would have been to see them graduating out of the second cycle primary school. While some of this could be a result of repetition\(^{38}\), in the rural children’s case, it is plausible to assume most is down to late enrolment. Similarly, while 30% of these children have never enrolled, it is likely that at least some of these will eventually go to school, and thus become late enrollees.

\[^{38}\text{Note there is automatic progression policy even though not uniformly followed by all schools.}\]
Table 4.9 Age breakdown of 7-14 year olds and their education level (both sites)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Never been enrolled</th>
<th>KG/Kes</th>
<th>1st cycle Primary (Lower primary)</th>
<th>2nd cycle Primary (Upper primary)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>19 (52.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>17 (47.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>36 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>24 (63.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>14 (36.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>38 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5 (18.5%)</td>
<td>1 (3.7%)</td>
<td>21 (77.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>27 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15 (37.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>18 (45.0%)</td>
<td>7 (17.5%)</td>
<td>40 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4 (19.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>14 (66.7%)</td>
<td>3 (14.3%)</td>
<td>21 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7 (17.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>19 (47.5%)</td>
<td>14 (35.0%)</td>
<td>40 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>6 (18.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>14 (42.4%)</td>
<td>13 (39.4%)</td>
<td>33 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3 (7.1%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>14 (33.3%)</td>
<td>25 (59.5%)</td>
<td>42 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83 (30.0%)</td>
<td>1 (0.4%)</td>
<td>132 (47.3%)</td>
<td>62 (22.4%)</td>
<td>277 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey 2008/09

Unfortunately the survey didn’t allow me to observe the number of children repeating years, since it was rather focused on enrolment and dropout patterns. Nor was it possible to obtain systematic data on repetition at the school level. Some documents show, ‘failed’ students i.e. final exam but, teachers said not all of the failed ones came back to school, at least to the same school. According to the MoE the national educational statistics for the year of the survey 2008/09, the repetition rate stood at 6.2% which was considered low by regional standards of sub-Saharan Africa where the average was 13% (see also UNESCO,
2012). However progress in school, repetition and dropout issues are covered in phase two of this research as discussed in chapter five and six.

Tables 4-10 to 4-12 present the figures on grades achieved for all children up to age 18. These draw out the difference by location in school progress corresponding by age, as they show the rural children are in grades much later than considered appropriate for their age.

Table 4.10 Level of education for total 7-18 year old children corresponding with age (N=402)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>KG</th>
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<th>UP</th>
<th>LS</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>D&amp;C</th>
<th>DG</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 survey

Note: NE=NEVER BEEN ENROLLED, KG=(Kindergarten, Kes/ Basic education), LP= LOWER PRIMARY, UP=UPPER PRIMARY, LS=LOWER SECONDARY, US=UPPER SECONDARY, D&C=DIPLoma AND CERTIFICATE, DG=DEGREE
### Table 4.11 Level of education for peri-urban site 7-18 year old children corresponding with age (N= 190)

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<th>US</th>
<th>D&amp;C</th>
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</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 survey

### Table 4.12 Level of education for Rural site 7-18 year old children corresponding with age (N=212)

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<th>UP</th>
<th>LS</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>D&amp;C</th>
<th>DG</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 survey

Note: NE=NEVER BEEN ENROLLED, KG=(Kindergarten, Kes/ Basic education), LP= LOWER PRIMARY, UP=UPPER PRIMARY, LS=LOWER SECONDARY, US=UPPER SECONDARY, D&C=DIPLOMA AND CERTIFICATE, DG=DEGREE
The above three tables are revealing. As tables 4-10 to 4-12 show, progress in schooling was not in line with the plan of education system. As mentioned above, late enrolment has many longer term implications, since children assume more personal and social responsibilities as they grow older and thus find it more difficult to stay in school. When we look at the column “never enrolled” (NE) for the total surveyed population of children we find 26% (103 out of 402) as not being enrolled to school but when we break this by site we find 92% of them (95 out of the 103) never enrolled children are living in the rural site. Moreover, when we look at the age 7 children in each site it is more revealing out of the 18 children 7 year old children in the peri-urban site only 2 are found as not enrolled, in contrast out of the same number of children that are aged 7 in rural area, 17 out of the 18 remain not enrolled. For the rural children even when we get to age 8 and 9 we still find significant number of them are still not enrolled: 23 out of 26 at age 8 and 5 out of 12 at age 9 are not enrolled. By contrast in the peri-urban site only 1 out of 12 and none out of 15 of the 8 and 9 year olds respectively have never enrolled. This clearly shows the spatial differences in children’s schooling trajectory between being a child in Kara and Kore. This is consistent with the literature on rural education in Ethiopia as discussed in chapter two (Admassie 2003; Yamada 2007; MoE 2010 and others).

In the next section I will draw on the survey questionnaire to further discuss the way how school readiness of children is considered by the Household heads. This offers an insight into the above discussed issues including of non-enrolment, enrolment and dropout in the two studied sites.

4.7 READINESS FOR SCHOOL: COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

In this section I will consider the local construction of school readiness. Here I draw on combination of data from the qualitative section of the questionnaire and the qualitative interviews with parents and children, particularly in the rural site.

Readiness’ for school was an issue that featured frequently in parents’ explanations of why children were not enrolled in the rural site, although it was barely mentioned in the semi-urban site. This contrast is particularly marked given that the communities are quite similar in ethnic, religious and cultural terms, it is under same local administration and there are less than 20 kilometres between the two sites as the crow flies even though actual journey takes longer path.
Further interrogation of the data reveals layers of reasons that formed the strongly held view of ‘readiness,’ as well as similarities and differences within it. As depicted on figure 4-4 the local construction of readiness is essentially about age, physical appearance, and what parents saw the child can or cannot do at a specific age. However there are two aspects to how this was formulated. One of the aspects concerns the physical ability of the child. The other aspect referred to ‘age related developmental capability’ concerns the child’s understanding of what is being taught in school in context of making progress through grades. This was the only aspect of readiness that was also occasionally been mentioned in the semi-urban site. The notion of readiness for school also has a gendered aspect. I discuss this in much more detail in relation to gender both in chapter five and six. Physical appearance was as equally important as age in determining children’s readiness (this is similar to the observation made by others for example Chanana 1996). As figure 4-3 below shows typically children will be asked to touch their ears as to conclude whether they are ready for school with the assumption younger children would not be able to touch their ears. This practice was more useful in the past when many children in rural areas wouldn’t have birth certificates.

Figure 4.3 readiness for school: A school boy demonstrating a typical test to see whether they are ready for school.
The construction of readiness with reference to physical capacity relates to the local environment. As mentioned in chapter three, the rural school was located just over 2750m above sea level while some of the children’s houses were as low as 2400m above sea level. Even for me as an adult, the journey from the lowest side to the village where school is located took an hour\textsuperscript{39}. The topography was typical of Ethiopian highlands with multiple hills and plateaux. Scattered homes and irregular, unpaved roads meant that many children had to climb up and down several times. Some houses were also situated across river with poorly structured bridge apart from fallen trees used to walk on (in the dry season it was also possible to wade across the shallow part of the river, but in rainy season it was unsafe). As a result of all this many parents stated that children were ready for school at the age of 12, because they didn’t feel children were fit to endure the journey to school before then. These challenges were mostly affecting those living far from the school. Parents also mentioned that children would already have made long and tiring journeys collecting water, shepherding animals and searching for the ever more scarce fuel wood.

\textsuperscript{39} This is not measured on my arrival to the area but after I settled for some months and got used to travelling by foot across many small settlements. Initially I had to stop several times and took me 1hr.45min.
Make shift bridges children cross to come to school

Source: Tigist Grieve fieldwork 2008-2009
The shift system, whereby some children attend school in the morning and others in the afternoon, was viewed by many parents as useful. First, it helped them to manage their house and farm work with the children’s support. Second, it provided a way to manage this concern over the physical sense of readiness, with older children going in the morning, and the younger ones in the afternoon.

While parents’ construction of readiness is phrased in terms of their protection of their children, this conflicted with what many of the younger children said they wanted. Some of the children, despite their young age, described how they saved money by running errands, collecting water, or growing seedlings for eucalyptus plant for sale in the market and to buy exercise books and pencils but parents then told them they cannot go to school because they are not ready. However, while those kept out of school expressed frustration and their eagerness to start school, many children in school did agree with the general view of how tiring the travel they had to do each day was.

4.7.1 Readiness, learning and progress
While readiness in relation to mental capability (understanding of what is being taught) was mentioned in the semi-urban site, this concern was far more common in the rural site. This view was expressed even by teachers who said age 7 was too young for school. A teacher said to me about his own child suggesting 7 was too young, ‘I let my son run after a sheep’s tail for a while because there is no point to put him in school before he learns good and bad’. I have put in diagram (see Fig 4-4 below) community construction of school readiness and what the key transitions they see what strategies they use to ensure their children have a sustained educational career. It seems much of the concern is shared in both sites (for example progressing with good result) while some are specific to the rural site (for example incurring extra expenses to relocate children to where the secondary school is).

Interestingly, many of the adults related the children’s inability to progress in their schooling in part to be a result of starting too young and speeding through education so quickly without learning much. They believed delayed start and slow progress (including repeating as to learn properly) can give a child a better chance of attaining in school.

According to the head of the household’s and the local teachers some of whom shared this view, this stems from a particular concern with difficulties for many rural children
passing key national exams like ministry in grade 8 to transfer to secondary grade 9, matric at grade 10 to transfer to grade 11 and beyond to college or university. This concern is widely recognised as there is a nationwide bottleneck for these transitions from shortage of available secondary schools and high marks required for admission. Since this research, the new MoE Programme Action Plan 2015/16-2019/20 stated its ‘ambitious plan’ that recognises the need to provide more secondary schools. And in addition to building more schools it will also target one in every five primary schools serving grade 1-8 to become joint primary and secondary school grade 1-10 and one in five secondary schools serving grade 9-10 will be upgraded to grade 9-12 thereby expanding secondary schooling to areas that previously had no supply (MoE 2015). According to the new plan children who have completed ‘in a recent time period’ but not progressed to secondary school will have the option re-enter and those currently in grade 8 will be encouraged to transition to grade 9.

It is early days for these plans to be implemented and whether these measures address the current concern adequately remains to be seen, nevertheless it shows a clear change of direction from predominantly focused on expansion of the primary school level to also take the secondary school as its focus.

As a study of primary school children it is beyond the scope of this project to address the secondary school concerns in this thesis but it is important to point out the influence of access to secondary education on primary education. For example, access is a concern for those in the rural site because there is no secondary school in the rural site. This is also the case for many of the villages surrounding the peri-urban site. The concerns mentioned in rural site include that they need to think whether they can afford the rent where the secondary school is located, and their ability to provide food, and transport for the children periodically. These issues for many of the rural families that are already constrained by their economic situation was off-putting. This is consistent to the study findings by Hoot et al. (2004) which stated, ‘Lower educational aspirations for children might also be accounted for by the very remote probability of their children being admitted to higher education institutions on completion of secondary education.’ (Hoot et al. 2004:7). Indeed, as this study found there are additional concerns over girls’ safety when they are away from home. For girls, in addition to the points raised already living in a place without parent or family member to watch them was considered risky and rarely did girls from the rural site go to secondary school as a result.
As depicted in fig 4-4 below, parents’ own concern over readiness is not intended to deny children the chance to go to school at all, but rather is a temporary measure to delay the start of school. The assumption is that delaying until they are a bit older sets them to learn ‘absorb’ better and will lead them to progress through the education system better. This view corresponds the aspiration parents and children have about securing paid jobs, however, this is clearly in tension with the progressive demand on children’s time and energy as they get older often in direct conflict to their progress in their schooling.

Source: fieldwork 2008 and 2009

4.8 Gender, Location, Wealth and Relationships

This section considers whether variables such as gender, location, household wealth and relationship to the household head are significant in structuring educational status across the two sites. For each of the variables (i) gender, (ii) location (iii) wealth and (iv) child relationship to the head of household, I present data on enrolment, the pattern of
education i.e. whether a child has experienced continuous or intermittent education and dropout rates. For a child to be eligible to experience continuous education or to be able to drop out, they must be enrolled, and therefore the samples for these analyses exclude those never enrolled as shown in Tables 4-9 and 4-10, thus n = 299 for the age 7-18 sample (402 less 103) and 194 for the age 7 – 14 sample (277 less 83). The sample for enrolment is 402 for the age 7-18.

4.8.1 Gender
Table 4-13 shows, a considerable number of children for both the official primary age (Ages 7 – 14) and the extended one (Ages 7 -18) have never been enrolled. That is, section A of table 4-13 shows that of the seven to eighteen year olds 25.6% have never been enrolled and the breakdown by sex reveals that 20.5% of boys come into this category as compared to 30.4% of girls. Regarding this observed gender difference, the chi-squared test reveal it to be statistically significant, (P<0.05). In relation to the seven to fourteen year olds cohort, even though a near 5% gap difference by gender can be observed for this cohort, no significant difference was found in statistical terms. However, comparing the seven-eighteen year old extended cohort with the narrower one for gender reveals that gap between girls and boys who have never enrolled falls from 10% to 4.7%. Taking these two outcomes together, this suggests that older girls are at a disadvantage regarding access to schooling. These results are all consistent with the extant literature that also points out that in relation to improved schooling access in Ethiopia, younger children overall and younger girls are having better opportunities than older girls.
### Table 4.13 School Enrolment and non-enrolment by Sex

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<th>N</th>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 7 – 18 (N=402)</td>
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<td>195</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 5.187$</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
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<td>$P = .023$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>63</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = .730$</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>$P = .393$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>103</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(25.6%)</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>B) All children Ages 7 – 14 (N=277)</strong></th>
<th>Never Enrolled</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 7 – 14 (N=277)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = .730$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>$P = .393$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 7 – 14 (N=277)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 7 – 14 (N=277)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve, 2008 Survey

Although it would appear that overall for seven to eighteen year olds 74% of the surveyed children are enrolled (Panel A, table 4-14), when we examine the data further they reveal that quite a number of them have experienced schooling intermittently. That is, their enrolment pattern has not been a smooth one. As can be seen in table 4-14 overall, for 26.4% of the surveyed children enrolled in school it was reported that they have had experience of stopping in the middle of their study. Considering the seven to eighteen year old cohort, more girls (27.1%) were reported as having been subject to breaks in their schooling than boys (25.8%). Regarding the statistical testing of this finding, no significant difference was found between boys and girls, $P>0.10$. Similarly, for the seven to fourteen year old cohort, the differences were not statistically significant, $P=.965$. The statistics suggest that despite the enrolment disadvantage of girls in the 7-18 cohort, girls are no more likely to undergo intermittent schooling, albeit the proportions of both boys and girls undergoing intermittent schooling are high. Further analysis and insight to expand on gender is presented in chapter five and six.
Table 4.14 Children’s school enrolment pattern by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children  N=299 (7-18)</th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have Stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>115 (74.2%)</td>
<td>40 (25.8%)</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 0.063$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>105 (72.9%)</td>
<td>39 (27.1%)</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 0.063$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220 (73.6%)</td>
<td>79 (26.4%)</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 0.063$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B) All enrolled children  N=194 (7-14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children  N=194 (7-14)</th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have Stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>77 (81.1%)</td>
<td>18 (18.9%)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = .019$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>80 (80.8%)</td>
<td>19 (19.2%)</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = .019$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157 (80.9%)</td>
<td>37 (19.1%)</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = .019$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve, Survey 2008.

Table 4-15 shows the results for dropout from school by sex, referring to when the respondents were asked if their children had dropped out of school since last year and had not been back in the new academic year. That is, the findings indicate the likelihood or not of children’s sustained schooling for both sites in terms of those who have been reported as being dropouts (out) and those who are still studying for the two cohorts. As can be seen, in general, the numbers of children reported as having dropped out at the time of the survey is concerning, standing at 14.7% of the total. Girls appear to be at a disadvantage when compared to boys for both cohorts. The older are also slightly worse off than their younger counterparts. However, no statistical significance for the observed gender difference emerged.
### Table 4.15 Current schooling status by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children N=299 (7-18)</th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>χ² (1) = 1.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>P = .297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) All enrolled children N=194 (7-14)</th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>χ² (1) = .118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>P = .732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Grieve, 2008 Survey.

### 4.8.2 LOCATION

As discussed in Chapter two, the role of location as a key factor regarding access to schooling is well recognised in the extant schooling literature on developing countries. The issue of locational differences and access to schooling in my study sites is examined below. Regarding this it is worth reiterating that KaraKore is situated in close proximity to the capital Addis Ababa and although the physical distance, as the crow flies, is less than 20km between the two surveyed sites (between Kara and Kore), in development terms (infrastructural, economic), they are clearly different communities as mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter and chapter three.

As can be seen in table 4-16, in section A for the seven to eighteen years old cohort of children, in terms of never enrolled, there are 95 rural children (44.8%), as compared to only eight (4.2%) in the peri-urban site. A similar outcome can also be observed in section
B, for the seven to fourteen cohort indicating that there is disadvantage of access to school for rural children. These differences are statistically significant (P<0.001), for both age cohorts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.16 School enrolment and non-enrolment by location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All children N=402 (7-18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) All children N=277 (7-14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.

With regards to the pattern of schooling, information was probed regarding the schooling experiences of those children who had accessed school to determine whether this had been continuous or intermittent. As can be seen in section A of table 4-17 a considerable number of children, 79 out of 299, have had to stop their schooling after starting it. For section A of table 4-18 the peri-urban site data indicate that 142 (78.0%) had a smooth enrolment experience compared to 78 (66.7%) in the rural site. While already observed that access is difficult for rural children, the results shown in table 4-18 further indicate that once they have achieved enrolment, a large percentage (33.3%) will experience intermittent school enrolment. The difference regarding experience of intermittent enrolment by location for both age cohorts is statistically significant at the 5% level (p = 0.030).
Table 4.17 Children’s school Enrolment pattern, by location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children  N=299 (7-18)</th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have Stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 4.724$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$P = 0.030$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) All enrolled children  N=194 (7-14)</th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have Stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1) = 5.256$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$P = 0.022$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peri-urban</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.6%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.       |

As table 4-18 shows in terms of current schooling status of children enrolled in school, at the time of the survey, 12.1% (for the seven to eighteen years old cohort) and 18.8% (for the seven to fourteen years old cohort) of children had dropped out of school. This result shows that majority of the children who had dropped out of school lived in the rural site and with respect to both age cohorts, and 18.8% of rural children were reported as being dropouts. The observed difference in school dropout proportions by site is significant for the 7-14 year age group where only 5.8% of peri-urban versus 13.7% of rural children had dropped out of school. The statistic for the impact of site for 7-18 year old cohort just fails to be significant at a 10% level and will reflect the fact that some of the older children may have legitimately left school.
Table 4.18 Current schooling status by location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children N=299 (7-18)</th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERI-URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>81.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 (1) = 2.559 \]
\[ P = 0.110 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) All enrolled children N=194 (7-14)</th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERI-URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 (1) = 3.566 \]
\[ P = 0.059 \]

Source: Grieve 2008, survey

4.8.3 Wealth

As can be seen from tables 4-19, 4-20, and 4-21 below, when the issue of wealth is considered some informative outcomes emerge that are further discussed in chapter five (including in how choice is structured by wealth). In terms of enrolment and non-enrolment (table 4-19), the figures indicate that while there is only a small difference between the rich and the poor households in terms of children never having enrolled, a greater difference is evident for children in the middle household category with only 62.4% being enrolled versus 79% for the other two categories. The factors wealth and enrolment show a statistically significant association with \( P = 0.002 \). The puzzle about the middle households doing worse compared to both the poor and the rich reflects the data presented earlier on table 4-3. Since a large proportion of middle income families are rural and as shown on table 4-18 the location is the most important factor that explains disadvantage in school enrolment this is not surprising.
Table 4.19 School enrolment and non-enrolment by wealth of household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never enrolled</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>32 (20.8%)</td>
<td>122 (79.2%)</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td>44 (37.6%)</td>
<td>73 (62.4%)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>$\chi^2(2) = 12.440$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rich</strong></td>
<td>27 (20.6%)</td>
<td>104 (79.4%)</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>$P = .002$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>103 (25.6%)</td>
<td>299 (74.4%)</td>
<td>402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.

According to the percentages given in table 4-21, it is the middle households’ children who do better regarding never having interrupted their schooling. That is, 12.3% of the middle of the wealth category are reported as having never stopped compared to the poor (42.6%) and the rich (54.7%) groupings. Thus despite the low enrolment levels for middle households, once in school their schooling is less intermittent.

Table 4.20 Children’s school enrolment pattern by wealth of household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poor</strong></td>
<td>52 (42.6%)</td>
<td>70 (57.4%)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td>9 (12.3%)</td>
<td>64 (87.7%)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>$\chi^2(2) = 32.096$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rich</strong></td>
<td>56 (53.8%)</td>
<td>48 (46.2%)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>$P = 0.000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>117 (54.7%)</td>
<td>182 (45.3%)</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.
In terms of dropout, as can be seen in table 4.21 the poor category of households ranks highest with a reported figure of dropped out children at 20.5%. The middle households’ children lie next with 13.7% and the rich households show only 8.7% as having dropped out of school. Thus, these wealthier households’ children can be considered as faring better compared to the others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All enrolled children N=299 (7-18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008 Survey.

When the data for wealth across the two sites is examined, the never enrolled status appears to be less pronounced particularly between the poor and the rich with less than 1% difference between the two categories. The middle income appear to be the least likely to enrol with 37.6% having never enrolled (see table 4.3). In general, these results are unlike much of the extant literature (MoE 2010; Colclough et al. 2012). However, this result of the middle income group emerging as being the worst off (albeit they tend to have better records once in school than the poor category of children) is explained by the data in this survey having a large proportion of middle income families as living in the rural site. Drawing on my ethnographic data I discuss this issue in chapter five and six in relation to differential outcome of children’s school trajectory.
4.8.4 RELATIONSHIPS

In this section I present the analysis of schooling status of children by relationship that is looking at the children’s status in the household in terms of their tie with the household head. The survey questionnaire probed living arrangements and available support. It further asked about the relationship of the children to the household head (HHH). These are important variables in general (Lloyd and Blanc 1996) and in particular in the context of Ethiopia where young children are highly mobile particularly in the rural and low income families, as well as the customs of sending children for various reason including work, and better education is common (Assefa Admassie 2003; Koohi-Kamali 2008). Moreover as mentioned in chapter two the HIV epidemic has resulted in many orphans which necessarily will be looked after by other family members or unrelated adults other than their own parents (Assefa Admassie 2003; Koohi-Kamali 2008; Tatek Abebe 2008, 2012).

With regards to enrolment in school, out of the 25.6% of never enrolled children among the seven to eighteen year olds, 31.2% of the non-biological children of the household heads have never been enrolled, compared to 24.6% of the those reported as being an ‘own child’ (see table 4-22). The difference in non-enrolment between these two categories of children increases from 6.6% to 11.3% for the younger cohort (seven to fourteen years old). However, there was no statistically significant difference found for enrolment by relationship: P=.261.
Table 4.22 School enrolment and non-enrolment by relationship to the household head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All children N=402 (7-18)</th>
<th>Never enrolled</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Own child</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>338</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not own child</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B) All children N=277 (7-14)</th>
<th>Never enrolled</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Own child</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not own child</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.

When the enrolment data is analysed by site and subject to chi-square testing, we get varying significance levels. That is, in the case of the peri-urban children the difference in enrolment between own children and not the progeny of the HHH was strongly statistically significant: P<0.001, whereas for the rural site this result not even at the 10% level, P<.113. This outcome suggests that the children in the peri-urban location who are not the offspring of the HHH may be treated differently to the biological children. However, for rural children this does not appear to be the case and I discuss this more in chapter five in terms of the complexities involved. However, other relevant studies have suggested non-biological children in the peri-urban areas tended to be serving households therefore likely to be treated differently (Beliyou Astatike 2008; Hestnes 2005).

In terms of patterns of enrolment, as can be seen in table 4-23 it appears that 26.4% of all children (i.e. 79 out of 299 enrolled children in the seven to eighteen years old cohort) have experienced an interruption in their schooling. The percentages of one or more temporary
withdrawals in any academic year for biological offspring was 24.3% versus 38.6% for non-biological offspring. This difference was statistically significant (P<0.05). For the 7-14 age cohort the difference was marginally significant at the 10% level.

Table 4.23 Children’s school enrolment pattern, by relationship to the household head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never Stopped</th>
<th>Have Stopped</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All enrolled children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N=299 (7-18)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not own child</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N=194 (7-14)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own child</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>82.7%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not own child</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.

In table 4-24 we see 14.1% of the biological offspring of the HHH were reported as being out of school at the time of the survey, versus 18.2% of the non-biological offspring but this difference was not significant.
Table 4.24 Current schooling status by relationship to the household head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OUT</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All enrolled children N=299 (7-18)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own child</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>( \chi^2 (1) = 0.494 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>( P = 0.482 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not own child</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **B) All enrolled children N=194 (7-14)** |      |      |      |                   |
| Own child                    | 13   | 155  | 168  | \( \chi^2 (1) = 1.647 \) |
|                             | 7.7% | 92.3%| 100% | \( P = 0.199 \)   |
| Not own child                | 4    | 22   | 26   |                   |
|                             | 15.4%| 84.6%| 100% |                   |
| Total                        | 17   | 177  | 194  |                   |
|                             | 8.8% | 91.2%| 100% |                   |

Source: Grieve, 2008 Survey.

In sum, it seems apparent that the child’s relationship with the head of the household does influence, school enrolment and the patterns of enrolment. However, this observation differs across the sites and is one of the themes explored further in the second phase of the study analysis when the focus is placed largely on the perspectives of the children themselves as well as their parents and significant others (see chapter five (section 5.4.3) Mesta’s case for example). To expand upon this results it is imperative we unpack the politics of households relations itself for which the ethnographic data has been invaluable.

4.9 Discussion and Conclusion

The first section of this chapter assessed the education level of household heads and all adults as reported in the survey. It emerged that, generally, the adults in both sites enjoyed a low level of education, with the rural adults being worse off. Parental education is an important area where the education literature identified as a key factor for children enrolment and progress in school. As I have shown in this chapter the adult education level
is considerably low in both site (especially rural) and the findings showing low enrolment of children corresponds with this therefore suggesting to support the literature that parental education is important.

The next section examined the nature of child schooling in the two surveyed sites. Three age group cohorts were considered, pre-primary school aged children i.e. four to six year olds, official primary school aged children (seven to fourteen years old) and all children from seven to eighteen years old in order to show more clearly the results of each categories schooling status.

Firstly, schooling patterns in terms of enrolment and non-enrolment were examined. With regards to the four to six years old cohort, it emerged that there was no pre-primary provision in the rural site. In the peri-urban site, very few children were enrolled in the existing one pre-school. The education sector reform that has encouraged provision of pre-primary schooling by community groups or private sector organisations and the implication of this leading to the withdrawal of poor children from pre-primary schooling was raised as a concern. As already noted by Woodhead et al. (2009) the data from this study also confirms as things stand the role of pre-school is marginal to the rural and poor (made even more so for KaraKore communities following the recent change that turned the only provision in the peri-urban to private one). This in part reflects inequality perpetuated against the poor as a consequence of current trends towards market driven measures (Woodhead et al. 2009; Kingdon 2007 and UNESCO 2008 cited in Woodhead et al, 2009). In general, the findings with this regard agrees with Hoot et al, (2004) and Woodhead et al.(2009) that mainstreaming pre-school’s for all could bring vital benefits for Ethiopian education sector as a measure to tackle some of the persistent challenges of dropout and completion rates.

Secondly, the data for cohorts seven to fourteen and seven to eighteen year olds was probed to ascertain how children were progressing according to their age. The results have shown that overall, there are 52.8% never enrolled children at the official school starting age of seven, and many children much older than the official starting age are still out of school. Moreover, the data on the achieved level of schooling by child’s actual corresponding age suggests that there is late enrolment. In addition, in terms of age related progress 42.4% of the thirteen year olds and 33.3% of the fourteen year olds were still
found in the first cycle of primary school, instead of having progressed to the second cycle as set by the education system. Finally, it emerged that a considerable number of children have never enrolled in school both for the seven to fourteen year old cohort (30%) as well that covering up to eighteen (25.6%).

The information with respect to, non-enrolment, enrolment and dropout amongst the children has been further analysed in relation to location, gender, wealth of household and relationship to head of household. Location emerged as being a statistically significant factor across the three states of enrolment. Withstanding the progress made in general it terms of school provision reaching more areas than before (MoE-ESDP 2015) these findings reveal a persisting problem in schooling of children in KaraKore despite the availability of a primary school as per the government’s commitment of one school per village. This result is of concern especially as a place in close proximity with the capital city therefore falling within the well served categories of the country, where all the new reforms have been implemented. Indeed the rural site comes out much worse and in this case, the much earlier prediction of, Tekeste Negash who argued saying regardless of attempts ‘urban/rural divide is here to stay at least for the foreseeable future’ (Tekeste Negash 1996:91) seems to hold.

Gender impacted enrolment with girls coming off worse is consistent with similar observation made by others in relation to Ethiopia (Colclough et al.2000; Guday Emeire 2005; Yamada 2007, 2013; Woodhead et al. 2009) but, not such a large difference when it comes to the in-school experience (i.e. interruption and dropout) of those enrolled. Furthermore, wealth too appears to influence child schooling when we look at the aggregated data of the seven to eighteen year olds across these three variables. Children of middle wealth households had the lowest enrolment rates, but did better once they were in school i.e. interruptions and dropout rates were lower. However, when wealth is analysed by site, these differences are not strong, except in the case of dropout amongst peri-urban children. Turning to the relationship of the child to the head of the household, across aggregate data the schooling of non-biological children was interrupted to a greater degree. The relationship to the head of household also appears to influence enrolment for rural children, particularly with respect to the older cohort (seven to eighteen year olds) in that own children fared better than their counterpart and was also statistically significant for the peri-urban site, but not strongly so. This is an area identified by earlier studies in
Ethiopia as having ‘added urgency’ Koohi-Kamali (2008) recommending further studies as an area not directly explored in relation to schooling and intra-household inequality of children arising from genetic tie of the child to the head of the household. The findings are consistent with results observed elsewhere that non-biological children comes worse off compared to the biological children of the head of the household (Case et al. (2000). Given the high volume of orphan children (Tatek Abebe 2012; Poluha 2004, 2007), the high mobility of children for work and seeking schooling (Tatek Abebe 2007; Koohi-Kamali 2008; Woodhead et al. 2009) I also agree with Koohi-Kamali (2008) indeed this is complex area that warrants a much closer look than it has currently and an appropriate response that considers this reality in the context of Ethiopia and its effort of EFA.

The qualitative aspect of the questionnaire was helpful to build the complex view of children’s schooling readiness from the perspective of the people themselves. Here it was possible to establish while overall early successful educational career is valued, the concern over school readiness is closely tied with the fear of failure to progress in education. While the community saw the measure of delaying children from school enrolment as one solution to ensure schooling progress of their children, the consequence of the delay doesn’t seem to influence their decisions. The assumption is underpinned by the aspiration of families to set their children in a best position leading to secure a paid job and their attempt to manage both the education system and employment market that is harder to exploit for rural people in their children’s favour (Tekeste Negash 1996; Woodhead et al. 2009). The expressed concern over learning in some ways echoes the overall concern that has been raised during the MDG and recently and more explicitly as part of the SDGs debate. This findings on the Ethiopian parent’s aspiration for their children to find a formal employment is similar to what Woodhead et al.(2009) and others report.

The statistical results are compelling in showing location based differences in the two sites for never enrolled children. The children in the rural site seem to enrol later than age seven, in fact in our sample there was only one child enrolled at the age of seven, and that overall 33.3% of the rural children are still in lower primary school. Evidently, this figure will have some of the children that have repeated grades therefore showing them to be in a grade lower than they could have reached had they had consistent enrolment and progress experience.
The findings in this chapter that shown location as a key factor for enrolment of school more than gender or wealth is consistent with the findings by the (World Bank 2004 and others). The finding also appears to confirm Tekeste Negash (1996) assertion in terms of the disparity observed between the peri-urban and the rural site. Tekeste Negash 1996: 25) asserted:

Rural Ethiopia is still short-changed. Urban children irrespective of their economic status have a far greater chance of completing primary education than rural children. The disparity in schooling is much wider between children in urban and rural areas than between boys and girls or even between rich and poor. In other words, the urban/rural divide is far more decisive for the educational destiny of children than gender and class.

I share the view expressed in the above sentiment. In part the observation of the literature, the survey and ethnographic data I have gathered in KaraKore points to the lack of resources both at the school level and at household level. Although financing is a complex area that I don’t examine directly in this thesis it is important feature of my findings thus appropriate to comment on it as a final point of this chapter (albeit with acknowledgment I have provided). Despite the global community promise of ‘no country will be left behind due to lack of resources’ lack of resource is a major problem for the Ethiopian education sector. While aid is coming it has not reached the level required thus significant and ongoing financing gap remains (MoE-ESDP 2005, 2010, 2015). In terms of the concern over meeting goals set in the education sector the shortage in budget has been highlighted by others including the World Bank (2005), Yamada (2008) and indeed 16 years earlier Tekeste Negash predicted this to be a persisting challenge in saying that ‘all the good intentions behind the expansion of formal education will not bridge the gap. The financial resources will not be there’ (Tekeste Negash 1996:91). This appears to hold some truth as was mentioned in chapter one and two, the Ethiopian government and MoE too recognise the need to expand the education sector in both qualitative and quantity terms as part of the overall economic development plan of getting the country to the middle income country by 2025 (MoFED 2012, MoE-ESDP 2015). Ethiopia aspire to do so in a pro-poor and pro-rural fashion (MoE 2010) however, despite the claims of increase in budgetary allocation for education sector (MoFED 2012), the sector historically and now endure a large unmet funding gap to execute what is proposed on ESDP action plan 2015/16 – 2019/20 (MoE-ESDP 2015; Tekeste Negash 1996, 2006). This clearly will impact the provision for rural
children for whom both availability of quality pre-primary, primary as well as secondary schools, and progress through education that lead to secure employment is of paramount concern as I continue to discuss in the coming chapters.

In conclusion, the descriptive data presented in this chapter has addressed schooling issues such as non-enrolment, dropout. The overall picture showed an important fact that fewer than imagined are in school making non-enrolment and dropout an issue also beyond the peripheral areas consistent with recent findings including specific studies for Oromia region (Kebebe Feda 2008). The issue of non-enrolment are identified in the official reports as being matters specific to the ‘underserved’ regions of Ethiopia, these being classified as mainly the nomadic and border areas in the regions of Afar and Somali. However, as has emerged in this chapter even in a location considered relatively well served, the number of out of school children is high. Moreover, even though the concern over dropout is valid the persistent problem of children who have never enrolled in schools still remains a concern despite the availability if schools following the 1 school per village strategy. This chapter has reported the survey results and one of the main functions, as explained in the earlier chapter one, has been to provide information on primary schooling status in KaraKore as well as highlighting issues that need further investigation. The subsequent empirical chapters will extend this findings further and supplement it with the qualitative data to offer nuanced analysis into the sociological insight of the schooling problem found in the two study sites.
A person who gets a chance to study and doesn’t grab it is like a person who refuses good food and I don’t think it is healthy, he may be insane and devil has hold of him. [...] a girl can be a nurse and if she wants it and works hard she can fly an airplane, I just don’t want my children to have my life. (Samra, a parent in the peri-urban site-Kara).

What use is an uneducated child apart from shepherding? Those who don’t have children have nothing, but if they have them and educate them that is wise. (Mehad, an 80 year old aunt to a 10-year-old dropout girl in the peri-urban site Kara)

They always tell me next year... next year! They said they would send me to school but they sent him [her younger brother] instead. I collected water for Bizu (local civil servant) and she gave me money for it and I bought exercise books and pens with it so I can register in September. (Gize 12 year-old-girl – in rural site-Kore)

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER

The above quotations introduce the focus of this chapter, which will be primarily drawing on the ethnographic data to capture the complexity surrounding school access for rural children. The central question it seeks to address emerges from the analysis of the survey data presented in chapter four. This is, what patterns of thought, behaviour and practices lie behind the observed patterns of school enrolment, non-enrolment, intermittent enrolment (temporary withdrawals) and dropout. The analysis of this chapter is anchored in the views of children and their parents. Its focus is primarily on the field of home and community, with direct discussion of the field of the school being presented in the following chapter.

The analysis reflects my view that what is missing in the literature is recognition of the way the interface between the child and schooling is mediated by the social. The dimensions of the ‘social’ that I consider here primarily concern household level issues, which I discuss using Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital and field, introduced in chapter two. The first section discusses parents and children’s perspective of education and illustrates competing
perspectives on school enrolment and dropout. I will also discuss the ways in which parents and children seek to secure schooling with varying degrees of success. In the second section I will revisit the dominant outcomes from the survey and I discuss children’s work in relation to schooling with particular focus on agency and decision making. The emergent themes namely livelihood, location, child work and migration, are drawn on to investigate in-depth how these produce outcomes of non-enrolment, dropout and come to impact child schooling experiences in general. This section also covers strategies employed by children and parents in relation to their schooling. The scale of the significance of gender means that I have allotted it a specific space in section three. The fourth section discusses intra household politics.

5.2 SOCIAL POSITIONING: HOME, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY AS FIELD

Taking home and school as fields in Bourdieu's sense, it is clear that patriarchy plays a major role in structuring positions within them, making age and gender critical markers of power. Economic, social and cultural capital associated with wealth, religion, marital status, education level, occupation and land-holding further establish hierarchies amongst men. Amongst women the most significant markers of status reflect their family-based identities: their marital status, their husband’s social status, the sex, occupation and health status of their children, and the status of their natal family. Other relational factors are also important, including their position in the household and the social capital they are able to draw on. Amongst children similarly, whether they are child of the household head, employee, orphaned, or a more distant relative plays a key part structuring their entitlements. For both women and children, their structural subordination and denial of voice in comparison with adult men, is nevertheless accompanied by a heavy weight of responsibilities for labour which is often critical to household survival.

While my emphasis in this chapter is on the field of the home and community, I also recognise the importance of talking about the interface between these and the school as field, and how children come slip from one to another and negotiate the demands of one in...
relation to the other. An obvious example of this is the way that children hurry to get their home-based duties done before school starts. Children’s presence in both fields at once is problematic because as one dominates the other suffers. For wealthier children in school, that becomes their primary identity. They are ‘school going children’ and this determines what happens at home. For poorer children their identity as ‘child of the house’ is more important and that jeopardises the school and prospect of consistent engagement with it. While household and school appear in some ways opposed to each other, it is important to remember that both are structured through the state, and through a shared local and global economy. The global economy is evident in the displacement of farmers to make way for the flower farms. The jobs these generate provide children with opportunities to find a new way of being, quite different from their role in the domestic sphere of the family home. Having sketched the background context in this introductory section, I now present my findings in detail.

5.3 SECTION I - COMPLEXITIES OF VOICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tigist:</strong> Why are Abel and Dawit not in school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mrs Tewabech:</strong> Solomon is going, ‘and-aybekam?’ (is one not enough?) I think it is enough. I said to them (her boys) one of you is enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extract of survey phase interview with a mother in Kore:2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tigist:</strong> Why did you drop out of school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abebe:</strong> [laughs] Is that not all about money? I earn money now anyway...and in the end education is about earning money. I even earn more than my school teachers sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extract out of interview with a dropout boy in Kore:2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first extract (A) comes from a conversation with a parent while I was recording the demographic information for each of the children in the household. Even though I spent time going over the survey questionnaire, I still came away with data showing 3 non-enrolled (2 boys and a girl), 1 enrolled (boy) and one baby. Mrs Tewabech was friendly and open to discuss various aspects of rural life. According to my field notes, I came away with
much knowledge about the local Kalicha\textsuperscript{41} and its place in the local imagination. What I lacked was any awareness of the politics of household, which as I later found out was critical to understanding what she was really saying by this remark of ‘and-aybekam?’.

The second extract (B) comes from my first meeting with Abebe, who had dropped out of school and returned from migration in various parts of Ethiopia working as \textit{Weyalta} (minibus conductor). He came across as confident, a bit defensive, and apparently happy with having left school. Again, further interaction with him brought quite a different picture.

I have selected the two cases as they are indicative of many of the conversations I have had with parents and children in the study sites. In short they show three points. These are, first, dynamics of inequality in schooling; second, the highly structured and constrained nature of many ‘choices’, for both parents and children; and third, the value of a long-term ethnographic approach, which enables one to hear in a fuller way what people are really saying.

\textbf{The case of Mrs. Tewabech:}

Mrs. Tewabech was a divorced women who then married a farmer with land. She subsequently bore him a daughter Rahel who is 8 years old, and a 2-year-old son Shola. The other three children were from her previous marriage. When we got to know each other better she explained why she decided to send to school only the youngest of the three:

You see, after all he (husband) has done, taking me on with three boys (from previous marriage)! How can I say to [my husband], let them eat your labour, your food, and they also go to school? Do you think he will agree? They are not his seed (children); can I expect him to be happy to feed those who belong to another man? Is it not enough that he is kind to take us in? So, I said to my two boys, you go and help him on the farm, and Solomon goes to school and helps us when he is back from school.

\textsuperscript{41} The local wise ‘spiritually gifted’ person, that is feared, worshipped, presumed to be able to predict future, heal, give child for barren women, perform magic or dispel magic or be consulted on social and personal matters and so on.
I asked then about Rahel, their daughter. As she is their joint daughter, surely he would not mind Mrs Tewabech sending her to school? She answered:

My husband has a lot of land. The boys spend time with him and help feed the animals and work on the land. I have no one to look after little Shola. So, I need Rahel to be with him while I attend to the house, market, social duties [like funerals and celebrations]. She also looks after the neighbours’ children... If I send her too, what will I do with Shola and who will stay in the house?

If my interaction had been limited to the survey, I would have noted the low level of enrolment of her children despite school availability and interpreted her comment ‘and-ayebe kém?’ (Is one not enough?) to show the limited value this ‘rural’ ‘uneducated’ mother accords to children’s schooling, particularly given that her household was not poor. However, my multiple meetings with her revealed how that comment was structured through her sensitivity to intra-household politics. As a divorcee with children from her former marriage her position in the household is weak: she describes herself and her children as a ‘burden’ to the current husband. My later conversation with one of the non-enrolled sons and her daughter revealed they accepted their mother’s view in general however, they would still like to go to school, not least because they lived so near that they could hear the noise of children playing there. They also had the aspiration of being like ‘wealthy children’ ‘city children’ and like ‘educated people’ with jobs and cars ‘living in Addis Ababa’.

In Bourdieu’s terms, Mrs Tewabech’s practice (or ‘choice’) is structured by her position in the field of the home and community. She has clearly internalised this as it conditions her perception of what is possible and what is off limits. Her view that educating one of her children is enough is justified both in moral and in practical terms. Her sons also appreciated the protection that her re-marriage afforded, they reciprocated with loyalty towards her new husband, and to some degree at least shared her internalization of their position ‘burdens’ on him, which their labour needed to compensate for.
The case of Abebe:

I went on to meet Abebe many times and got to know his mother well too. He had dropped out from grade 7. His mother said ‘enbi aleng’ (he refused school) she bitterly complained that his father helped him to get a job ‘Abebe developed a taste for money so hated school’. She took this as her ex-husband’s way of getting at her because she has always worked hard to put all of their children through school with a hope of avoiding ‘yetegelabitosh’ (upside-down support) and ‘kesew endayansu’ (to be equal with others). She said, if Abebe hadn’t dropped out he would have been in secondary school by now.

I pushed for all of his siblings to go to school. I even carried food on my back and walked a long way every week to deliver to them where they were renting near the secondary school. I didn’t want them to go hungry and leave school. I saved our money so we can afford the rent for a room near their school. They haven’t achieved as much as I would have liked them to but they are OK. I had big hopes for Abebe and I put him through school so young, he was clever, his brothers helped explain things for him when they lived with us. Then when we went through divorce, everything got bad. But, I said to Abebe, to carry on that ‘beset Akime Asadigihalew, ‘I will raise you with my female sweat’. But, after I spent money on his exercise books and shoes, he refused and left. Now he has fallen out with his uncle (employer) and came back home and I am asking him to go back to school, it is still not late, I will support you as long as I live. You tell him Tigist, you know how school is the best, what hope has he as a mehayim (Illiterate)?

Abebe’s case reinforces the threat that divorce poses to children’s schooling careers. As discussed in more depth later in the chapter, this is one of many critical life events that can cause children, either directly or indirectly, to drop out of school. It also introduces another key theme for this chapter, the commitment of the majority of parents to send their children to school, in the hopes of improving the children’s situation. One dimension of this

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42 I will come back to this point in section two of this chapter to explain the tension between the necessity of children supporting parents through work now and the ideal imagination of desirable support (tureta/metor – to be pensioned) at old age and moral logic associated with it.

43 An important cultural reference is drawn here ‘Set Yasadege w’ – ‘the one raised by women’ is a common insult directed at misbehaving children raised by single mothers. Both men and women use it in reference to women’s achievement or derogatorily in various contexts. She draws on it defiant to the derogatory label, knowing her children do carry this but she uses it to signify the difficulty of doing things as female without the support of a man.
is that dropping out is commonly imagined as a temporary situation by both adults and children. Although Abebe left school two years ago, his mother is still holding on to his unused exercise books in the hope that he will return to school and go on to fulfil his earlier ambition of becoming a doctor.

As with Mrs. Tewabech, the narrative that emerged over time was rather complex. At first, Abebe stated that he left school because he wanted to help his mother. He wanted to earn money and not be a burden, he was happy to be paying his own way. As I got to know him better, however, he began to express regret:

‘I could have been in grade 9, all my friends are in grade 9 now’. [and] ‘yes I feel sad, ... I was cleverer than my friends and they are now in grade 9 but, if I go back to school I still will be in grade 7’. ‘I did want to be doctor, saymaru yikonal endea?, ayyee ‘is that possible without schooling? (He laughs) No No.

So I asked what he thought was better, making a good wage as a weyala, or being in school? His answer reveals a tension in competing narratives about what is desirable, preferred and settling for what seems possible. He explains this framed in an acute sense of inequality and on the interrelated socio-cultural factors that shaped his decision.

First, he unequivocally said, ‘Yemiredang bagenma memaru new tiru’44 (If I had someone to back me, being in school would have been better). He then said how much his mother cared for him and his siblings, and how he therefore didn’t want to be a burden any more or cause yet more sacrifice on her part. His hope was still to help his mother through earning as weyala in the city, and eventually to work as a driver. Finally, with reference to enrolling back to their village school as his mother wishes him to, he said it would be embarrassing for him to have to sit in a lower class than his age-mates, especially having come back from the city. Such sentiment is similar to the one reported by Gibson and Eshetu Gurmu (2012) in rural Arsi Ethiopia where rural people felt ashamed upon their return ‘empty handed’.

44 The English translation didn’t seem to carry the same weight he was putting on it, however, I have given the close translation of it.
What is evident in the case of Abebe as is with many of the poor children I have interviewed is the sense of responsibility he feels towards his mother as much as she feels towards him. Abebe also feels humiliation from the implied backward step in terms of his social standing that is from ‘being in the city (an elevated status) and back’ and seeing his friends in higher grades than himself. The expectation he had of himself was a transition to urban independent life that would allow him to take care of his mother and get a better educational opportunity in better quality setting. However, he could not manage either.

The multiple visits to Abebe and his mother’s house gave me a rare insight into the gap between aspirations and real possibilities, as well as the fluidity of life and how choices were made and influenced. It could be, of course, that he really wanted to leave school when he did so, but that on reflection – especially with the prospect of losing his taxi role – he felt this wasn’t such a good idea. But even if this was his ‘choice’, it clearly bears the marks of a broader context of constraint. As Abebe saw the sacrifices his mother was making to get his elder siblings through school, it is likely that he felt that he should go for the option that was financially attractive in the short term. But both he and his mother were worried that he couldn’t continue in the work he had been doing, and would need more training to get an adult job. His initial assertiveness about having left school that ‘education was also in the end all about money’ seems to have been his way of rationalising this compromised choice.

These two cases are illustrative of many of my conversations with parents and children. These show not resistance to school or ignorance of education’s benefit but choices structured through poverty, critical life events, the presence or absence of zemed, (the social capital of kin/network/relations that one can draw on), the competing demands of paid or family-supporting labour, patriarchal structures, and a commitment to collective, not just individual, security and wellbeing. Moreover, the complexity of how such factors intertwine only emerges after some time in the field. Without repeated conversations throughout my stay in their village in these and in many other cases, I would have not come to complete the ‘circle’ (as discussed in chapter three - methodology), but instead would draw half a circle, half a story and half conclusion that also painted them as ‘placing limited value on schooling’. Being able to engage critically with the narratives over time situating them in their social context, power relations and continuously reflecting on our own role as interpreters, gives a far better chance of being able to capture accurately the values and
meanings attached to the narratives by their own authors. This is the ambition of this chapter.

5.3.1 *The value of education*

As shown in the literature review, rural Ethiopian parents are widely held to resist schooling, particularly for girls (with some recent exceptions such as those coming out of the Young lives study e.g. Yisak Tafere 2015 and others, Tatek Abebe 2007, 2008, 2012; Yamada 2007). My own survey showed that rates of school enrolment in general and for girls in particular were lower in the rural site. It was important that I directly examined the value of schooling in KaraKore community from their own perspective.

Much of the way parents in KaraKore constructed child schooling was instrumental. Primarily it was seen as a means to economic improvement and associated higher social standing. In many ways they echoed the official discourse where education of children is framed in terms of national development and poverty reduction. However, what is also noticeable is the dichotomised ways children and parents appear to see quite starkly what the educated can have and the uneducated lack. This is despite many of their children being never enrolled or having left school before achieving their aims and despite some evidence of uneducated people doing well. Seeing it in its stark form they related their own lack of education and the ‘imagined’ educated persons and expressed their aspiration, hope and fears for their children to become the latter. This was further structured through a pervasive dichotomy of modern versus traditional and progressive versus backward, which again is echoed in official discourse, including amongst teachers as representatives of the state (see chapter six). Two further issues were striking. First, even though parents and children were clear about the many external factors that stopped them having education, they still blamed it on themselves. Reflected on their own educational history many parents blamed their current unfavourable social and economic status on their being illiterate, as not just a functional but also a stigmatised status. Table 5.1 shows the key terms used to describe having and not having education.
Table 5.1: Parents’ and children’s description of education and the terms used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defining not having education (first column)</th>
<th>Defining having education (second column)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chelema Darkness</td>
<td>birhan Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deha Poor</td>
<td>habtam Rich/wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>efret Embarrassment/shame</td>
<td>kiber Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikel Looked down</td>
<td>siltan Position of power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chiger Hardship</td>
<td>demoz Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mewdek Failure/failed/to fall</td>
<td>Ye dilot nuro Living good life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shekim Load/ burden</td>
<td>tesfa Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozene Purposeless</td>
<td>gobez Active/clever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>durye Juvenile</td>
<td>Rasen mechal Self-reliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dinkurina Deafness/ignorance</td>
<td>tamagn Honest/trustworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gebere ‘Farmer’</td>
<td>tikem yalew Useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leba Thief</td>
<td>alama yalew Purposeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kertata Aimless wandering (sympathetic)</td>
<td>Hulu Yichalewal Able / a can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yetasere Trapped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesfabis Hopeless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interviews with parents and children (phase 1 and phase 2)

These descriptions clearly show what Bourdieu terms symbolic violence. Second, as mentioned above, being not enrolled or having dropped out was almost always presented as a provisional, temporary status rather than a permanent state of being even when in some circumstances to an outsider, what is aspired for appears virtually impossible. This is in marked contrast to the bald labelling into categories such as ‘dropout’ that appear in official documentation, and even much of the more academic literature (this reflects some of the discussion I raised in chapter two on labelling in development Cooke and Kothari 2001; Moncrieffe and Eyben 2007; Wood 200 and Eyben 2007).

A further important issue to note is that, regardless of whether the particular child we were discussing at the time was enrolled, had never been enrolled or had dropped out of school, almost all of the respondents had an understanding of ‘education’ as something very desirable and the ultimate preferred goal in life. This was linked to the view – common to all, but coming more strongly from the poorer section of the communities – that one had the chance of being able to live ‘an ideal’ life if one was educated – with ideal life being having a secure government job. Even though many parents acknowledged having ‘luck’, ‘good marriage’, and ‘good health’ as also important in their children’s’ lives, the imagined gains from education were deemed to bring ‘certainty in terms of regular income’ and

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'financial freedom and independence’. As one father in Kara commented, ‘most things (e.g. wealth) vanish but education once you have it, no one can steal it from you’.

The commitment to schooling is evident not only in what parents and children say, but also in the material practice of the preparations that they make for the start of the school year. For many households the enrolment of their child is a subject of many months of discussion. Children themselves anticipate this stage of becoming a student eagerly. This waiting and preparing often is done throughout the year. The majority of children automatically assume the responsibility of preparing for their first school day even if they have parents to take care of them. The girls and boys pass the year looking to secure financial help from older siblings or relations living away from home, also making and saving money, even getting into debt in order to invest on materials they will need for school. The ‘September syndrome’ is an interesting phenomenon. It coincides with the Ethiopian New Year and is charged with fresh hopes and excitement. Through the year children earn money through keeping chickens, growing seedlings, boys make charcoal, girls do chores for the few government workers around the village, and some children migrate to the city to work for the summer. The school year in September is marked by students wearing clean clothes and new shoes. They would have made a bag out of used milk plastic bags they collected or purchased from market and spent time covering their exercise books and the books they rented from school with newspapers and plastic bags to protect from dirt and rain, to mitigate receiving fines for damaging books rented from school.

Education appears to hold a hope for parents themselves as well as their children. With regards to themselves this was framed as ‘making them proud’, and ‘being respected’ through having educated children. The educated children’s contribution to the social standing of the parents and the household in general is multi-fold. Successfully educated and employed children are seen as providing both economic and symbolic capital. A father in Kore (2009) commented,

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45 This is the translation of an Amharic phrase used by the Deputy Head of Kara school, in commenting on the uniqueness, renewed hope September brings.
I educated my children. I now rest because of them. Everyone knows I sleep in proper bed because of them. Who do you know that sleeps in proper bed? They bought it for me.’

For many parents, education seemed the ultimate gift they could give to their children particularly so in circumstances where scarcity meant land and other assets were not available to be passed on.

The following statement by Abate a farmer and father for a large family in the rural site conveys strongly the value parents gave to education and the frustration they feel at not being able to educate their children. He said having being able to read and write gave him extra income as an application or dispute letter writer in the community where people trusted him for their private and business matters. He wanted his children too to be more educated,

How can one say no to get one’s children educated. Isn’t it for our own benefit that the teachers come and tell us to send them to school? Don’t we know this? Do you think we will not send them to be like you one day - if we could? Would I hate it if I had a daughter like you, or like Selam giving everyone merfe (like the nurse administering medicine to all the neighbourhood). No one will be hard on his own children, if he could help it. Realising they won’t have a future better than Gebere (farmer) pushing this soil like us, and that they will be keswe betach(beneath others), crushes and saps out energy from us and from my children too. (Abate: father Kore: 2009).

Despite the strong view this father expresses, most of his children have not been enrolled at school. Those who were enrolled have all dropped out and no one has completed. Consistent with what was said above, he sees this as a temporary state. His explanations for why they were not in school in part reflected the practicalities of life, but also included his awareness of the poor quality of the school available, and difficulties engendered by the official language policy that is seen as both positive as well as a challenge. The family were displaced from their village by the current land allocation system46 and lost their land to foreign corporate flower farm investors. They have moved to a new settlement nearer the

46 For detailed discussion of the FDI and land allocation policy in Ethiopia see Lavers (2013).
main road where there is a school but, the school uses Amarigna language, whereas the medium of instruction was Oromigna in their former school. With the move the collective focus of the family became getting on with life in the new place. The disruption brought new opportunities and lead some of the children to get employment in the flower farm, while two of the girls left to work as domestic helpers, the boys went to the market as day labourers and the remaining girls and young boys stayed at home. Stories very similar to this were common in both sites, displaying the multiple insecurities and structural inequalities that interrupt family lives and the ambiguous role of the state and ‘development’ as well as the education system.

While the appetite for education cannot be doubted, parents and children in both areas question whether they can achieve their hopes from their respective schools. For those with the means, the best option was considered to send their children to Addis Ababa. While most people lacked either the zemed (social capital) or the cash to take this option, some in Kara, and a very few in Kore were able to exercise this ‘premium’ choice. People have a clear idea of what is good quality and prestigious, and make a reasonable distinction between city-rural, private-public, regular-evening schools in order of preference (this is consistent with Jennings 2011 clear awareness of quality, fearing to fail, and ‘they believe that less qualified teachers are assigned to rural schools’ (Jennings 2011:56). However, my findings across the views of children, parents and teachers challenge Jennings own assertion in infrastructural terms suggesting ‘Quality education does not necessarily require high levels of investment in infrastructure, though this can also be important, especially in remote and historically underserved areas.’ (Jennings 2011:65) I argue this conclusion is a reflection of the mainstream policy view (e.g. World Bank 2004) that promotes cheaply built schools using local material (just as in the photos I have shown in this thesis or worse) whereas the rural community in KaraKore was aspiring for better in infrastructural and associated provisioning of water, toilet and so on.

The case of evening school indicates some of the complexity of the situation within which parents and children make educational ‘choices’. Evening school is considered by both parents and children as the schooling option of lowest quality and prestige. This in part reflects the low status of its intended target group: children who are working full-time, with little economic or social capital in the form of family support. It was available only for those living in Kara area and was not free. There were no girls at the time I visited the evening
class nor was there any teacher. This may have been due to the time of the year as exam results were being handed in during the day. The students, however, were quite clear about the poor quality of the education at evening school in a focus group I held (2009):

‘We learnt nothing’

I followed this up by asking why they studied at all? The consensus among the students was that having a certificate would improve their chances of promotion to higher regarded and paid positions at work (I raise this point in chapter six section 6.3.3 in relation to school practices). Highly preferred is a certificate that shows completion of grade 12 then to move on to higher education. However, even having a certificate showing they had reached and completed 10th grade or vocational training would afford them an enhanced position in the newly expanding flower and horticultural industry as team leaders or administration work. This would enable them to move from their current position as labourers and being relegated to lower status jobs of mixing hazardous chemicals, heavy lifting and hard labour.

As discussed in chapter two, the debate continues as to what quality, access, equity, relevance and more recently learning mean and how they might be conceptualised (Katz 2004; Nikel and Lowe 2010; Hickling-Hudson and Klees 2012; in context of Ethiopia Tekeste Negash 1996; Tatek Abebe 2007; Berry and Solomon Shiferaw Bogale 2011 and Poole et al, 2013). It is also reported children being either withdrawn or made to repeat by their parents who are concerned about poor quality, which was assumed to arise out of “pressure from authorities to keep the figures up”. In relation to this, parents pointed out that teachers push for enrolling 5 year olds to boost enrolment figure, but are consequently unable to deal with big class size.’ (Elizabeth Mekonnen and Bizuayehu Feye 2010:19; also see Carr-hill (2012, 2013) and Stuart et al. (2015) on inherent political nature of data especially in relation to MDG). This section responds to the call that these debates should be more enhanced by the local level understanding of people in poor, rural, developing country contexts. It shows clearly that parents and children value schooling highly. However, in general what parents and children aspire for is not necessarily limited to basic level reading and writing but an opportunity to learn something that they can directly translate into a formal job with a regular income. However, they often see such schools as beyond their reach, only available in the city and for those who can pay for private education (see also Jennings 2011). This desire of going to secondary school and the
challenges is consistent with experiences of rural children in many developing countries (see Ames 2005 for example in the context of rural Peru).

5.4 SECTION II - REVISITING DOMINANT THEMES: RURAL LIVELIHOOD, CHILD WORK AND CRITICAL EVENTS

5.4.1 Rural Livelihoods
As discussed in chapter four most of the rural households rely on farming, even households that have a business (shops, cafe or mills) consider farming as their main activity. In this community only few of very poor households are not engaged in farming. Even these households strive to save some money to undertake animal husbandry activity each year or in the cases of adult male being available in the house they undertake ye-ekul mares (share cropping) where they contribute their labour and inputs and obtain land from another person. Small-scale husbandry, which involves buying small lambs and goats from the weekly local market at a cheap price to fatten and sell when the value goes up during the holidays is common. This is typically children’s work, taking sheep to free pastures to graze and (particularly boys) cutting grass by sickle to bring home for animal feed. The scarcity of water near the dwellings meant that all children and women have to go into the valley every day to collect water from the unprotected spring. Boys also take the animals to drink from the river passing through the valley (in the dry season they go further).

In a typical rural household, the work starts at dawn with girls searching for kindling to light the fire using remaining fire from a night before that is usually buried under the ash. The girls or mother gets up in the morning to get it going for the day. Sprinkling water on the ground of the house and its surroundings to manage the dust during sweeping, and clearing the dung from the barn as the animals leave to graze for the day. It is also their job to make coffee following appropriate traditional ceremony each day, and to tend to the younger children in the house as the mother will also be busy milking and preparing food. These are all early morning activities that have to be done as it is important the animals are released with the boy(s) for grazing before the sun gets strong and the spring water dries. In this rural community the farming job is highly labour intensive and therefore requires everyone’s input every day. Farmers still plough using the very traditional, physically
arduous method, of plough and oxen, while children and women follow behind to help break the soil further and pull out weeds, stones and roots. Even when the ploughing season is over, sowing, protecting the seed from birds and then as it grows protecting the seedlings from animals, requires children to be in the field all day. At night-time, also, children may be required to stay in the fields to protect crops from animals such as baboons. One informant reflected on this as follows:

‘We went after late dinner and sit there. We’d play (joke), sometimes fall asleep taking turns, as we know there are hyenas passing through, but, they don’t eat you if you are two or more. Now that is a job for my younger brothers and the employed shepherd. (Fieldworker in Kore)

A village where children take animals to graze

Source: Tigist Grieve fieldwork 2008-2009
Shepherding children at field where they play and study

Source: Tigist Grieve fieldwork 2008-2009

5.4.2 Harvest and bird watching

The ESDP documents and academic literature on children’s education in Ethiopia recognise the need to be flexible to accommodate the needs of rural families, especially at harvest season (ESDP I, II, III, IV 2002-2010, Hyde et al. 2005). Indeed child labour and schooling focused literatures in Ethiopian context and beyond have argued that schooling and child labour is compatible (Assefa Admassie 2003). What is rarely appreciated, however, is the continuous nature of children’s work. Undertaking ethnography helped me to appreciate both the extent of rural children’s work and its relentlessness. It also helped me to understand the complexity and inter-relatedness of household level relationships and how the desire for education has to be balanced with responsibility towards the collective sense of security and wellbeing. For illustration I present a particular case below, of a girl, Misrak, who the official register shows is on prolonged absence from school over a health of her mother.
Bird watching children at fieldwork

Source: Tigist Grieve 2008-2009 fieldwork

I went to look for Misrak after a teacher told me she had not been to class for months. The teacher said the reason for her absence was illness of the mother. I arrived at the home to ask permission from the mother to interview Misrak. Throughout the discussion with this mother as with many of the parents she was full of self-blame, even though the circumstances (chronic illness) were beyond her control. The mother said she was unwell a few weeks back and regularly falls ill with tuberculosis yet she didn’t tell her daughter to stay away from school but her daughter herself stopped going.

She stayed home ‘when she saw I wasn’t in good health and good with the children. I am now better but, she is now at the belg place’.

Belg is the word used to describe a crop that is nearly ready for harvesting. In this case on the land by the river using irrigation rather than in season farming through rain. When I arrived in the field I was surprised to see a large number of children (both boys and girls) across a very large green field sitting on raised level decks under a wooden structure every
few hundred yards (see photos). They stay there from very early morning until dark to scare off birds with sling and stones. Older boys reported staying in groups at night. As I frequented this place and others like it, I noticed how this is an established way of being in childhood. Spaces are occupied and used by the children for various activities and play, including secret places where they cooked new potatoes taken from some of the plots without permission. There was barley, oats, wheat and other crops. To my knowledge, there is only one report that gave a brief mention of ‘bird watching’ as responsibility of children in Ethiopia (see Hyde et al. 2005). This is irrigated farming near the river which occurs in addition to seasonal family farming on their common lands which are often near their own homes. Many studies assumed rural children’s work is seasonal, and so compatible with schooling where there is a flexible school calendar. Here, however, the land is in constant use and demands a watcher in place all the time. Some parents told me how they gave up their land by the river for share-cropping because the children were in school. For others, the year-round demand for children’s labour kept children out of school. For rural children engaged in non-seasonal farming, the view in the child labour literature in Ethiopia that child work in the family home as compatible with schooling therefore needs to be questioned (Admassie 2003; Hoot et al. 2004).

I discussed the situation with parents, teachers, and even the local administration without being able to find an alternative way of managing this cultivation and scaring off the birds. What became clear is that, although the issue goes unrecognised in the literature on rural schooling, local people all knew about it, but no longer ‘saw’ it, as they considered it a given that couldn’t be changed. The comment of a chair of PTA demonstrates this:

‘at least with animals you may contemplate fencing which in itself is large scale project, but, you can’t fence off birds, you just need one or two of your children to be scarecrows’

That someone in such a position should express such acceptance is concerning, given the role that the ESDP and other literature give to PTA’s in terms of encouraging school attendance (I go on to discuss school level issues in the next chapter six).
5.4.3 Peri-urban household livelihood strategies: the role of children

In the peri-urban site (Kara) farming was a marginal occupation, comprising some livestock rearing or small amounts of crops or animal products for market and home consumption. This is getting increasingly squeezed as a result of displacement to make way for the new flower farms and other investors. The majority of households however earned a living from the informal market and unskilled jobs. A few relied on work as government bureaucrats or small and medium level business. In each case the children had some economic input. However, the extent of their involvement and expectation of the family of them varied depending on how pressed the family are to make a living ranging from young children following their mother’s in daily domestic servicing to well off households (low paid, but fed) arrangements to those who worked fewer hours and in less labour intensive tasks.

In general children accepted that work is an inevitable part of their lives. But this inevitability is in tension with what children and parents sought the ideal of ‘metor’\(^{47}\). In general terms many of the parents and children said the ideal is for parents to provide

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\(^{47}\) This is common. In every children and parents conversation about aspiration they mention ‘tureta’ (direct translation pension), ‘metor’ (to be given pension). But, this is not said in a narrow sense of pension as a regular income in old age but refers to a much broader support as parents get older, in illness, getting weaker and even honouring them in their death such as providing respectable funeral and keeping their ‘name’ - legacy.
when children are young and for children to provide when adults get older, not ‘yetegelabitosh’ (not upside-down). The term ‘yetegelabitosh’ ‘upside-down’ is used by parents in relation to the practice of drawing on their children particularly in terms of work and earning to support self and their parents. This framed a constant blaming of self for being poor, for being unable to provide for their children.

Asked whether they worked in the home, most responded with amusement and questioned ‘Saysera Yibelal’? (Can one eat without working?). A remark from a grandmother similarly suggests even though not ideal that it is commonly accepted that children should work:

‘Ahiyam beweledechiw tarfalech (it is a saying that translates ‘even a donkey merits rest as her offspring grow to take over).’

When children detailed their activities, however, the extent and range of work and the nature of it varied considerably by the type of household to which they belonged. Children from poor households mentioned that they all have to participate while in the richer households younger children are expected to study and not to work. Moreover, while the ethic of work, good manners, obedience, thoughtfulness is valued and expected from all children especially as parents grow older, both parents and children mentioned their preference by making reference to other children whom they thought have better childhood and future prospect because of being born in economically better off families. A comment below from Duni - a widowed mother in Kara sums up the view about children having to support families and themselves, saying:

‘Beleliengma ankebarere neber yemasadegachew’ meaning ‘had it was possible/permitted to me by God/life, I would have raised them in better protective and indulgent ways like others.’

Duni’s sentiment is widely shared, even though she was a mother who didn’t have money, she collected unused exercise books from her older children (no longer in school) to sew new ones for her younger son to use in school and still blamed ‘their (her children’s) lack of being born from them (her and her late husband)’, as limiting their children’s prospect, leading the older children to low regarded jobs, being without money or zemed.
In general there is a clear gendered division of labour. Typically, girls carried out most of the domestic tasks while boys tend to do less but were involved in tasks that were perceived to require ‘gulbet’ (energy) like chopping fuel wood, going to the market to sell produce, carrying loads, going to the mill or digging. However, in poorer and particularly single headed households, the gender division became less noticeable as boys also carried out domestic tasks and care work commonly reserved for girls. This does not come without a cost, however. Poor boys undertaking ‘girls’ work’ are teased by calling their name in a feminine way Anchi ‘she’ instead of Ante ‘he’. While they see it important that they obey their family and help in anyway they don’t want other children to know or see them doing this. Looked at more closely, there is clear fluidity in gendered relations as they interact with household economic status. This draws attention in particular to the complexity for boys who are in the margins as they negotiate balancing external expectation and the pressure to adopt a masculine public stance with its mismatch to their day to day reality in the home.

Children also spoke of physical tiredness and dislike of back-breaking work like fetching water and gathering fuel wood. Some of the children are exposed to worry, hazards and have accidents during errands. Unpopular jobs among children were the early morning task of ebet mezak (clearing dung from the barn with bare hands), making charcoal or chopping wood. These were particularly disliked because of the shortage of water to wash quickly before going to school. In the survey, for example one of the key items parents frequently regarded that children needed for schooling was ‘soap and hairwax to appear clean and be equal with other children (this is similar to what Tekola (2009) reports on the Ethiopian child’s sense of being counted equal).

Some examples of the hazards that children face in their work were given by Abush a 10 year old boy in Kara, who does several forms of ad hoc work to support his (single) mother and cover his school related expenses:

Once when I was running errands for people I went into debt. I was given 10 birr and sent to buy eggs very quickly. As I was coming from the shop, I fell down and all the eggs broke. I then did not want to return to their house thinking they will not

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48Both in rural and urban areas there is shame in having a man in a kitchen or doing the women’s tasks. Activities such as cooking, making coffee, looking after children are culturally reserved for women and girls.
believe me and might punish me. Later on, I borrowed 10 birr and paid them. Another time, as the roadwork that was going at the time to join the town with the next town left an open hole, I fell between the concrete gaps over drains and one of my knees got stuck when one leg was over the ground. People picked me up and carried me home. My mother was distraught, because I was in so much pain and we didn’t have money to get me to hospital. The man who sent me to do the errand heard and said he will give us money he also brought me food. I had to take a long time off school.

As the above case illustrates, paid work exposes children to physical, emotional, and financial hazards which can have direct implications for their schooling. In the absence of a free health service, the expense of medication, the general lack of structure to take responsibility of hazardous situations (e.g. at work injury as Abush had) all creates difficulty for poor households that rely off their children to supplement family income.

5.4.4 Work, Schooling, and Household economic status

As widely recognised in the literature, work can enable children to continue in their schooling, as they generate cash themselves to help them meet school associated costs. However, it is equally important to acknowledge there is work, including work done in the family home, that inhibits children from going to and progressing in school. Children in all categories of household worked alongside their schooling. However, as mentioned above, the type of work they did and the ways in which the demands of education and work were balanced differed according to the wealth of their households and other factors. For wealthier families, the children’s progress in school was paramount. Children’s work was therefore carefully organised around their schooling and the household was able to cover school related expenses without difficulty.

Children in middle-income households, however, would often get help from the family to get a small fund to start up small enterprise to do alongside their schooling. As chapter four shows, this is the group that seemed to get least schooling. Girls in this income bracket might, for example, set up a small hairdressing shop beside the family home. Boys might hire gari (horse and cart), bicycles, or run a street game like pool in a public space. As this is associated with gambling, however, it can have many negative effects for the boys involved, including physical abuse and addiction. Other work involved employment in small
metal or woodwork workshops for mending and making small pieces of furniture, for example. The responsibility children in middle income households bore often required them to be continuously on site as the income didn’t justify hiring labour. This was highly disruptive to their schooling.

Children from wealthy households in Kara also said they worked, however parents insisted that their education was the priority so they only made them work at weekends or after school, usually in the family business. A few parents also said that recreational time was necessary for children. Only two of the seventy two household heads in the survey said children are not supposed to work at all. They explained that even if working could be good discipline for children; they did not wish to compromise their children’s schooling. Ironically these parents also said they instead employed local children to do domestic work for them. With live-in working children, people said they are being kind feeding them and raising them up, so they didn’t feel they should be expected to put these ‘other children’ through school. This was particularly the case in Kore, where young children are hired as shepherds for farm related work. The contract in this case is between the parents and the employer. Salary for young children in the contract I saw was 500 birr per year paid to the family, plus full set of clothing bought for the child and feeding of the child for the duration.

Amongst poorer households the picture is mixed. For some of the poorer children who worked for money in Kara, the tasks could be undertaken at any time of the day including the evenings, meaning that they could still go to school. In other cases children said they sometimes stopped their schooling for a few weeks when they get an attractive offer of a job. They said they had to take the job because of the economic situation of the family even if they know it may be a short term offer. The highest level of drop out came amongst children living in households that lacked any stable means of income and those who worked for other people. The statement of Mesta, a 13 year old girl living in Kara, conveys some of the dynamics of how working in others’ households leads to school dropout.

When I was living at my parents, I can quickly do what I am told to do and get ready for school...even if I don’t finish they are my parents they can shout at me....I can cry...But, when I am living at my work place I have to finish all the work before I wash and get ready to school and I am always late, also I have many days absence.
When I don’t like to argue with the woman (employer), I just stay away from school and now I don’t go to school anymore.

Parents may also place children with richer families in the hope that they will send her/him to school in exchange of her/his labour. Such strategies do not always bring the desired result, as the poorer children may often be used simply as cheap labour. Such practices can also be seen as exploitation, especially when the child’s wages are paid to the parent. In many cases I came across, however, it was clear that the parents did not just abandon children, but tried to maintain some form of support to them through visits and small gifts of home produce to their employers, ‘so they will be kind to her’. However, as discussed in chapter two, the lower access to schooling and poorer general welfare of children living in a home other than their own parental home, is well established in the literature. Similar observations are reported where children from San community in Botswana experience different treatment compared to for example household (employer children) in Mokibelo (2014).

In line with other studies, my empirical data shows that children who are not biological offspring of the household head are much more likely to have lower levels of schooling. Thus beyond just the character of the household, an added element that has considerable influence on child schooling is the relational aspect. As illustrated in the case of Mesta, unrelated children are treated differently. For example their claims on important resources for schooling such as time is severely constrained. As household heads make decisions about resources, a crucial question that they ask is ‘Who is this child to me.’ Therefore, who they are to the household head is an important factor in determining whether they will be enrolled to school. This is important given that many Ethiopian children (and generally Africa) do live outside of the family home (Coe and Shani 2015). In this study sample there were 15.9% children reported as living in a household that is not that of their biological parents. This is slightly lower than Koohi-Kamali’s (2008) finding of 17%.

49 Such gifts include for example, handmade baskets, eggs, yogurt, incense sticks, and fetel (handmade cotton wool).
5.4.5 Migration for schooling

For both boys and girls an opportunity to escape the constraints of rural life is offered by migration, with its promise of securing better work and educational prospects. In most cases the decision to migrate was undertaken with mutual agreement between parents and children, though in some cases boys simply left of their own accord. Interviews with returnees reveal that the experience of being away from home is mixed. On one hand it involved enduring physically demanding jobs, the loneliness of being away from their families, the inferior position they hold in their new place, punishment, abuse, fear, non-payment, lack of sleep and a major struggle to meet their ambitions of going to a ‘good school’. While some mentioned enrolling in evening schools, they struggled to maintain consistent attendance due to their inability raise the necessary fees and complete work in time. On the other hand both boys and girls visiting for holidays revealed their sense of pride having left rural life, being able to support their families financially, and managing to live in what they considered modern places. There was however, no case out of the seven I interviewed in which they had met their expectations of fulfilling their primary goal of getting better schooling and progressing through school.

In addition to the social difficulties faced by migrating children, state structures in the form of the language policy posed considerable constraints on their scope to continue in education. As already discussed in chapters one and two, the current education system in Ethiopia maintains that schooling should take place in the local language. Typically rural children migrated to cities where the working language of Ethiopia (Amarigna) is used or others came from Oromigna to Amarigna area. As both children and parents reported, *Kube* language (the written form of Oromigna) was of little use to them in the new location. This is consistent with what others have noted (e.g. Tekeste Negash 1996; Bloor and Wondwosen Tamrat 1996; Tatek Abebe 2008) where the majority of employment opportunities are concerned Amharigna is needed. Given the concentration of better employment opportunities in the city where Amarigna is required it is not surprising. In schooling case children find their years of study discounted, as they are required to enter again from grade one in the new language, which is a significant disincentive to re-enrol after relocation. The case of Abate’s family, whose children dropped out of school after they were re-settled in a part of town where the school language of instruction was different, is mentioned above. The existing Ethiopian literature on the language policy generally focuses on implementation, and capacity to expand to the numerous languages
Along with the perceived advantages however, listening to local people’s experience draws attention to another important issue: the barriers to education that it can present to a highly mobile child population. A point made by them and their parents as well as teachers is emphasis on being proficient in Amharigna, English as well as their own local language Oromigna to save them from embarrassment of their inability to communicate freely and open doors for them locally and more widely in Addis Ababa and beyond.

5.5 SECTION III - GENDERED NORMS, PRACTICES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Asked directly whether they wished to educate all their children, sons and daughters, the majority answered that they did. Alam’s answer is typical:

**Alam:** *Daughter or son life is one and equal. We never say boy or girl all gets treated same and my desire is for all of them to reach best place so, as we have raised them they also return our favours.*

This was the general sentiment I encountered in KaraKore in my direct discussion with parents and young adults also note at the start of the chapter Samra’s comment ‘a girl can be [...]I just don’t want my children to have my life’. I did not find, therefore, the level of direct discrimination on the basis of gender that might be expected from the literature as discussed in chapter two. However, two points are important here first, as shown in chapter four girls were out of school more than the boys and a clear disparity in both enrolment and dropout was observed empirically. The qualitative analysis reveals there are complex mechanisms that affected boys and girls differently and led to unequal outcomes.

School readiness discussed in chapter four, for example, was applied in a gendered way that meant it had much greater impact on girls’ schooling than boys’, as girls were assumed to be physically weaker and so needing to be that much older than boys to manage the journey to school. While on the surface it is framed as protection what underlines it is enduring gender stereotyping. In this way my findings echo the existing recognition of influence of gendered norms and practices at the wider community level (Colclough, Rose and Tembon 2000; Aikman and Unterhalter 2005, 2013).

Anxieties about safety and security also play a role in keeping girls from school. Some girls addressed this by walking together in groups. Again, topography played a role. One path that children take to school passes through an uninhabited wooded area. Locally it is
believed there is an HIV+ man hiding there waiting to attack girls, making female teachers as well as school girls afraid to pass that way alone. There is striking similarity to what Punch (2000) finds in rural Bolivia where stories such as witchcraft is used to restrict mobility of children, also similar to Porter (2011) surveillance on the girls from real dangers and perceived threats.

Specific threats also relate to marriage practices. In the predominantly Oromo ethnic group of the study site Telefa (girl’s abduction for marriage) is practised. This might be because the man doesn’t have the money needed for a marriage ceremony, or because the girl or her parents have rejected his proposal. Family anxieties regarding the need to guard their sexuality thus run high once girls reach an age that shows them to be ready to marry. The combination of these issues means that late enrolment can be particularly catastrophic for girls, whose perceived readiness to start school may coincide quite closely with their perceived readiness for marriage. Related to this is reaching puberty and moments of embarrassments almost all of the girls have went through (I address this in school experience context chapter six, section 6.2.4).

As Gina Porter (2011:65) states ‘in rural areas … patriarchal institutions (including the gender division of labour, which places great emphasis on female labour contributions to household production and reproduction), and a patriarchal discourse concerning linkages between women's mobility, vulnerability and sexual appetite, shape everyday social practices and material inequalities.’ As observed by Chanana (1996) pulling children out of school is justified as taking a precaution because honour and shame is much more exaggerated in relation to girls than boys. The exaggerated view of girls’ weakness and seeing their virginity as a measure of their future success restricts their physical mobility and therefore schooling opportunities. However rarely do girls question such actions partly because none of this is done in a hostile manner but also because they too see themselves as needing special protection. Porter also found girls didn’t question their parents over this even when there was minimal actual risk (Porter 2011).

5.5.1 The Gendered Outcomes of Critical Life Events

The domestic responsibilities of girls constitute a major factor which inhibits their regular schooling, particularly in the rural area. While there is tension even with everyday activities the contradiction can become particularly strong in family crises such as illness, birth or
death, leading to girls having to drop out of school to take up family responsibilities, at least for a while. I outline some of these as follows

Specific societal pressure on girls arises when there is birth in the household. In Kore households tend to have many children. When babies are born older girls assume most of the housework that the mother did in addition to their own tasks. In these cases girls are unable to continue with their schooling. The duration mothers ideally stay within the house following giving birth, is around 40 days and even if the school rules allow it, girls said that they feel they will be left behind by their classmates after missing class for such extended periods. Indeed in Kore, after ill health, caring for younger siblings was quoted as one of the main reasons girls did not enrol and dropped out from school.

Girls initially stay behind to help in the home because the mother is expected to rest but their chance of return becomes slim as they then will begin to care for the baby as the mother resumes her usual domestic and social activities. Even for the girls that manage to return to school, they say their attendance is not regular as having a baby in the home causes a lot more work for them.

Illness is another reason reported for never enrolment or dropout. Some households reported ‘health issues’ as a reason for intermittent attendance. Practical and financial strain put on the household by an illness may mean a withdrawal of children from school. This is more likely to become long term where there is an additional vulnerability, such as the household being headed by a single mother, or a stigmatised illness such as HIV/AIDS, which blocks the mobilisation of potential social capital.  

Where illness is followed by death households can face sharp decline because following long illnesses, some households bear the burden of death of a family member as well as associated expenses. If the mother dies a daughter will often step in to take over her responsibilities. Men typically are not allowed to enter the kitchen or carry out day to day domestic work. In this case the elder daughter not only suffers the loss of the mother, but also most of the domestic tasks including caring for siblings fall on her and she has no option but to drop out of school.

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50 I became aware of 3 families in the peri-urban and 1 family in the rural that have HIV positive members of household. One of the parents in the peri-urban died in my second round fieldwork and the rural father died after I left.
Taking the above points together various reason constrained children’s enrolment. However, as the qualitative analysis reveals when parents are able to enrol their own children, they didn’t base it on whether a girl or the boy, but made pragmatic decisions based on the household economic and practical needs. This is consistent with observations elsewhere (Case et al. 2000; Huisman and Smits 2009).

The dedication of the above section to girls is not to imply rural boys have no problem. The gendered expectations that boys will carry heavy loads have been noted. Farming work is labour intensive and older boys are reported to drop out of school to farm for their family. Due to the late enrolment practice in general within a few years of being in school they will be ready to farm. Moreover, just as the girls I have also witnessed many of the boys migrating to bole51 when they see family needs, or like Abebe at the start of this chapter leaving school and getting in to employment. The point of giving a larger section to discussion of girls is a reflection of the complex way in which particular disadvantages are experienced by girls (Aikman and Unterhalter 2007). However, gender constructions clearly affect boys equally, if in rather different ways.

5.5.2 Family conflict and divorce

Divorce has direct implications for children. On the one hand they find themselves in the middle of a row with emotional and physical implications, and often new responsibilities. On the other hand this means their chance of enrolment is severely limited with the household’s changed social and economic position, especially as in most cases children stay with the mother who has weaker economic and social standing. If mothers re-marry, children of the original marriage are in a position of structural vulnerability in family politics. As mentioned above, beyond issues of gender, age, health or disability status, a critical dimension of entitlement is the relationship to head of household, who will ask, who is this child to me?

Typically there is prejudice against female headed households. In the case of divorce, women in the village commonly are expected to seek traditional mediation within the community. This takes place on a weekend where shimagilewoch (elders) made up entirely of men sit near the village market to hear complaints, preside over divorce, and apportion

51 People use the word Bole which is an affluent area in Addis Ababa. In reality they could be working anywhere construction work is found in the capital city. Many youth from this rural area go to work as a daily labourers.
the family resources. All of the three active\textsuperscript{52} divorce cases that I am aware of in the Kore during my fieldwork had an impact on the children’s schooling. The traditional justice allocated the majority of the land to the man who is generally considered ‘owner’ and ‘farmer’ (for similar observation see Yigremew Adal 2001 cited in Guday Emeire 2005, Lavers 2012, 2013). Women at times of conflict either leave and go to their family home or choose to stay within the compound, in some cases with no rights over the land\textsuperscript{53} through systematic exclusion such as giving them grain each year as a deal excused by the gendered division of labour logic ‘women can’t plough’. This brings a considerable level of hardship for the women for whom alternative means of livelihood is extremely limited and on whom much of the child rearing responsibility falls in addition to her compromised social standing as a divorced women. I briefly draw on couple of cases to illustrate this. Even though the stories are individually different, the gendered outcome of divorce, and its direct implication on their children’s schooling are common for all.

\textbf{Meti}

It is unusual and considered inappropriate by the community for a woman to sue her husband through formal means, and this can lead them to be ostracised. I went several times to meet a mother called Meti to discuss why her children didn’t come to school despite living quite close by. My local contact (Shafi) said to me. ‘\textit{She is never found at her home she is evil woman}’.

\textbf{Tigist} ‘Why is she evil?’ Shafi: ‘She shames her husband going away every day to town to sue him over the land. She may as well beat him’. I don’t even like talking to her. No one says selam (hello) to her these days’.

Women often don’t feel able to take on men over dispute. There is also the practical difficulty of travelling 20km far to Kara or at times to the much further regional town in order to seek formal justice. When I finally managed to meet the women she explained.

\textsuperscript{52}The emphasis here is ‘active’ and that I am closely ‘aware’ off. There was actually a lot more divorces both in the rural and peri-urban typically leaving the women in disadvantageous position. These are typically initiated by men. I only encountered one farmer who told me his wife chose to leave him and he is hurting for his children and for himself (due to shame).

\textsuperscript{53}This is in direct conflict to the official law on land and divorce settlement which stated equality between men and women. In practice the land issue has been problematic (See also Lavers 2012).
about the long, bureaucratic, frustrating process that requires both money and zemed (social capital).

It has been a while, I never rest. I have all these children to think about. I made Kishe (her daughter) to stay home so, she can look after the house and the children. If I left it empty, what happens to my children also, my husband will come and steal our grains or burn the house. What use is it for her to be in school when we are in such trouble?

The interview with the daughter was also revealing:

I want to go to school, but I need to be home. Mother said if he burns down our house we have no food to eat and she will leave us and go to live in the city. I fear what would happen to us.

Previously this girl had sent a message through her school friends to her school teacher asking her to come and speak with her mother to allow her to go to school. The teacher told me she got the message but had not find time to go and their house is too far.

Tarik

In cases of family break-down, the demands of state educational policies can interact with personal animosity to interrupt children’s schooling. Tarik describes her own experience of this.

‘When my husband died I left Meron my older daughter with my in-laws and went to work in Addis Ababa. I then met my current husband moved here and had two girls. When life allowed me, I wanted to put her to school like her younger sisters here with me so I went to the village to tell the grandparents this but, her grandparents refused. When I managed to talk to her to flee to me they hid her certificate so she cannot enrol here. The school here requires seeing her certificate
and meshenga. I cry because without education she will stay behind her sisters in life, they are younger than her but they are in grade 3 already.

Indeed there will be multiple reasons why the grandparents appear to want to stop this girl from going to live and study with her mother. They raised her since the death of her father (their son), so she may be seen as a replacement of the son they lost, and they may need her labour to support them as they age. She is already enrolled in her grandparents remote village, though her mother sees that school as of poor quality. The complexities of family conflict are compounded by official demands for documentation, which places the girl’s educational future entirely in her grandparents’ hands.

Kaba

Despite the fact divorce is happening in both communities, it is still regarded as a great misfortune and social shame, which men may feel as much as women. As described above, children are critically affected by family disharmony and relationship breakdowns. Kaba described how her son was a good student who stood first from his class from grade 1 to 3. Then she describes how after the divorce they didn’t have much at home and her son decided to get work. She says:

He was clever from his class and once even asked me to come to school on award day to see him get his certificate. But, the market was running late and I didn’t go. He said Emmaye, why you didn’t come? Then one day, he said what can you do for me he (his father) wouldn’t do anything for me. I will not study I will go to Bole. I said to him, I will do what I can for you, I even got some exercise books so he can register to grade 4 and he said to me why did you buy these, is it for you? Are you planning to go to school – I am not! See, I then didn’t want him to be corrupted by going to Addis Ababa so, I said instead I will send him to good Christian home. So, I made a year contract with this family and he went. He came for Astro (St Mary’s day) and said ‘I hate it there’. I asked him to finish his time as we already ate(used up the prepaid salary) the money and I said I promise to go bring him back at the end of contract so he can be back to school by September. He agrees. Then, I was planning to go fetch him when (Arogitwa sitmot) an old women in the family died this made me late just by 3 weeks. However, he must have thought I am keeping him there longer so, he went and hung himself. I don’t know why but God is punishing me and he is giving me strength too.

Meshenga is a form of clearance also required for people moving places to enable them to register in different Kebele and get new identity card. Same practice in the Derg era served to control rural–urban migration. Ethiopia continue to have control over migration (Boyden 2013).
The larger story of this suicide shows the ways that age and gender combine to create multiple vulnerabilities. Kaba’s gender meant that she received only one quarter of the family’s assets as the divorce settlement. Her son’s age meant he was employed for specific work but an older worker in the household made him do extra work in addition. When her son complained to her she counselled him, ‘you are a good Christian boy forgive him he is old’. In her view saving her son from being corrupted in Addis Ababa and possibly going astray from his faith was more important than his immediate difficult experience at work. She also hoped that she would eventually be able to get him back to school. She goes on to explain how life became unbearable after his death and she feels confused because people tell her to sue the family that employed him. She is also isolated because she became a Pentecostal after experiencing healing, and was then ostracised by them because of her son’s suicide. ‘I don’t know when my suffering ends but I am here and God gives me strength so I can live to raise the children (her younger son go to school)’.

The fact that Kaba didn’t listen to her son perhaps reflects the ways that adults see particular situations as temporary, something to be endured for a relatively short while, just as they see their children having dropped out of school as a provisional status. Her son on the other hand was saying he hated it and wanting to return back home making now the immediate concern. It was complex for Kaba. Even though it wasn’t her initial choice for him to work, once he decided and they signed the agreement with the employer she had taken and spent the money 500 birr (GBP 25) for the year. The structural forces upon her meant she couldn’t listen to him.

This example tragically brings out the tension between individual and collective interests. His initial decision to leave school despite doing well there, reflected his wish to help his family out of the hardships that followed his parents’ divorce. But when he found the situation was unbearable, his mother’s sense of their collective position having already used the money, meant that she was unable to release him. While this is an extreme case, this tension between the individual and collective runs through the chapter, from the way collective concerns structure the ‘choices’ of Meti and Solomon, to the comment of Mrs Tewabech: ‘is one not enough’?

This section has described some of the implications of patriarchy in Ethiopia, a social hierarchy ordered by age and gender. While parents valued the schooling of children this
could be in tension with concerns for their safety and security. Critical events that affect households often have a detrimental effect on the child’s schooling. Children find it hard to remain in school when family members fall ill. Illness in both communities often results in debt because households use their resources for medication. We have also seen how death brings profound change to the household and it curtails parental ambition to educate children. Often children that lose a parent or parents find it very difficult to remain in school.

5.5.3 Agency and Choice

The dominant view of African children, and girls in particular, positions them as passive recipients of adults’ decisions. The picture presented here is more complex. The decisions of both adults and children clearly reflect their habitus, combining internalised responsibilities structured through gender and age combined with conscious reflection on the particular demands of their economic situation. This results in a paradoxical sense both having no choice, and making some form of compromise choice which balances their sense of loyalty and responsibility for the family’s immediate needs, with their preferred choice of being in (or keeping their children in) school. The balance between factors and the nature of choice clearly varies by the identity of the child and the character of his/her household.

While the dominant pattern is clearly of highly constrained choices, there are exceptional cases where children pursue schooling despite major structural barriers. In this section I present some examples.

**Tesfa** age 15, grade five, is the third child out of eight children in a poor farming family living near a primary school. Her parents said they are unable to support her and suggested they would find her domestic work as they did for her two older siblings. This would enable them put their younger children in school. Tesfa disagreed and faced a beating for it. Living next to the Kebele compound she knew influential people, so went to the school head and the kebele leader to demand they put pressure on her parents to let her continue school. At one point she even sued her parents formally to the Kebele and was assigned her own hut next to her parents and allowed to manage her own life. A compromise was eventually reached that Tesfa will go to city in summer time and earn but come back in term time. She continued studying with no support from her family. She supported herself working outside of school time as a very low paid helper to the teachers in the village. This enabled her to
buy nail polish and set up a small business painting nails for school children. She also sold tea and biscuits. There is little doubt that her success in pursuing a case against her parents reflected their poverty – the kebele and school authorities had little to lose by supporting her not them (see also chapter six section 6.3.1).

**Worke** age 17 grade seven lives with her aging parents and many younger siblings. Three of her older sisters and two brothers are already married. An offer of marriage was proposed to her family and they agreed. She tried to negotiate with her parents to turn down the marriage and let her carry on her education. Without telling anyone she ran away to another village where one of her older sisters lives. She threatens to kill herself if they force her to be married. Shaken by her disappearance and threat of committing suicide the family agrees for her to return home and to school. She goes back to continue her study and was sure she will have her family support to continue into secondary school too. This was one of a number of cases where threatening to run away enabled girls to negotiate successfully to stay at school rather than marry. Such cases are interesting because they indicate how girls can mobilise cultural capital to support their interests. While families may accept (if unhappily) boys leaving to seek work without saying where they are going, girls’ perceived greater vulnerability means that their disappearance is much less tolerable. Failing to protect girls, such that a girl left home before formally leaving for marriage or secondary education through proper arrangement with the family, or even worse who killed herself, will have a serious consequence for the family’s status in the community. Girls like Worke skilfully recognise that the cultural investment in virginity and female vulnerability which may often constrain them, can also be mobilised for use to their own advantage.

While some girls manage to avoid pressure to marry, in the case of abduction, there is particular pressure put on girls to agree. The parents’ view is that she has lost her virginity and may be carrying a baby, so her chance to marry properly is compromised and the family will fall into disrepute (Guday Emeire 2005). Therefore parents will generally prefer to settle by mediation that gives some compensation to the parents, not because of the compensation per se, but to restore the family reputation. While abduction is generally reported as becoming quite rare, there were several cases of it in the village. This led me to wonder whether the view that this is rare is a result of lack of reporting (I will discuss this in chapter six).
The statement below by a woman in Kara whose sister (Tideg) is now living with her after abduction followed by pregnancy, birth and escaping. Her description expresses some of the tensions and conflicts involved.

She is now in school. My parents are disappointed with me for taking her on. It took them long time before they were willing to see us. See, I went to visit them and she told me she was unhappy of her marriage by abduction. She didn’t want to stay in the marriage but our parents said ‘it is too late’ so, they took her back to him. I said, I don’t mind her to come and live with me. We will eat what we have and I will put her back to school. So, one day she came.

Tideg herself went on to explain how it was important for her to stay in school, because she wanted to become a teacher. She said

I always knew I don’t want to live there. I hated him for spoiling my luck. He thought I forgot that, I didn’t! I waited until my baby passed his first birthday and left without telling anyone. I left the baby in his grandmothers’ house. My parents were very embarrassed because they accepted shimagile (elder mediation) and ate the money so, they tried to pressure me but I refused. My sister got me meshenga\(^55\) from the village school and enrolled me here. My parents haven’t given up, when we went to visit them for Easter ‘they brought the baby with nice clothes hoden lemababt belew (trying to weaken my stomach/heart), saying he misses me, he cries and calls ema’. I resist them. I sometimes don’t look at the baby…. I took him clothes too’.

It is much harder for girls when they decide to break the societal rules, in addition to the practical difficulties moral and emotional questions are raised against them. This was the only case I found of a woman who decided to leave after marriage by abduction. None of the others\(^56\) I spoke to attempted to go back to school: they felt they had no choice but to stay. Overall, exercising agency that challenges local conventions and power relations is highly risky. It involves forgoing the immediate protection that children would normally enjoy. This prohibits many from making such an attempt. For those who did defy conventions and succeeded to stay in school a common theme was the social capital

\(^{55}\) This is discussed in chapter 7.

\(^{56}\) Between the two sites I spoke to 6 young women settled in their marriages following abduction (one of the abduction was by mutual agreement having fallen in love but family didn’t allow her marriage) even though all of whom said they had hoped to go back to school in practice almost immediately they fell pregnant and gave up their hope.
(relationships with sisters, friends and so on) that they were able to draw on. There were very few in this group those who managed to go it alone.

While most parents wished for their children to be in school, there were also some children who reported that they had a desire to enrol too but were being kept at home. At times, as shown above in the case of Gize, children reported that they have prepared for September and bought the required materials only to be prevented from enrolling by their parents (I come to this case in chapter six section 6.3.1).

In such contexts, social capital again proves vital. In addition to relatives, friends are also valuable sources of encouragement and practical help. Some children, especially boys, go with their friends in September and enrol at school without their parents. Many boys learn counting and alphabet from their friends while they are looking after the animals. Chal tells me that his friend taught him how to count and write his name while he was shepherding. He has no mother and lived with his father and his paternal grandparents. His father was an alcoholic and Chal was helping the grandparents with farm work and at home. As a young boy, his friend took him to school in September to enrol. He says:

*I was scared of going to school but my friend said they will love me there because I was clever. Then we came to school and my friend said ‘teacher you can test him he already knows how to count, and they registered me to grade 2! I didn’t tell anyone at home after few days my father beat me for going to school and he said he has told all the teachers to beat me if I ever set a foot in school and I won’t have any home to come back to. So, I went back to shepherding. My friend came and said that I must come to class because the teacher was asking about me and that it is lie no teacher will beat me. He said we can share his exercise books and I can even eat in his home. My grandmother also said I can go, so, I went and she supported me. I worked over the weekends and after school, I even farmed along with my father. My father didn’t accept me until I was in grade 5 and people started talking that I was progressing quickly and stood first in the whole school. He stopped nagging me after that.*

As Chals’ case illustrates, boys are able to do this using their relative freedom of movement and interaction within the informal market that gives them access to cash for registration fees. What is interesting in his case and in many others is their evolving agency. Once he was in grade 5 things turned for better for him as his father accepted the situation, the school had much hope for him and at the time of the interview he was the head boy with
teachers confident that he will go far in his education. The support Chal received from his
classmate also illustrates children’s agentic reach beyond themselves, as he opened a way to
transform Chal’s schooling prospect from non-enrolled to a head boy and it all begun in the
field they were shepherding!

Another remarkable case of friends’ support was a small project I visited of a nine and ten
year boys who had taken unused lands near the river and put their school lessons into
practice to create a greenhouse to grow seedlings for the market. They took turns to water
it, fenced it with thorny plants to protect it from being destroyed by small animals. They
used the money they raised to buy schooling items. This and few cases similar to it are
important especially in the context where many children struggle to sustain their presence
at school, partly because they will be needed at home but also the expense of schooling is
not a one-off payment that gets resolved by the abolishment of school fee, and requires on-
going funding that they cannot maintain (I will discuss this more in chapter 6 in the section
about school related issues for never enrolment and dropout).

Children also expressed agency by leaving school against their parents’ wishes. In some
cases this was because children wanted or felt the need to earn money, but in other cases
they simply didn’t want to study and refused to go to school, however their parents,
grandparents and their teachers tried to keep them there. Describing the reasons for this,
they would question why they should study when they know they won’t get to use the
learning, they know it will not get them the jobs they want, and they know they don’t have
the support ultimately to sustain it. What appears as agency may thus be re-interpreted as
the internalisation of constraint (see also Unterhalter 2012 interpretation of voices of
school children)

5.6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to explore some of the key issues that emerged from the survey data,
through in depth qualitative research with children and their parents in KaraKore. In
particular, it has investigated the patterns of thought, behaviour and practices which lie
behind the observed patterns of school enrolment, non-enrolment, intermittent
enrolment (temporary withdrawals) and dropout. In this concluding section, I present a
short reflection on the key findings from the field of the home and community, drawing out
in particular how my findings challenge or confirm the arguments in the wider literature. In
chapter six I move on to consider children in the field of the school, and how issues appear when we take into account the teachers’ perspectives.

As pointed out in chapter four, poverty remains constant for many of the KaraKore people thus it frames much of the discussion. However it is important to note that outcomes in children’s schooling could rarely be attributed to a single factor. Instead, various factors such as rurality, poverty, school system, family structure, connections with the global economy, gender, livelihood and so on intersect in sometimes complex ways. In the following sections I discuss two key points. First I consider how my findings address the concerns in the literature for access, quality, equity and relevance as explanations for why children are not in school and voice. In particular, I stress that poor parents and children not only value schooling but also have a sophisticated understanding of what type of school is desirable in order to achieve their aspirations and the constraints they face. My second concerns the issue of ‘children’s voice’ and the social construction of choice, which I discuss in relation to the literature on children’s work and schooling. Much of the findings here asserts prior studies that considered children’s perspectives, schooling and children’s voice in the international development and education literatures (e.g. Unterhalter 2012) that asserted contextualisation of voices, but, also challenges researchers to critically reflect on what we mean by voice and its utilisation. See for an examples of detailed critique on voice and international development (Wood 1989; Holland and Blackburn 1998; Moncrieffe and Eyben 2007; Moncrieffe. and Eyben 2007; Mokibelo 2014).

5.6.1.1 Local understanding of school quality as structural inequality

As discussed in chapter two, the debate in the literature continues as to what access, quality, equity relevance and more recently learning means and how it might be conceptualised (Nikel and Lowe 2010, Barret 2011, Hickling-Hudson and Klees 2012). My findings show that these are indeed live and important topics of debate within rural areas. First, as introduced in chapter four section 4.7, geographical dimensions of access do not simply concern distance from school, but also topography as one key reason for never enrolment and late enrolment because of the locally constructed view of children’s ‘readiness’ for school. This is a key and neglected issue to fine-tune the conceptualisation of ‘under-served’ areas in Ethiopia’s education sector. Local constructions of ‘readiness’ do not only make children enrol late in school, but also reduce the numbers of years they stay there, as readiness for school coincides too closely for girls with readiness for marriage, also
critical life course moments e.g. puberty and experiences of menarche and with boys with readiness for paid employment.

Second, the **quality** of schooling is an issue that people themselves raised with me in both Kara and Kore. This was framed in various ways. Most simply, quality is ‘read’ through the infrastructure of the schools (not the mud built, no windows, dirt earth classroom) but modern, clean, with amenities including water, toilet and play grounds. Next, quality is assessed through the demonstrably growing ability of children and their transition from primary to secondary school and beyond. Generally parents have very little complaint directed against school teachers even though they recognise the problems they faced from the school system e.g. demand for meshenga, and (‘mewacho’ ‘school contribution’ discussed in chapter six) they didn’t see any of these as something they can challenge but to accept and put effort to fulfil.

Challenging the literature that suggests rural uneducated parents are unable to follow up and support their children in education (e.g. Hyde et al.2005) my data shows that parents in KaraKore are highly aware the level of their children’s engagement and ability in school (this sense of awareness is in someways consistent with Yamada’s recent observation of what she claimed a shift in peoples attitude). Children loudly declare incremental achievements, studying is also common knowledge in the field of play around the house or while they are shepherding (e.g. see above Chal’s case section 5.5.3), specific events like certificate days and achieving good grades are all shared knowledge even beyond the immediate household members, and children are encouraged to display their knowledge to family members, especially their skills of English language, and parents proudly facilitate for their children that are counted as clever to give practical help to other families for counting logs, seedlings, evaluation of trees for sale and so on. All these practices, interactions and the teacher’s feedback (discussed in the next chapter) therefore formulates parent’s view of the school and their children’s place in schooling. It is also noticeable that the children (both boys and girls) that are seen as high achievers receive moral, practical and financial support from their family and others (including from teachers and neighbours). This finding of the awareness and engagement of poor parents in their children’s education, even when the parents have little education themselves is confirmed by Banerji (2000) who argues that

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57 This is one part of a broader view that parents’ education level is a key determinant of their children’s.
poor households proportionally spent more on their children’s schooling than richer households did.

As regards quality (Punch 2002 and others) and relevance (Pryor 2005 and others) my findings clearly echo those of others with respect to rural children. In rural Ethiopia these issues are covered by Tekeste Negash (1996, 2006) and Tatek Abebe (2007). It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the theorisation of quality and relevance (see for example Nikel and Lowe 2010; Aikman and Rao 2010; Tikly and Barrett 2013). However, it is appropriate to offer some reflections on these issues from the perspectives of parents and children in KaraKore. In this context, it is interesting to note that, although there is no sophisticated market or choices of schools within the communities, given there is only one school in Kore and even in Kara the schools are more of less similar, children and parents did have awareness of the ideal school that they imagined will be required to get their children their desired outcomes. This is framed in comparison to those schools that also offer secondary level, but most prominently towards people who were not like themselves, in being rich on the one hand and urban on the other. For people in KaraKore, therefore, the issue of school quality was framed within an, acute awareness of social inequality. At the same time, this sense of inequality was internalized, as parents typically blamed themselves for not being able to provide the best for their own children. Although the contexts are different the findings resonates what Tatek Abebe who also found in Gedo rural Ethiopia that he characterised children as trapped between disparate world where they neither manage schooling nor master their rural livelihood owning to the gap between what school is offering and what their rural livelihood requires (Tatek Abebe 2008).

5.6.1.2 Voices, choices and agency

As discussed in earlier chapters, the importance of listening to children’s voices is a key theme in the literature. My findings suggest, however, that this may be more complex than it first appears. In particular, I argue that we need to spend time to understand not just what children and parents are saying on the surface but really to hear what they may be saying at a deeper level. This is particularly important when it comes to issues of agency or ‘choice’. The notion of habitus is particularly helpful here, in that it points to the formation of choices within the context of pretty adverse circumstances.

58 For example, they were all located just off the main road, included grades 1-8, had standard classrooms, irregular access to mains water, and a nominal toilet block (divided into cubicles) that is clearly not adequate to the number of users.
The issue of children’s work provides a clear example. As discussed in the literature review chapter there are two broad positions with respect to children’s labour, the abolitionist/liberationist and moderate/relativist. The moderate/relativist position has helped to highlight both the potential benefits of child work and the potential damage to working children of outright bans and boycotts of child labour (Boyden 1994; Boyden, Ling and Myers 1998; Basu 1998; White 1999; Lieten and White 2001; Woodhead 1998, 1999, 2001; Pacis, Alcantara and Labrodor 2003; ILO 2004; Cockburn and Dostie 2007). An important aspect of this is the claim that children’s work is not only essential to the family livelihood but also children are proud to provide for themselves and their families (Bequele and Myers 1995; Woodhead 1999; White 1999; Buchmann 2000; Admassie and Bedi, 2003). Indeed, my findings too suggest that children want to work, they feel responsible and proud of contributing to the family home, and that parents too recognise their input as essential for the survival of the household. However, as shown in the above discussion of their view of the ‘ideal’, all these apparent choices happen within a very constrained context in which it is certainly not the best of all possible worlds. So, their pride itself in a sense is an indication of a particular kind of social formation or habitus. Furthermore, these ‘choices’, this pride, even the collective value and sense of appreciation to hard work, patience and resilience in short term for future gains, should not simply be taken at face value, but seen as the outcome of adaptation to a far from desired context. They also exist alongside an acute awareness of ‘better’ childhoods for other wealthy or city children and parents’ grief and shame at having to accept the situation of ‘upside-down support’. Although she only reports on girls’ perspectives, my findings here are echoed by Emebet Mulugeta’s (2004) interviews with rural girls enrolled in higher education in Ethiopia. She reports:

Due to a lack of awareness of families, and the existence of circumstances beyond parents’ control, the girls often missed school. They were asked to stay home and take care of the house and younger siblings when there was a family emergency. Most of the girls were not happy to do that. But they did not have a choice; it is expected of every girl to help her mother in the house. (Emebet Mulugeta 2004:82)

In KaraKore the ideal, for parents and for children, is that children should be free from paid and hard labour including from the jobs that are the family enterprise when it clashes with
schooling. It is important that the rush to recognise children’s voice and agency should not obscure the ways that these are generated within contexts of considerable constraint.

One important dimension of constraint that can often be overlooked is the sense of insecurity and uncertainty. In KaraKore parents’ paramount concern was to secure their children’s future, whether by schooling, marriage, migration and jobs. Marriage, jobs or migration are not mentioned as the ideal choice, but their narratives are characterized by a strong sense of uncertainty emphasising the fear of death and dying, and of leaving ones children before they are on secure foundation. Seeing them settled is a real worry and this is not unique to Ethiopia. UNICEF (2001) notes the example of Ugandan and Somalian parents seeking security through marrying their daughters to militia members. This worry about future security is present in the children’s narrative too in being left orphaned and not having parents ‘to look after them’ even though in material terms the children might already be providing both for themselves and for others including their parents. While schooling typically appeared the preferred choice, that it could provide a foundation worth striving for, it was often not seen as a practical option, so other ‘choices’ that appeared to offer security were made.

The larger point is that what children and parents say, and especially what they say first, should not be taken simply as an answer itself but as something that needs to be problematized. What is taken for granted is itself an effect of power (Mitchell 1990). There also needs to be a much more realistic position which recognises that actually some form of child labour does mean that some children cannot go to school. This is not just about working in global factories but also about working in the family enterprises. There is also a further complexity. On the one hand children and parents may have internalised the situation as what must be, so that they ‘choose’ for a child to take work to support school for themselves or for younger siblings, or simply contribute to the family’s livelihood. But on the other hand, this does not mean that they believe this is the way things should be. These simultaneously remains another kind of consciousness which will not accept this as the ideal, and knows that if circumstances were different a very different choice would be made.

In relation to gender, I did not find a sense that parents were unwilling to invest in girls’ education on the grounds that she is getting married and therefore becoming the property
of her husband, as is widely claimed in the literature (e.g. Tietjen 1998). Instead, there is a lot more sense of trust for a daughter to look after parents in old age to be reliable, loyal and understanding of her mother’s problems (see also Hirut Terefe 2000; Emebet Mulugeta 2004; Guday Emeire 2004 on family relations). Some did, however, say that schooling is not purposeful, not as a direct discrimination or dislike for girls, but rather as the outcome of deeper gender structuring which is part of the taken for granted. Also, as I have stressed throughout the chapter, the interrelatedness of things means that we need to develop a relational understanding of schooling. A schooling career is not just about the individual child but also very much about what is going on and the ecology of family. In relation to gender in particular, it is important to shift the default focus on women and girls as students, to recognise that gendering at the level of the parents is critical particularly when things go wrong (such as in the event of a divorce). This again has gendered outcomes for both boys and girls. It is also important to recognise how boys may suffer particular kinds of difficulty due to the structural disadvantages of their mothers. Their life circumstances mean they may be out of line of societal expectations and suffer the repercussion from it (e.g. stigma from taking on jobs normally reserved for women). The relational is also critical when it comes to household decision-making about which child to enrol in school. My study shows that the key variables considered are not so much gender, but firmly anchored on the answer to the question of who is this child to me. Pini et al. (2014) note rurality itself 'like gender is messy, fluid and complicated. Definitive and unequivocal universal assessment of inequalities which arise from intersections between gender and rurality are thus impossible to make' (Pini et al. 2014:456).

I have shown even when school is theoretically available, for the majority of school aged children there is no linear path to get there. Similar observations are made by (Filmer 2007; Kabeer 2000b; World Bank 2005). My analysis shows the path before children enrol and when they are in school is rather fragmented and uneven with pervasive steep challenges. The lives of rural children are characterised by considerable uncertainty and unpredictability relating to poverty, work, migration, illness, loss of parents, critical events in the household, divorce, and indebtedness. The collective sense of life and wellbeing means that a hazard suffered by one family member may have far-reaching effects for others. The aspiration of parents and children for a good education are therefore only one part of a complex set of factors. In this chapter I have explored how the structure of rural livelihoods and gender and age based responsibilities within them, militate in practice
against the children being able to pursue stable and continuous school careers, despite the desires and best efforts of themselves and their parents. In the next chapter I will extend the exploration from within the school and the education system.
6 SEEING THE SOCIAL (PART II): SoCIALLY EMBEDDED TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL SYSTEM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws again on the ethnographic work I carried out within the schools and among the community of KaraKore, to extend exploration of the social with a focus on teachers and school-based practices. As in the last chapter, I aim to offer a sociological insight as to why low enrolment and incompletion persist in rural context. To that end I will draw on Bourdieu’s theoretical tools of habitus, capital and field to explain how enrolment and completion is affected by what goes on inside of the school as much as outside of it. I discuss the field of home in relation to field of school to show the way the interface between the child and schooling is mediated by the social. Particularly following the work of Mills (2006) on social reproduction theory, I will highlight the ways the spatial differences in the two schools translate on the ground and draw attention to the tension between transformational agenda of the school system and the reproductive outcome of its practices in each site.

I do so first, in the context of the key tool of the education sector that is used every year to bring children to school - namely, the campaign59 for the recruitment of local children to school, focusing in particular on the way that the implementation of the campaign in social practice affects processes of enrolment and non-enrolment. I compare how the campaign is carried out in the two study sites and the similarities and differences between them. I note the exclusionary nature of the campaign in the context of it being time bound recruitment, the invisibility of certain categories of children, and the classist approach that marks the campaign marked in the local village. Second, I consider more closely the interface between the school and its system in how it positions the teachers. Focusing on the issue of dropout I discuss teachers’ roles in producing both transformative as well as reproductive outcome in children’s schooling. I then look further into the ways that teachers are socially embedded, and how this leads to continuity between home, community and school in the reproduction of social hierarchies. The ethnographic data thus reveals a fundamental paradox in the way that teachers ‘see the social’. On the one hand teachers fail to see the

59 Yamada 2007 in her study on EFA in Ethiopia notes that there are two intensive campaigns ‘election and UPE’.
social in the sense of a problematic context that needs to be addressed if children are to be enabled to attend school. On the other hand, however, they also have an over-socialised view, so that their treatment of children reproduces, rather than counteracts, social inequalities by class and gender with direct implications for children’s schooling. In other words, at times their view of the children is clouded by stereotypes.

Thirdly, I extend this argument to consider the broader educational structure in terms of the schooling system and the mechanics of social reproduction within it. Just as teachers fail to see themselves as social actors with their own part in reproducing inequalities, I highlight how the system too need to be seen as part of what needs to be explained in the problem of children’s low school enrolment and completion, I give examples to illustrate how this unfolds on the ground for the children and their families and its implication on their aspiration for attainment of education. In particular, I show how never enrolment and dropout can in part be explained by the intense efforts made towards the measurable outcomes of ‘increased rates of enrolment’ and the pressures put on schools to perform within the given parameter itself can undermine the realisation of desired outcomes.

6.2 Section I: Context, Utility and Practices of Campaign

There is a strong culture of using campaigns as an outreach strategy. As a familiar tool endorsed by the education sector, the schools at both sites and other government and nongovernmental bodies use campaigns for various purposes including child vaccination, family planning, HIV/AIDS awareness and education about children and girls’ rights. Campaigns can take various forms ranging from one-day events to several weeks and may be conducted in a market, at health centres or through door-to-door visits.

The activity by the schools is planned at the start of school year. The main objective is to stimulate demand for school, to trace never enrolled children and bring back those who have dropped out. Teachers do walk from door to door in groups of two or more accompanied by the local Kebele Abiyot Tebaki60 (revolutionary guards). The major difference between the two schools is, geography as the rural (Kore) teachers will be expected to cover a very large area, as the community is a collection of scattered

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60 While this is a term popular during the Derg era, I am using it here following the local teachers own words at the time of the interviews.
settlement and it has unpaved foot paths, rugged landscape, multiple hills, crossing rivers whereas the peri-urban (Kara) site have a much better flat land and comparatively the houses are situated closely to one another.

Inside a classroom made of ‘cheap locally available material’
Source: Tigist Grieve, fieldwork 2008-2009
6.2.1 Geography of the two schools

The topography of the Kara site is flat and next to the roadside which makes a tremendous difference in the time teachers need to spend on house to house visits for the campaign as well as in monitoring persistently absent children. This is an important factor as teachers’ standard workload is forty hours per week. UNESCO states that this should break down into ‘22.5 hours used for classroom teaching, 11.5 hours for lesson preparation and monitoring of students, three hours for co-curricular activities and three hours for miscellaneous school activities’ (UNESCO 2006:2). For Kore teachers, by contrast, two hours can easily be spent travelling to visit a single student at home (refer to table 6.1 on key differences between the two schools). On the basis of student residency patterns and topography alone it is therefore evident that there must be serious doubts about the practicalities of the campaign for the Kore teachers.61

More differences are outlined on table 6.1 below as explained in this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peri-urban site (Kara)</th>
<th>Rural site (Kore)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situated by main road – geographical advantage</td>
<td>Situated amidst rural roads and difficult terrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer never enrolled and some dropout</td>
<td>Never enrolment and dropout wide spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are organised and able to take action on aspects of findings from the campaign process (e.g. material help)</td>
<td>Teachers unable to offer practical help to children and family to encourage enrolment apart from mere campaigning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced and well trained teachers</td>
<td>Inexperienced, young, new recruits and under qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained teachers to support children that are unable to hear and speak</td>
<td>No trained teachers to take disabled children in to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration fee for the poor waived</td>
<td>Registration fee applies to all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform is an obligation</td>
<td>Uniform not an obligation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The community is more diverse (ethnicity, religion, occupation)</td>
<td>Homogenous community (in ethnicity, religion, occupation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few farmers, a mix of government and private sector workers and labourers</td>
<td>Predominantly smallholder agriculture (labour intensive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ residence spread throughout the three Kebele’s</td>
<td>Teachers live among the closely knit community in one compound in the middle of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional62 relationship between many of the teachers and parents</td>
<td>Close social ties between the teachers and some of the parents and children in the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grieve 2008-09 summary of observation field notes from the two study sites.

61 Of course some studies had linked motivation of teachers and salaries but this is not explored here as it is beyond the remit of the study. I have noted in the next footnote the challenges teachers described as a context.

62 I don’t use this term here or elsewhere in this thesis in evaluative sense as used in education literature but, to point out the relative independency teachers have in Kara as they are not closely associated in day to day personal needs as the teachers in Kore are due to the different community set up.
Experience of teachers across the two sites

The school in the Kara had a number of immediate advantages. First, as I have shown in chapter four the problem of never enrolment and dropout was significantly lower compared to Kore. Second, as noted above, topography and the proximity of the children to the school meant that physical access was considerably easier. This meant even though as discussed in chapter five availability of school was not a guarantee to enrolment one of the widely recognised hurdle rural children face (distance) is not an issue for children that live in Kara. Third, the teachers in Kara site were better organised to deal with real life problems of children collectively. This was possible through the teachers’ initiated fund for students that experience hardship during their study. The initiative raises funds from tea and snack sales at break time as well as from other sources like NGOs. Fourth, most of the teachers have diploma or degrees and had received extra training, including for some on teaching special needs children. This meant the school campaign was relatively easy to do and inclusive of at least the physically able children and those with learning difficulties. Finally, the school administration has waived the registration fee for children from poor families or working children. Moreover, it administers extra help (school materials) for children that fall into hardship.

The school at Kore however, has young teachers at the start of their career with less experience and networks. This meant internal or external resource to help children experiencing hardship was not possible. The only provision the school in Kore made to attract children to school is abolishing the rules over wearing uniform but all children still paid for registration fee and other contributions throughout the year as requested. This measure has opened the opportunity for many more that would have not been able to come due to shortage of cash in the area.

Teachers and the community relations

The position of the teachers within the community constitutes a further important dimension of difference. In Kara the community is more diverse both in terms of ethnicity and livelihood. This means that, even though children do work, the family livelihood in many of the households is not as child labour intensive as it is in Kore. In addition, the teachers in Kara lived in a relatively highly populated area scattered across three Kebele’s.
This meant that they were able to maintain an independent professional relationship with the parents that enabled them to raise the issue of persistent absence and never enrolment more directly including about children employed in the households.

By contrast, in Kore all of the teachers lived in one compound in the middle of the village, just beside the village market. This meant that they interacted with the parents as neighbours in the course of their everyday routine activities like going to the market, searching for fuel wood or helping with water collection, sharing the only pit latrine in the village set at the health post. The relatively isolated rural location also meant they relied heavily on the local community, and particularly on the richer households within it, to meet their own needs. This included gifts such grains, seasonal produce, and eggs, or borrowing a horse to travel to other villages and so on are part of everyday life. Such items were important in extending the reach of the salary that teachers frequently complained was insufficient for their needs. They also used the local children to work in their houses or gardens in addition to bringing young children from other villages to live with them for domestic work without enrolling them to school. Their contact with students’ families was therefore far from the professional structured relationship which is imagined in education sector documents. Their close social ties with the community meant teachers in Kore found it difficult to challenge some of the parents who were effectively their neighbours and tolerated non-enrolment of employed children. This is not surprising since they too had such children in their own homes. The boundaries of being the teacher and being a ‘good neighbour’ became rather blurred, as illustrated below.

6.2.4 Campaign for school recruitment of children

Both of the schools use the campaign as a way of recruiting never enrolled children in a door-to-door visit within their catchment area. Notionally, this task is agreed to be undertaken with the support of the local Kebele authorities. The presence of Kebele

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63 While I have not looked into the specifics of salary, despite the recent improvement in pay scale many of the teachers raised they ‘count towards the payday’ and ‘incurred debts throughout the month’, as their ‘salary is inadequate’. The rural teachers further asserted that they have no opportunity for salary supplementation, as there are ‘no evening class or custom of supplementary tutoring’ in the community.

64 Having children for domestic work is not unusual in Ethiopia in general I comment here in the rural context but in the peri-urban site I have not had much chance to know teachers intimately in their home context as much as rural so I am not able to say the extent of this for them.

65 I expect the teachers in Kara too may have working children as it is common to employ children for their cheap labour as a live in domestic help but, the community set up didn’t allow me to observe this closely. However, in the survey I came across children sent by their employers (teacher) to school.
authorities is taken to give the campaign legitimacy. However, in practice, the
arrangements between the school and the local authorities appear to lack structure. The
director of one of the schools has explained:

We take this seriously and ask for help from [Kebele’s]. Initially [the revolution
guards] came with us and we went to pay a visit to parents who report excuses and
are not willing to send the children to school. We take time trying to persuade
them explaining the purpose of schooling for children. But, after that day, the
Kebele forget about it, the registration time also passes and this is what we
commonly face. I will try again next year. (School director –2009).

As the director in Kore reported to me, commitments of the local authorities and their
willingness to follow up identified cases of never enrolled children is problematic. While the
campaign takes place with joint force of the school and the local administration, follow up
and enforcing child schooling in the village is challenging. In reality there was no action
taken against the people who refused to send their children. From the school side and by
implication the educational system itself schooling is bound by time and there is a
particular time where children has to register and ones it passes the school follows the set
educational system therefore has no means to accommodate children outside of the
dedicated registration time. He identifies the problem but as something beyond his
influence to change and adopt to individual children’s needs.

6.2.5  Context and time of the campaign

State schools in Ethiopia begin in the second week of September just after the Ethiopian
New Year of 11th September. During the summer, most of the teachers are away for their
professional development summer training programme that is set up to help towards
addressing the lack of trained teachers and as partial measure for quality education
delivery. The time of the campaign often begins in early September after the teachers
return from the summer break and training. This timing also is better in terms of
practicalities of local access as the rainy season which makes travelling within the village
difficult will not be an issue. While there appears to be sound rationale regarding the start
time of the campaign, I found the precise nature of the time set as ‘a registration period’ to
be restrictive as I will discuss below.
During the campaign period, the teachers are put in groups with the enforcement team of the kebele representatives to make a door-to-door campaign towards encouraging children’s schooling. They use the opportunity mainly to recruit never enrolled children to school, but also use it as a time to encourage school dropouts back to school. While this effort sometimes succeeds in bringing children to school, there are two important points that need highlighting. The first point concerns the campaign period (time) and the second point is about site based marked differences in the nature of the campaign and its effectiveness.

As the quote from the school director above highlights, before the kebele or the school was able to do something about the never enrolled children that are identified as a result of the campaign ‘the registration time has passed’. This appears to be a self-inflicted problem of the education system itself, and as he went on to explain this is something that is beyond the director or the teachers’ control.

The cut off period meant that some of the children who may be experiencing temporary difficulties at the time of the registration period, will be excluded from joining the school once they have overcome the difficulties they faced\(^{66}\). It is often the case as we have noted in previous chapters, that some children are unable to obtain all the materials needed for schooling or have the registration fee ready in time for September\(^ {67} \). Consequently, the restricted registration period is off-putting for those who are already hampered by other factors such as affording school related expenses. Indeed this problem is to do with education system as the schools merely follow directives to implement it. If the campaign is a genuine effort to bring the children to school then it is hard to see much point in the short cut off period. Some form of leniency in the registration period and an open on-going opportunity could attract many and reward motivated children and families that run into temporary difficulties. This is not to underestimate the potential complexities in accommodating students who join at different times, nor to deny the need for some cut off point by which children need to register. There is no doubt, however, that the current tight

\(^{66}\) I am aware the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) centres are there to take people throughout the year but the value put on them or on the satellite schools is not the same (as I have discussed in chapter six on the view of parents). Particularly the young school age children that the campaign targets are unlikely to opt for that while their friends are attending regular school. The issue of the satellite and ABE centre and the view of children and the community is beyond the reach of this study. However, given the policy emphasis put on them it is an important area for more research.

\(^{67}\) It has been noted also rural people lack cash in the rainy season particularly (when they have no produce to take to market).
cut off period acts to undermine the key objective of the campaign, to bring all children into school.

6.2.6 **In/equitable campaign: Education for some?**

In practice the campaign was not targeting all of the children in the community, especially evident in Kore. The close relationships of teachers with local residents made it difficult for them to raise the issue of non-belonging (unrelated) children at the door step. This is the case firstly, as discussed in chapter 5 the deferential treatment of ‘other children’ appears to be widely tolerated due to assumptions that they are doing a charitable deed by taking on ‘other peoples’ children and ‘raising’ them. More importantly, the teachers also generally share this outlook as many of them also employ child workers fulltime or on ad hoc basis and often refer to it as ‘raising them up’ so, consider this as a mutual benefit. Therefore, teachers themselves as socially embedded entities are not in a position to hold the moral high ground on this issue. Some household heads are not willing to send these children to school and when they do, as mentioned in the cases of unrelated and working children (e.g. Mesta chapter 5 section 5.4.4), they are often absent and have little time to study or to do their homework as they are required to do substantially more work in the house than the household head’s own children.

In Kara, by contrast, the school paid special attention to these working children in its campaign. Once they were enrolled they also encouraged them to stay by relaxing demands such as the need to bring a parent for certificate day, and by being tolerant of their absence. However I felt this view was not communicated well to the administration level of the school as there was random whipping by school guards as late comers entered the school gates running.

Students in Kara themselves appreciated these concessions. One girl related how her homeroom teacher signs for her books, while normally the school demands that parents do this. Similarly, another student recounted the support the school showed her when she had to take up work when her widowed mother became paralysed. Owing to the subordinate position children have typically parents were required to take children to school for registration day, but she said
‘my teacher knows I can’t bring my parents and do not even ask me, she just registers me’.

Some categories of children in Kore community were particularly visible in my study as being an excluded – those who ‘didn’t belong’ (mostly working), and those with disabilities.68 Ironically, despite the rhetoric over equity of schooling, on the doorsteps during the campaign their interest tends to be overlooked. This suggest that the school teachers supported by their counterparts from the kebele appeared to weigh practicalities and decide not to challenge or act blind by not raising the schooling needs of these children. Children even with minor health problems (short sight, headache) are not considered for schooling and there is no probing from teachers when parents identify a child as having a health problem. In part this may be a pragmatic decision, given the lack of suitable facilities and trained staff in special needs. It may also reflect teachers’ sense of the enormity of the task they face, as I discuss below in the section on the sense of ‘helplessness’. While there could be many reasons, the result makes the campaign process discriminatory thereby reproducing disadvantage in educational attainment for particular group of children. Indeed, such an outlook is a reflection of the wider social structure and including the culture of local institutions that are characterised by hierarchy and practices that result social bias.

The issue of stigma and illness deserves further discussion. The role that societal beliefs plays in the interpretation of children’s physical wellbeing even among the ‘educated’ sections of the community such as the teachers and the local health professionals was brought home to me one day when a five year old boy was found to be suffering an epileptic fit. This led me to probe more with the local nurse and teachers into the implication of health problems and the deep-rooted impact that the social understanding of illnesses on children’s prospect of schooling.

On a typical school day break time, some children come rushing to tell teachers that a boy69 who was playing had fallen down sick. When we got there none of the children were close to him. I noticed this as something unusual, since the children are usually are curious and congregate near incidents such as fights or games. Adults picked up the child and

68 I will go on to address other categories in part two of this chapter.
69 Not a student but playing in the school ground with other children.
discouraged other children from coming near. Initially I thought this was to give the child breathing space. Some were then sent on to find a mattress to get the child comfortable. His parents came distressed and crying looking at him hopelessly. Then someone brought in box of matches and begun to light it creating smoke and holding it close to the child’s nose, aiming to wake him up. After that one of the students was sent to call the local nurse. The nurse claimed she had run out of ‘injections’ and asked for water to wet the child’s forehead and chest also helped get the child comfortable and the child responded well. Later on, I had a chance to speak with teachers, the parents and the nurse about this incident.

The adults I spoke to including the teachers were clear that this illness would transfer from child to child. The reason for discouraging the children from getting too close was that they believed that the illness was passed through the saliva. His parents, who are also educated, later told me the only hope of cure for their child was to find a rope that someone had used to commit suicide. If they could put such a rope around their child’s neck the child will be healed from epilepsy.

This incident and the subsequent discussion I had with the key people in the community gave me further understanding of why parents of children with health problems or physical disability are not pressed to bring their children to school and the importance of schooling for these children does not feature in the campaign. There is a strong sense that these children must be protected by their family, and are destined for a housebound life with no opportunity of schooling, jobs or marriage. People have sympathy for them but they are also considered a lifetime ‘burden’ for their parents (MoE 2010a). This is not surprising as generally there is very poor provision of health service in both sites. The Kore site in particular has only a very basic health post that administered limited services mostly geared towards family planning. Even the family planning services frequently run into problems due to the shortage of birth control medication.

In addition to the points made above that children can be designated as disabled simply for having headaches or short sight, school buildings are not designed with a view to giving access to disabled students and teachers (see Jennings 2011 for similar observation). Even the new schools currently being built ‘to serve the underserved’ make no provisions for people with disabilities. As a result, there are very few people with disabilities connected
with the schools either as students or staff. The only exception is that in the school located in Kara there is one blind teacher, but he experiences many frustrations in trying to carry out his job. The above discussion of the ‘other’ children, together with those with disabilities, points to a mismatch between the rhetoric ‘education for all’ and the reality on the ground being ‘for some’. While it can be said that most of this is historical problems, it is evident however that the provision for disabled is still not central to the current initiatives. For example, in the context of the continuous advocacy of cheaply built schools to expand access might inadvertently allow the deprivation of physical access for the disabled children and teachers. Indeed access issues are evident even in the schools located in the capital city, including the private schools. Given the ongoing resource constrain under which state schools currently operate, addressing such important but costly enterprise may pause major long term challenge.

6.2.7 Figure massaging and school readiness

One important observation to point out here is the inconsistence and complexity in the way age appears to be constructed. As I have discussed in chapter five there is a sense of ‘being too early’ and ‘being late’ for enrolment a view expressed by children and their parents. This view appears to be shared by the school too as in practice as I discuss next there is a deduction of the real age at registration time. Yet as I go on to show in the coming section age 7 while it is an official age for enrolment in primary grade 1 in rural context actually age 7 is considered too young. However, as I will go on to discuss later in this chapter (section 6.5.4) there is a further dimension of age bound with gender that disqualifies a child particularly a girl from gaining school level support from teachers.

Another section of ESDP reforms that the Kore teachers follow partly was about age and readiness for school. Their approach in practice appears to combine both the ESDP education system regulations as well as taking account of the local reality. I will comment here briefly from school side as this issue of readiness in the context of the study sites have already been discussed in detail in chapter 4 section 4.7 and in chapter 5 section 5.5. As mentioned there the two aspects of readiness are physical ability and developmental capability. As I already mentioned in chapter five, even the director himself shared the

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70 This is beyond the scope of the present study. However, my interview with a blind teacher educated in another part of Ethiopia was compelling that support to the physically disabled is far from perfect. Among many of his challenges were the lack of access to a laptop to type his own exam questions, prepare lesson plans and complete reliance on other people and resorting to begging colleagues to help him fill the endless paperwork by hand which he found frustrating.
belief that age 7 was too young for school and both in physical sense and mental ability (maturity) have influenced this view. When I asked a 10 year old girl near the Kore school why she is not going to school, said to me:

Mallo eda Kebba? Didn’t teacher Tessa said I am not ready?11?

As she went on to tell me, the decision was made for her by the teacher (a neighbour) a year before advising her family to wait until she is ready. What I found interesting is when older children (boys and girls) do come to school they appear to be given a lower age than their actual years. Although I tried to explore this with teachers I was not able to establish exactly why they did this. There seem to be two plausibility, and it could be that both operated to some extent. The first is that they wanted to bring the records more nearly in line with the education system that expects children at age 7 to be in grade 1. Alternatively, they could have felt that it would help students to feel nearer to the ideal age of children joining primary school. In general the school teacher’s appear to have inconsistent view about age in relation to schooling and trajectory of children’s lives. This raises question over the quality and accuracy of administrative level data (see Elizabeth Mekonnen and Bizuyehu Feye 2010; Jennings 2010; Carr-hill 2012, 2013 and Stuart et al. 2015).

6.2.8 Formality as factors of hurdle

It is appropriate to address here the issue of meshenga (clearance certificate). This is briefly mentioned also in chapter five72. Meshenga is required if children wish to register at a new school, to show the level they have reached previously and to indicate a clean school record such as they owed no books or debt. I have said how the Kara school was better resourced and better placed to deal with children experiencing hardship and so at risk of dropping out. However, it was also demanding when it came to the registration of older children. In one case a family dispute meant the mother could not access her daughter’s

71 Without the gesture and the tone it is very difficult to capture her precise phrase in English. However, what it reveals a great deal of respect for teachers in the village and the teachers’ judgment is unquestioned. So, she is saying don’t blame me, I am doing the right thing approved even by the teacher who was also their neighbour.

72 While I am discussing here about the expectations on students to fulfil this teachers are also required to produce similar paperwork when they change school e.g. showing they returned all books. Also generally as people move places there is a tight control demanding they bring meshenga from their previous Kebele to new one before being given ID card which is demanded for access to various services.
certificate and the school refused to enrol her without it (see the case of Meron in chapter 5 section 5.5.2). In another case the school questioned the mother’s integrity suspecting her daughter of being thrown out of another school and attempting to enrol from grade one in this school. In the first case, the child stayed for a year without being able to get to school and before I left I raised her issue with the deputy director who assured me they will look into it, and she was subsequently admitted. In the second case the girl remained non-enrolled. Here again my interview with the school didn’t lead me to any firm conclusion as to why this practice was so strictly followed. I was simply left with more questions and curiosity as to why they make it so difficult for children to come whatever their past circumstances if they aim is to get all children in school by 2015? It seems to me one alternative may be school to school communication to acquire the necessary information about relocated student’s seeking to enrol than leaving the children and parents who are already facing complex challenges and adjusting to changes to face this rather difficult formality process.

6.2.9 Materiality of the practical

In addition to the social and institutional issues noted above, the demanding context that teachers work in makes it very difficult for them to follow up with absent students as the education system demands. The two shift system means that teachers simply have no time available to follow up if they have more than one persistently absent student. Teachers also mentioned to me that even when they make time and make the journey they sometimes fail to meet the parents and have to make another attempt to meet with them.

Some of the teachers viewed the campaign as an obligation they wished they didn’t have to do for various reasons. Almost all of the female teachers in Kore mentioned that they felt unsafe to go searching for absent children who lived far away from the school. They said they relied on their male colleagues or male students. Sometimes they ask the students to go check and bring news of a specific student or to accompany them when they carry out the home visits.

Another teacher raised the practical challenges of making home visits they have no other ways of communicating with parents except face to face or sending verbal messages through children. She said:
You know there is no transport here and we have to walk. I had to cross a river and got really tired in the sun and I know I won’t bring him back to school anyway, but I had to do it. (Female teacher at Kore site, 2009)

The issues raised in this section have direct implications for the on-going school reform, particularly the appointment of undertrained and inexperienced teachers to more problematic rural areas (Tekeste Negash 1996). This in itself evidently encouraged and served to maintain location based inequality between the schoolchildren where the rural come worse off (Tekeste Negash 1996) due to the urban biased system (Guday Emeire 2005). The likelihood of change in these aspects may be slim because the condition of the rural site is not inviting for experienced teachers when they may have better opportunities in urban areas. Nevertheless, there are important questions this raises over the commitment towards equity and suggests issues of campaign need to be part of the ongoing discussion overall and with regards to rural schooling in particular (also see Uzobo 2014 in the case of rural Nigeria).

As the above section shows, the application of strict and context blind rules is common. The campaign for example is perceived as an important activity in encouraging and recruiting children to school but not without its own challenges. Also, it is difficult to know how many children have come to school as a result of it. The date bound rules for enrolment and the need for a meshenga paradoxically themselves result in some of the cases of never enrolment. The wider social, cultural, institutional and financial context mean the children with disabilities, illness and those who don’t ‘belong’ remains to be overlooked. Children who live in rich households are not targeted by the campaigns in Kore site. In part this reflects the desire to keep good social relationships with those influential households. It also may reflect fear of losing the vital financial input to the school from richer parents. Albeit unintended this may be exacerbated by the lack of resources the school has that encourages reliance on local contribution and so ties the hands of teachers and the school administration who might wish to take action or even just to question some families. The ironic conclusion is thus that the education sector (in this case the school and its system) are themselves implicated in the reproduction of schooling inequality among children through the outcome of never enrolment and school dropout. This though albeit unintentional directly serves to reproduce the existing and persistent social inequality in educational attainment of rural children.
Some of the above observation I am making here is consistent with Jennings (2011) however, while important her report is limited to an interview response with teachers and PTA in that has limitation to contextualise the findings. For example in context of PTA and school partnership in getting children back to school and the PTA finding ‘parents manipulating’ information’s about their children in the household giving wrong age or lying that they are not their own children but hired help it is reported ‘Interviewees also contend that PTA members may be reluctant to challenge parents’ (Jennings 2011:27) but, beyond this we are not given any explanation as to why they are not challenging the parents therefore my study can usefully extend such observations.

6.3 SECTION II: MONITORING TO CURB DROPOUT IN SCHOOL AND THE UNSYSTEMATIC SYSTEM

Once children are in school, keeping them there and completion rates are a major concern for the school and the education sector more generally. Schools are keen to see the children progress through their schooling and attempt to monitor this so they can take measures to keep them in school as I discussed in the section before this. In the following section, I present the systems in place and measures the schools take to curb dropout and encourage completion. As clearly indicated by the teachers and school administrators in both sites the practices they follow at the time of this study suggest that there is a strong upward accountability towards the MDG agenda as core part of the ESDP directives schools try to follow

In practical terms, monitoring children that are persistently absent and considered to be at risk of dropout involves a home visit by the teacher. As mentioned above this is a much more challenging task for Kore teachers for various reasons. In addition to keeping the daily attendance record, (see example in the appendix 6.1 the registered reasons I extracted from the school records) the teachers are required to fill the forms provided to them with reasons why the child is regularly absent or has left school.

My conversation with the teachers and observation of the documents as can be seen in the appendix reveals that monitoring and recording are experienced more as a performance

73 ‘register their own children as hired help - as they are not obliged to allow hired help to go to School’(Jennings 2011:27).
and duty than a practically useful exercise. There are two key aspects of this. The first is the unsystematic way that facts are recorded. This means that the same problem may be recorded in different ways, and the labelling is so vague that no real sense of the problem can be read from it. The other aspect is the top down nature of this exercise and the motivation behind it.

With regards to the unsystematic method of recording, I reviewed the actual words used on the forms filled by the homeroom teachers. When revisiting previous records the teacher looking back at their own records was unable to explain the lack of consistency. For example, the words Dhukkubaa, Dibeen, D/maadaa, Dhakkbaan, were used in a recording book to refer to illness.74 One of the teachers who coordinates the committee that deals with absentees said, ‘lack of uniformity is a real problem, every teacher has their own preferred vocabulary for the same problem’. This is aside from variable spellings and illegible handwriting that make systematic analysis considerably difficult.75 Similarly, some of the labels used are too broad making it meaningless in terms of understanding the precise problems or possibility of considering suitable response to address it. For example words like, Rakko (problem), Jiijira (change), Iddoo (place), Ollaan (neighbour), were on the record I examined and could mean almost anything. Indeed, the coordinator with whom I was reviewing the records said herself that she could not explain them – she merely takes care of the records and passes them on to the director. This and other relevant data are transferred to the visiting supervisor appointed by the local education desk and subsequently to all relevant places in the education system as deemed relevant or some of the information that are recorded go nowhere so serve no real purpose.

The unsystematic way in which reasons for dropout are recorded results in part from the fact that the reporting format distributed across schools is driven by the MDG agenda and its main focus is on ‘increased enrolment rate’. Firstly, the box provided in the registration book is too small to contain the real reasons for absence or dropout. This indirectly disengages the teachers from considering the actual ‘reasons’ and instead encourages teachers to treat the recording process as technical exercise (see Jennings 2011). It seems they make little effort to coordinate approaches among themselves to ensure consistency. It is also difficulty to capture the complex reasons of real life problems the students

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74 Appendix 6.2 presents tables in thematic order which illustrate this point further.
75 Even though the peri-urban school has one computer it was all written down by hand.
encounter within the space provided. And perhaps even they may not see much point in it (see 6.3.3 below on how teacher feel about their inability to address their students challenges).

When I asked the teachers how they get the information they put in the records they said, again there was no systematic or uniform method. Sometimes they were informed by the student himself/herself, sometimes by other students if they happened to be neighbours or friends of the one who dropped out, sometimes the teachers went and enquired at the students’ homes. The latter was the option which the school recommended, but the teachers felt it was often too demanding in terms of the time required and when they know they can’t change the outcome e.g. when children migrated for work or got married and so on.

The state of the record book and their own reflection suggests that the teachers treat this data collection as a mere formality for their superiors and not as downward accountability or seeing it a means to make a real difference to the situation of their students. A second factor that tends in this direction is that there is no feedback loop that values the teachers’ views. Thirdly, the teachers are keen to fulfil their upward accountability to avoid consequences that will affect their promotion or nomination to move to a better location. Fourthly, even when the real reasons are known, there is no capacity to take any action to address the difficulties the child was facing and simple format is preferred. As a deputy head teacher in Kara put it (2009):

A child may have more than one reason for leaving his studies. We take one and fill in the form, so, first the absence may be because of family illness, then may be the child ‘doesn’t want to comeback’ so, in this instance it can be put as ‘lack of interest’. You know it is not all but it is also true.

6.3.1 Surveillance on the poor and skipping others

I have mentioned above teachers are socially embedded in the field of community and in practice therefore share the local habitus that tolerates categorising of children according

76 According to the local view promotion is also related to political allegiance and party membership. I observed an annual meeting day’s teachers divided in two groups (for party members and non-members). Some of the teachers mentioned their inability to sustain membership contribution meant they are not entitled to attend these meetings even if they are members and seen being associated will bring them promotion. However, this area is beyond the remit of this study and not included in the analysis.
to their social standing. In Kore when the teachers are willing to challenge parents over enrolment of their children, they tend to visit poor households and appear to be less ‘concerned’ about the children in rich households. My point here is not concern in emotional sense but in a sense of not having the disposition to challenge ‘other children’s’ issue and it being taken for granted. There may be two key reasons that can explain this. First, they appear to view the relatively richer parents as already doing all the right things by their children, but see the poor parents as needing some advice and encouragement to do the right thing. Secondly, as mentioned above, their own socially anchored positioning means they find it difficult to challenge some sections of the community. This tendency may inadvertently be amplified by the decentralised system (discussed in chapter two) that encourages the school to raise its own funds within the community through promotion of participation. Thereby making the rich households the school’s key donors therefore too important to be challenged. As schools are trying to do more with less, they rely increasingly on the contributions of the community to deliver and sustain services. This is particularly so in Kore school as there are limited means to raise funds given the lack of hard cash in the area and lack of external network such as NGOs. The fact that teachers in the Kore area are relatively younger, less experienced and less qualified than those in the semi urban location, probably also means that they are paid less.

To give a sense of the practical issues that teachers face in pursuing the education sector’s goals to expand primary schooling to all children, I draw on the case of a 12 years old girl Gize whom I introduced at the start of chapter five. Her father was a highly respected man in the village with the status of ‘model farmer’. He presented a highly convincing case for his decision not to send Gize to school. He began by establishing his own credentials:

I don’t even know what tej⁷⁷ tastes like. I leave early morning and work at the mill, I also farm on my land and on a rented land by the river. I have now bought more land and built houses in the neighbouring village for renting as I heard there will be an electricity connection coming there soon. My wife is very good too, she helps me and she doesn’t like spending money.

Stating what the motivation is for him to work so hard, he said

⁷⁷ Traditional honey wine commonly drank for pleasure mostly after a market day and at celebration. This is as he tried to point out is indeed very unusual for a person of his status, his religion to be withdrawing not only from alcohol but in the process from important social centre too - the drinking venues where local men socialised.
‘I fear for my children if something happens to me, this is why I buy land\textsuperscript{78} and houses’

When I ask him about Gize and the prospect of her being enrolled to school, he said:

Of course I want her to study if God helps me I will send her next year. All I am doing is for them (his children), this is not for me. We need Gize to stay at home when her mother is out helping me at the mill and in the next village, also on market day my wife is away selling drinks. Ask people in the village everyone will tell you. I don’t even buy a change of clothes for me, it is all for them \textit{bota lasyzachew biye new} (to safeguard their future/ position them well). So that they will be secured if something happens to me. I can only send Direba (her younger brother) [to school] because the older brother too helps me on farm. He is nearly ready to do it all by himself and the rest of them are too young.

The rationale for keeping children at home to support the broader family livelihood is familiar from chapter five. What I hope to convey here in addition is the way a man like this presents himself and his social status act as an effective barrier against teachers pressing him further. As he said, everyone knows he is a good father trying hard to secure his children’s future.

There are also perhaps echoes here of Abebe’s comment (chapter five) ‘\textit{Is that not all about money? I earn money now anyway...and in the end education is about earning money}’. The result, is that despite living yards away from Kore primary school and having raised money herself to get the necessities for going to school even though unnecessary as she belonged to financially secure family, Gize’s effort is invisible and ignored by the campaign and her aspiration for schooling remains unmet. As an older girl in the household she is chosen to overtake the domestic responsibilities while her mother is engaged in her husband’s business. Despite her efforts to attain schooling and living close to the school none of the teachers identified her as a child in need of help, this is a complete opposite case from Tesfa discussed in chapter five. They live side by side, but their difference is that one belongs in the poor household with poor parents where the school and the kebele feel they can intervene, the other lives in the rich household with richer parents that are one of the main source of financial support for the local school (Swift-Morgan 2006). This makes them off limits for challenge. This gives a specific instance of how local teachers’ over-socialised

\textsuperscript{78} Note technically land belongs to the state in the current system but only the building on it belongs to the person therefore selling and buying land is against the rule but people buy a token property on a land and develop it further.
view that legitimates skipping of certain households means they and the schooling system that promotes reliance on the community are implicated in this outcome. In such cases the social embeddedness of the teachers takes precedence over their role in administering the program of education for all and perhaps leads them even to undermine it.

6.3.2 Doing more with less under the context of resource constraint

By contrast, in Kara school there appears to be an active practice of identifying the struggling children. This is partly made possible because of the presence of NGOs activity in the area, and more importantly the proactive approach of teachers with many years of experience (see table 7.1 above). As I have described earlier in this chapter the teachers in this school appear to apply rules ‘selectively’ in the best interest of the children. Moreover, the school’s ability to give practical help and incentives from waiving the registration fee to providing the much needed school materials through their engagement with NGOs meant children and parents in the area are aware of the availability of support.

This support was however, limited to a small gift in a form of exercise books, pens, soap etc. for selected children, there was no state cash transfer or school feeding programme. The committee recognised that this was very limited. They explained that there were far more children who needed support than could be helped by the resources they have been able to generate within the school from the staff tea money or external donations. Though they acknowledged the inadequacy of the support they gave to children they believed it served as an encouragement particularly effective in cases where children were at risk of dropping out following critical event such as becoming orphaned. They also administered a small snack of biscuits during break time, but this was limited to children with impaired hearing and studying in special class.79 (see Chege 2006 where in different situation but teachers doing more with less).

6.3.3 Sense of helplessness

The positive side of teachers’ social embedding in Kore is their empathy for their students and their families. Ironically, however, this can induce in them a sense of helplessness. This section presents some of the ways that teachers in Kore reflected on the campaign, the

79 This provision of snack depended on availability. However, a teacher said, this is the only school in the whole woreda that teaches children with impaired hearing with trained staff and has practice of giving out snack albeit inconsistently.
follow up of their students, their own positions, and the expectations put on them. A female teacher in Kore site (2009), put it like this:

‘if they don’t come, there is nothing we can do for them. Look, one girl sent a message to me through her classmates saying her mother did not want her to come to school and will I come to persuade her mother. I didn’t find time to go, I feel for her you know but what can I do?’

Emphasising their limited power over real life problems, another teacher said,

‘We are told to go visit them and discuss with the parents and explain about children’s rights to come to school. But, look one of my students’ father said his wife died and the daughter is now a mother, you feel you can’t even argue with him. I can’t help him or her. She is needed for her siblings and there is no mother. It just makes you feel so helpless. Poor girl!’ (Female teacher in Kore site, 2009)

Going through the absentee lists with one of the female teachers, I asked for more explanation of the reasons for the long absences of her students. A female teacher explained she often feels it is beyond her ability to do anything and viewed what she did in terms of recording the reasons as pointless and her role as a teacher frustrating. Giving an example about one of her students living close to the school she said:

I know his father divorced his wife and raised his son on his own. He did everything like a mother. He is HIV+ and from time to time, they disappeared from the village to search for jobs. ...I say to [his father] school is good for his son but he knows it anyway. ...How can you say do send your son to school? (Female teacher in Kore, 2009)

The discussion with the teachers revealed many similar situations like the above case where their students appear to be in a complex life problem. The teachers expressed they felt helpless at their inability to address the real problems of their students and felt their role was limited to telling them what they and their families already know.

At times teachers said they disregarded the specifics of what the child learnt and helped students with low attendance to sit exams in order to help them progress to the next class. It was difficult for me to establish whether this was to do with automatic promotion policy
that is already in place or if the teacher just want the students to progress. A teacher who felt the only way within her power to help her student was to let him sit the exam. She said, ‘he hadn’t been to class for couple of months, but I know he is good student, he is respectful and motivated. I did send a message to him to come for the exam day’. However, such opportunities were entirely subject to students maintaining their link with school and in reality, many of the students that fall into hardship tend to drop out of contact.

While aspects of the school system were inflexible there seems to be a degree of discretion at their disposal and they apply it as they see fit. The teachers’ explanation of their sense of helplessness and lack of capacity to change the situation, reinforces the view expressed earlier that the monitoring of long absentees and dropout children appears to be more about technicality in fulfilling the obligatory reporting than it is to bring back students to class successfully. Moreover, the emphasis put on sitting on exam even in cases of long absence draws out the value put on getting a certificate in the chase of formal employment in future as discussed in chapter 5.

Another point to bring here is the increasing reliance of rural schools on community participation. While my data brings a specific way that the discourse of community participation influences local level relations and teachers own positionality in some ways this is consistent with Rose (2003) observation in Malawi context where many implication of community participation was identified as promoting inequality in decision making, in schooling and more, leading her to conclude ‘As an alternative to international advocacy for community participation, external support could more appropriately be directed at increasing the capacity of state organisations to deliver quality education efficiently and effectively, rather than attempting to mobilise communities to take over state functions’ (Rose 2003:62), in the light of the considerable effect of demand for community contribution (in the context of KaraKore predominantly about contribution labour and cash) is having in rural families, I agree with Rose’s view that pragmatic measures that offers alternative appropriate genuine options of participation may address many of the concerns children (see below example 6.5.5) and their parents have in KaraKore context.

In the next section I look more closely at how teachers saw themselves, what they didn’t say and what they appeared to be blind to. What was remarkable was that, for all our lengthy discussions about the ‘faults’ of the system or issues with the ‘rural uneducated
people’, no one ever raised the possibility that their own role might have been problematic. On the contrary, almost all of them presented themselves as an ideal teacher I have no doubt that they genuinely saw it that way.

6.4 **SECTION III : THE NARROW LENS: AN OVER AND UNDER SOCIALISED VIEW**

The potential for teachers to play an ambivalent role as both resource and hindrance to children’s education is widely acknowledged in the literature (Gould 1993; Barrett 2005; Collins 2009 for example). However, in Ethiopian literature this tends to be limited to discussion of issues like being role models, attitude, practices of corporal punishment, sexual harassment and some gender stereotyping (MoE 1999; Anbesu and Derese 1988; USAID 2003; Emebet Mulugeta 2004; Guday Emirie 2005). Moreover when it comes to gender and education as discussed in chapter two there is a tendency to focus on parity rather than equality. Less explored and or noticed in the case of Ethiopia is the subtlety of some discrimination camouflaged by culture, power, and class. When specific societal practices are deeply entrenched in everyday life, it is often hard even for researchers to identify these as forms of discrimination. This is the case particularly in institutes like schools where on the surface gender equality rhetoric is abound on text, drama performance, mural walls and enchanted motivational words and so on (Swift-Morgan 2006). In this section I present four aspects that illustrate how issues of gender relations are manifested in the school ground and classrooms to promote exclusion and risk of dropout. My discussion largely focuses on Kore where these practices were particularly evident, leading to markedly poorer education outcomes for girls.

Since this section focuses on gender issues it is worth noting here that a local level office of the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs exists in the woreda at Kara. It is, however, relatively newly established at the time of this study and generally seen to have minimal effect (Yilmaz and Venugopal 2008). Moreover, in the context of KaraKore they didn’t seem to have a strategic link with the school, nor did they take part in activities like the campaign. While I did not witness their attendance during my stay, I am told they will be invited in the days when there is drama performances and school celebrations. My own contacts with them suggest that they have a long way to go before they can address both the visible and hidden disadvantages that children face.
6.4.1 Blind spots, misrecognition, dutiful projecting of positive image

In the discussion about girls among the staff in the school, I raised the issue of cultural practices such as abduction reported as an issue in the region in official documents. Repeatedly the director asserted to me that this is a historical problem and at present there is no case. Just as Tideg’s family opted for mediation for fear of disrepute (chapter five section 5.5.3) so I believe the school’s reluctance to admit abduction occurs is an attempt to distance the school from practices considered against the low and from an issue of contention with the community (Yamada 2007a). The result of making it unspeakable issue, however, is that it could become more difficult to fight against it. The director’s attitude to abduction, however, was consistent with his more general tendency to resist any discussion of gender issues in more depth.

**Tigist:** Have you any fear about abduction and did your students experience this?

Abduction is [rather] used by the students and the families who don’t want to enrol you know like an excuse. So, we don’t believe it exists and it doesn’t exist. We know if anyone claims this, we know we don’t accept them because we make sure this doesn’t happen and this is Diro Yekere (old fashion), used to be practised by people who are backward.

He went on to explain that this is an outdated practice and because people are afraid of the consequences from law, they no longer practise it. Despite him being highest duty bearer to the boys and girls under the school care what is evident in his statement ‘we don’t accept them’ implies resistance and misrecognition because in complete contrast to his statement it is difficult to be sure of such incidences from happening ever.

When I asked if the school was a safe place for girls, he said:

We never have this problem because they [the male students] fear from us so they don’t do it. But if any girl does complain about harassment, we call the boy and the girl together, discuss this, and can solve it. We give advice to the offender. The law doesn’t permit it, so we even have the power to call the kebele and they take the necessary measures to punish the boy.
Tigist: Do all of your staff know the procedures they need to follow if children complain to them and do they explain to the girls about their rights?

We all know and we are all trained about children’s rights and the rights of girls. We are told at meetings too. I am confident they all know it but you know, sometimes *afeestasem lay chigir linor yicheilal* (there may be problems in implementation).

Unfortunately, the happy picture that the director presented did not coincide with my observations. There seems, rather, to be a silence about these matters, with school authorities denying that what is considered shameful takes place. Indeed such turning a blind eye to school based violence’s are not uncommon for example Chege (2006) reports her analysis of a cover-up of harassment on female student by head teacher in Kenya implicating him through ‘violence by omission’ (Salmi 1993 cited in Chege 2006). In the case of abduction in Ethiopia, there is of course a law against it. Official papers also report a significant decline in girl’s abduction. However, as seen in the previous chapter, abduction clearly still takes place at present and not historical phenomena. More pervasively, girls and their parents still live with the threat of abduction, and this has material consequences in terms of restricting their ability to attend school. Underreporting and lack of enforcement of the low with this regard is also common problem (Yamada 2007a; Guday Emerie 2005).

6.4.2 *Understanding and dealing with gendered based discriminations*

The school’s notion of gender equality appears to be limited to girls’ existence in the school. Ones they are in school the main activities appears to involve speeches and drama performances often on event days for sport or in relevant classes such as civics. The content of mottoes like ‘child rights’, ‘girls schooling is important’ ‘stay away from HIV’ decorate the school compound walls and feature in the teachings but there was no evidence of in-depth engagement of this, moreover it seems such measures on its own is seen as a great step with no tangible follow-up of action. The everyday activities within the school (particularly in Kore) however are a continuum of hidden and visible gender discrimination as I continue to discuss below.

As it is within the community, where the process of ‘gender-specific trainings of girls to become “obedient” and “submissive” wives and “responsible” mothers’ (Guday Emeire 2005 :121; Poluha 2007) dominate, within the school grounds too, girls and women are
obliged to conduct themselves in a way that is subservient and modest. The teachers themselves play a part in enforcing this gendered structuring. An example which may seem trivial, but is indicative of wider patterns, was the sports day competition between schools. Normal dress for girls involves wearing a long top or skirt which disguises the shape of her bottom. For playing sports, however, the girls wear relatively tighter trousers or shorts. Some chose to wear a skirt on top of these, while others did not. As the girls passed them the teachers drew attention to this, shouting out in a teasing way to the girls who had not put on the skirt: ‘what is that you are wearing?’ Beyond the rhetoric the issue of gender equality does not seem part of everyday practices and experiences of schooling. Instead, the teachers and the system itself seem to be subservient of the culture that the director above labelled as ‘backward’ (see similar observations in Poluha 2007).

Teachers also responded in conventionally patriarchal ways to any signs of sexual activity amongst students. Such cases are far from uncommon. There was a case of rape the previous year where a girl from the school had fallen pregnant and dropped out (I managed to trace and interview both her and her mother). There was also a current student who was ‘suspected’ of being pregnant at the time of my fieldwork there and subsequently left the school (whom I have not interviewed). This girl has dropped out and the rumour I was hearing among the teacher’s is that she is pregnant they ‘can tell from her walk’ but no attempt was made to provide her or link her with any support even though a local health worker approached the school multiple times asking if her support would be needed and to be used in any way such as providing family planning training to girls and boys in school. I was not able to establish whether she was actually pregnant and if so how she became pregnant. In the case of the later the girl was raped by a fellow student who is a son of one of the wealthiest family in the village and this is widely common knowledge but the school nor the kebele had taken any action.

Here again, the teachers’ de facto tolerance of these instances is at odds with the formal position of the education sector (MoE-ESDP III 2010) and what the director and staff meetings echo. The new Ethiopian Revised Family Code Proclamation No. 2131/2000 declares 18 to be the age of consent. Informal discussions in the teachers’ group, however, there were cases of pregnancy amongst much younger students that talk concentrated
more on how the girl was to blame for how ‘she showed face’ than any consideration of what next for these girls, legal matters or power relations between boys and girls. Even though there were shared understanding of the life of girls as ‘broken from now on’ there were considerable reluctance of being involved in ways that can remedy it. While at one level this reflects the patriarchal moralism of the broader culture, it is also indicative of the lack of organised and responsible ways of dealing with such matters in schools. Despite the existence of girls club there was no effort made to utilise that as a platform to prevent teenage pregnancy or promote ways to deal with it. Instead teenage pregnancy was identified quite simply as the fault of an individual girl in relation to which the school had no particular role. There was no discernible difference between male and female teachers in their interpretation of these matters. This misrecognition of gendered disadvantages occurs despite some of the female teachers having experienced harassment and attempted abductions as teenagers thus pointing to what Bourdieu refers as symbolic violence taking place.

Another incident illustrates vividly the school’s tolerance of sexual harassment. I was standing with a mixed sex group of teachers in the school-yard one morning when I saw a girl talking to a boy who was seeming to hold on to her hands while she was trying to pull away. The girl was looking down at the ground and clearly looking embarrassed and uncomfortable. Although there was no indication that she was being physically hurt, I asked the other teachers if they thought she was ok. A female teacher responded:

Setowchu fit eyaysayu new (the females show face), that is why this happens to them, serious and decent girls don’t encourage boys.

Another teacher remarked:

If she didn’t want it, she could have run away from him.

(Fieldwork note, Kore site - 2009)

The group then went on to comment about the possibility of her being the next mother among the girls and appeared dismissive of her visible fear and embarrassment. There

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80 This is a common saying towards girls that laugh, are loud and overtly friendly to boys. It is said they will lose respect and bring on the attack on themselves. ‘Showing face’ is not in literal sense as covering face. It is not customary in this part of Ethiopia to cover up faces but it is a traditional saying as to mean the girls are being ‘easy’, ‘encouraging’ type.
seemed little sign that they had internalised the messages on gender equality from the workshops they had recently attended. Nor was there any attempt to free the girl from him or address the issue putting a question mark against the director’s claim I noted earlier in this section suggesting the teachers are aware and the school take action by ‘giving advice to the offender’. But, also agreeing with his comment of the implementation issue in practical sense of what is held in theory. Indeed it is early days of the recent institutional and legislative reforms such as linking of schools with Women’s and children’s affair and even the new family penal code being put in place in Ethiopia and, as established in Aikman and Unterhalter ‘there are no quick fixes to the deep-rooted and often widely accepted forms of gender discrimination that affect education and schooling’ (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005:247).

6.4.3 Teacher-student relationships

In the literature about relationships between teachers and students, particularly in African context are concerning (Leach et al, 2003; Dunne and Leach 2003; Chege 2006). Indeed as indicated above, and noted in Leach et al.(2003) however, the reality is complex. While there is no doubt that personal relationships between teachers and children can be the medium of abuse of various forms, they can also be formative in influencing children’s careers. For Kore in particular, students seem to be benefiting more from personal (not sexual) relationships with their teachers than they did from the organised system. This transformative tendencies of teachers involved, for example, letting students sit exams despite long absence, or buying them school materials on an individual basis. Children Kara also have reported beneficial relationships with teachers as a catalyst for staying in school but the follow up as discussed above was matched by practical support through more formal channels also. Such encouragements and dedication was shown by both male and female teachers.

One perspective that is rarely found\textsuperscript{81} in the literature was described to me by two young single male teachers. They felt vulnerable both in the sense of their personal future as well as their career to the advances of girl students. They described how girl students offered to clean and cook for them and brought food from their homes. This was the exception rather

\textsuperscript{81} When reported the scholars motivation seems to be questioned (e.g. see comment on the work of Brenner 1998 and Anderson-Levitt et al.1998 as possible attempt to downplay or embarrassment of authors) in Dunn et al.2003/4:5).
than the rule, but was the subject of much laughter and teasing of the two young men within the teachers’ group. In a private conversation, one of these young men described how he saw it:

I don’t want to be trapped in the village life, I have an ambition to study and progress, I am taking distance learning course to improve my qualification. I run away when they approach me. I don’t want to embarrass them but, when they offer me to clean for me or bring water for me, I just say OK OK but don’t let them catch me at home.

Much of my discussion with this teacher was about his own future plans. In discussion with two girls at Kore about their schooling his name was mentioned as a teacher who told them to resist marriage and to study. One of the girl who had dropped out from school said to me, several teachers were kind to her but ‘[he] even bought me 16 page exercise book and told me to keep coming to school’. Exercise books in the village is sold by number of pages (16, 32, 50, and 100). He bought her 16 pages which are the cheapest exercise books, nevertheless what is important to note is he is not paid very much and she couldn’t afford it. This also shows that he noticed his students challenges despite girls being largely invisible and quite in rural areas. In Kara there was an ex teacher I have come across that I later discovered was married to school girl and few teachers at both sites are married to ex-pupil of their age (one to a women much younger). However, during my stay or in conversations about historical events I didn’t not come across of sexual nature relationship or violence committed by teachers towards the students. Perhaps, in Kore as a close knit community and physically constraining settlement of all civil servants by living in one compound even shared rooms may work as a deterrent. Moreover, everyone sees who comes and go, including who travelled out of the village, with whom, when and why is public knowledge. This may have prevented it from happening. In Kara to my knowledge there was none reported either though the community set up could permit such evidences to go unnoticed. Indeed as a recent Save the Children sponsored study shows in some part of Ethiopia this is a serious problem (B & M Development Consultant PLC 2008).

6.4.4 Gendered expectations, accessing support and the off limits

I have discussed above that girls are assumed unlikely to make it whereas boys are considered to stand a better chance of making it through their schooling and to succeed.
This indeed is widely acknowledged as evidenced by empirical studies both in relation to Ethiopia and other developing countries where rural girls face multiple obstacles in their pursuit of education (Davison and Kanyuka’s 1992; Emebet Mulugeta 2004; Guday Emirie 2005; Poluha 2007). I will continue to discuss this further in unpacking some of the perceptions embedded within the school narrative about the perceived differences between boys and girls. Aside from this perception and its consequences in terms of how much support the teacher’s tend to give to the students there were other ways we can trace the different treatment of boys and girls by the school and its system albeit unintentional that results gendered social reproduction. Related to this I give examples where the line is put in drawing teachers support.

In most part the boys were considered as performing better than the girls and this was rationalised as boys being dedicated to their studies, strong, having commitment to their study and a clear sense of future goals. One of the teacher’s describing the boys as highly motivated said: Boys

...even miss lunch. They stay in school and don’t leave to eat…. They lead study groups. You don’t see girls doing this. (Teacher in Kore site, 2009)

Another one also said

....boys make more efforts in our school and it is known they do.

(Teacher in Kore site, 2009)

Another said:

Boys from the morning shift often stay on throughout the afternoon in study group and boys from the afternoon shift come early to study group and carry on being in school afterwards for their regular class. Girls don’t make effort as much’ (Teacher in Kore site, 2009).

Here while the fact of boys staying longer in school to take part to study in group while the girls don’t is generally true. This is brought up as a reason why boys do not just by teachers but also by boys and girls as justification for cleverness, good grades, dedication. However, it is important to analyse this further and it will be helpful to do so by drawing on
Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence as a way of exploring this teacher’s narratives. In this case the teachers who to some extent can be assumed to be acting upon the school culture show inconsideration of the demands put on girl’s time and social restrictions they face for example in terms of freedom to move. The appropriate times for the school enrolled girls to be out and the legitimate ways of having a ‘free time’ spent without their family is limited to the schooling hours as specified by shift hours and outside of that they are expected to be home and attending to chores. This is demanded of them and justified both in terms of the perception on girl’s safety being at home not in public place, but also in terms of their labour in domestic contribution. Indeed boys too are needed for their domestic labour but, as discussed in chapter five often the volume and nature of work reserved for girls are unlimited and time demanding while the boys are contained particularly for those who are in school. Yet girls see it justified and as Bourdieu explains it is an evidence of the disproportionate weight of their ‘primary social experience’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:134) which is the harder to shift.

In taking the school as a field where by various kinds of capitals (in this case being male having relative weight compared to being female for example) are employed and deployed by agents to secure positions that results favourable outcome for specific individuals and groups. As Bourdieu clarifies numerous times in his various work this does not imply the enactment of premeditated goal rather it signifies an engagement in acts that ‘impose principle of hierarchization’ (Ritzer, 2008:533) in gendered ways.

In describing the girls absence to the extra study groups as though it was their choice are examples corresponding with Bourdieu’s (1977; 1990) notion of symbolic violence. Bourdieu relates symbolic violence in that the cultural values of the rural community overridden by the concern of school and teachers therefore by the dominant values. The gendered cultural values however is more permissive of boys to move much more freely, yet in saying 'girls are not interested', 'the clever boys don’t even want a break...organise a study time going through old exam questions preparing for their ministry exams' all suggests the school teacher’s failing to recognise the girls social position and is indicative of the miss-match between home and school values. For Bourdieu symbolic violence is a phenomenon whereby dominant symbolic systems are sentimentalized or mainstreamed therefore in the case of the studied children, despite attendance of the study group being an extra activity it is clear the study group is popularised in a way those going are
considered clever and showing effort while the opposite is applied to those unable to take part.

It is also possible to trace the education system implicated in the acts of symbolic violence as the major concern or culture became about performance on the ministry exam which is said to be difficult to pass hence why this group were organised to study past exams outside of the formal school hours. This in rural context is considered to compensate for the poor quality schooling in particular on difficult subjects. However unintentional the school system, the teacher’s action could be viewed as contributing factor of the symbolic violence the girls are subjected to. In that the misrecognition of ‘the social origin’ of this ‘suffering’ that is the differentiated gendered expectations of boys and girls results a violence. While no explicit force is evidenced in terms of ‘physical violence’ in a sense that the study group features equality of provision as being self-run by students, open to all students regardless of gender, and not compulsory to attend therefore no obvious repercussion from not attending and so on, at the same time classification, and categorisation of children is exercised in how some categories of children are claimed to be motivated and others not.

Another important way to look at this from Bourdusian point of view suggests the school as a site where the system in place and the school culture together reproduce and maintain existing gender hierarchies. While schools may claim to be meritocratic and an equally shared field, in practice, girls were suffering marginalisation and misrecognition. In the case of the study group while the girls recognised their inability to attend this extra non-compulsory classes as they needed to carry out more tasks at home, what was not acknowledged was the open claims teachers made about them as ‘not motivated like boys’. Girls and boys own narrative too suggested that as justifiable since the boys spent more time than them at school but without connecting it to the restrictions put upon girl’s mobility. The position taking by boys and girls in a manner that is fitting the symbolic order appears to suggest that both side recognise the legitimacy of the symbolic order. Symbolic capitals in this case for example the perception that epitomise boys as free agents to move safely at any time enables them to maintain their domination as male students within the school field as well as later on as adults is being taken for granted. Therefore school level practices plays part in the continuity of wider gender hierarchy.
It is also important to recognise there is an understanding and sympathy towards the girls that are poor, working or orphaned as often teachers in Kara site described these girls as *miskin* (poor) *gobez* (courageous) and even mobilised other teachers to support selected students when they face hardship. There is also a lot more closeness with teachers. The girls appear to be more open and trusting to come forward to explain their problems to selected teachers. Teachers also knew a lot of information on individual children and their day to day challenges and were open to discuss and find solutions including finding ways for the school to support them. However, first these were largely limited to economic problems and critical events happening in family life. Teachers helped by easing some of the rules such as missing exams, absences, rules such as exempting some students from parental show up at registration or certificate date. These were very common to observe in Kara site during my stay with a lot with fewer cases in Kore although significant helps such as girls reporting to me their favourite teacher (as one of the young male teacher for his kindness) who had given practical help to girls giving advise against marriage proposals, sending message through friends for girls who are absent for a while, encouraging them to stick with school and buying exercise books for students who have no family with economic means to do so. What seems off limit though in both schools perhaps as a reflection of Ethiopian culture that is said to be silent on some life areas (Poluha 2004; Guday Emeire 2005; WaterAid 2009) was of any discussion of sexual nature, advice or mentoring despite the heighten concern by both parents and teachers about pregnancy and HIV. Girls experiences of life transitions brings further vulnerability both in terms of being considered ready to marry and in mangig growing up associated life course events (e.g. reaching puberty). Children had a misplaced deep sense of shame about biological facts of bodily changes and of having a period which was particularly acute for rural girls as their experience of unwanted embarrassing incidents in school (period soiling their uniforms), misunderstandings they collectively have about age related biological changes and simply because of their situated-ness in rural area where information and options of managing such regular incidents as they would like. How girls that are in or out of school in Kore, also the poor girls in Kara managed this raises serious questions about the most basic information on female health and provisions. Even for me this was the hardest topic to discuss and never found appropriate moment to discuss in group but one to one as they were too shy to engage with conversations of female reproduction and sexuality, recent study by Sommer et al.confirms such experiences in Tanzania, Ghana, Cambodia and Ethiopia noting a culture of fear, secrecy and taboo about this topic in Ethiopia (Sommer et
al. 2015) while WaterAid (2009) study reported on stressful experiences for girls in school including ‘dropout’ for lack of support in the school (House, Mahon and Cavill 2012:22). In Ethiopia found 51% of girls that missed schooling regularly because of menses (House et al, 2012). One important point to note is even the working adults in the Kore managed menstruation times in haphazard way for lack of affordable sanitary pads. This struck me important further as in my conversation with young women in Kore even the basics of monitoring fertility is surprisingly low and full of myth such as in case of unwanted pregnancy drinking a bleach or Coca-Cola with 40 penicillin will abort it82. I raise it here as a reflection of what Poluha (2004) notes, that places where culture is silent often concern matters that affect girls’ wellbeing (see also Herz and Sperling 2004; UNICEF, CCBRT and EEPCO 2010; and Sommer et al. 2015 for similar observation).

This section has shown a further dimension of the social embedding of the school institution: its reproduction of patriarchal attitudes and practices. Girls are both disciplined to behave modestly and blamed if an inappropriate relationship develops. Such incidents are matters for gossip rather than preventative action by the school staff. Girls and their families will seek to hide what has happened for fear of stigmatisation, and the attitudes observed amongst teachers suggest that they may be wise to do so. Even where there are serious offences of violent abduction, the social practice of mediation seeks to restore social order rather than take action against the perpetrator. There are also class dimensions of this. Girls from poorer households are often exposed to such risk because of their multiple interaction to make a living83, and they also are at a double disadvantage if they lose their ‘dignity’, or fall pregnant. This is because their options for future prospects gets even narrower due to added responsibility from bringing new child to the household.

The experience of gender training notwithstanding, the school concurs with the community and wider society over what is proper and shameful, what is public knowledge and therefore worthy of discussion and what is inappropriate and to be kept secret. The narrative of seeing girls as burden or bringing shame are all too evident as a shared view of the home and the school level. This means that the real extent of sexual exploitation remains hidden. Paradoxically, the patriarchal structures of the society also continue to

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82 Despite considerable problem with female health there is hardly any sociological study to draw on on rural Ethiopia.
83 Girls from rich households are rarely exposed to men by going to their homes but the poor girls do as they are more mobile.
constitute sexuality and reproduction as one of the primary arenas in which women and
girls see possibilities for their advancement.

6.5 **SECTION IV: FORCED INCLUSION, EXCLUSION: AVENUES FOR SOCIAL REPRODUCTION**

In this section I describe a different dimension of the same problem: the way that teachers’
inability to see the implications of their own actions results in them reproducing social
inequalities as deep-rooted societal practices make their way to classroom and remain
unnoticed. This is common to both male and female teachers. Here again, these actions are
neutralised as they are interpreted as ‘closeness’, ‘affection’, and ‘good relationship’ and
not as issues of power relations. There is a locational dimension to what I am about to
present, again practices in Kara school prove better aligned with the best interests of the
children in schooling terms than those in the Kore site.

6.5.1 **An extension of the home to school**

While sexual exploitation is widely discussed in the literature (e.g. Murphy and Carr 2007)
with reference to Ethiopia, the use of students for unpaid domestic labour receives much
less observation. In Kore, however, female teachers at times send girls in groups of four or
five to undertake domestic activities like clearing grains\(^{84}\) for teachers’ private use. Some of
the teachers ate together as a group, and they buy large quantities of grain together. The
work usually involved older girls and was unpaid service but something that brought them
close to their teachers too. Indeed there are many children that benefited from the
relationships with adults that is a relative or otherwise particularly where their service to
the family is recognised and ruminated and allowed time for schooling.

While their regular absences from class doing errands for the staff might be seen to be
harmful to the girls, the teachers framed this as a particular favour. They called on specific
girls that they claimed were ‘close to them’ whom they ‘liked most out of all their students’.
Such statements were made openly in front of other students and staff. Boys also were
asked to do errands, this involved taking messages and carrying loads for example.

This is clearly an extension of child work from home to school. Beyond this, it raises the
issue of power because of their subordinate position as children against adult and as

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\(^{84}\) This is a process of separating the grain from small stones and dirt by hand, which demands time.
students against their teachers. Consequently, children were not in a position to refuse these tasks. They didn’t seem to question this either, at least in my company. However, this doesn’t take away the fact that this is essentially a forced inclusion and risks to blur the boundaries of teacher, student, employer and worker. Teachers clearly fail to see themselves as part of the problem in this situations even though there may be implications for students’ retention and completion which is a major problem in Kore. This problem of pulling children at school time for personal work was not observed in Kara as the more dispersed living arrangement didn’t allow it. Generally occasional compound or classroom cleaning was shared by whole class of students both boys and girls. However, there were children that were in school but worked as live-in domestic help for teachers, those who worked at teachers house without attending school and those who studied but took on work from teachers or other people in the community in their time outside of school often running errands (more about work was discussed in chapter five).

6.5.2 Situated blurred boundaries of the professional and the personal

In addition to the above mentioned practices of forced inclusion of girls the context of shortage of hard cash meant students (both boys and girls) in Kore, in particular take part in the local weekly market. Undeniably the market is the key source that brings a much needed cash and other items for the children and their families. Their activities involve buying but mostly selling their own or their family’s small produce like vegetables, eggs, cheese and butter. Some of these transactions commonly take place in the classroom early mornings. Some of the teachers do ask the students if they have brought items they are after and purchase before the goods even reach the market stall.

Usually on a typical village market day a 10 o’clock school bell signifies the break time. Some of the students slip out to display their produce in the market grounds just yards from the school gate. Teachers use this market for their weekly shopping and this changes the dynamic of teacher/pupil relationship temporarily. I was aware of this transactions taking place openly but I wasn’t able to document the level of haggling (which is common in the village markets as there are no set prices for goods), or pricing that went on as a result of the power relation between teachers and their pupil.

This again raises some ethical issues over the power relations between the student and teachers. Various issues are evident, such as students running late from market and arriving
after lesson started, some children were not willing to charge their teachers, and a whole
dynamic of transaction across the school. There is a paradox, the relative power of teachers
may mean that they get favours but for example, this might cost them their authority to
enforce timekeeping in class.

This in general throws up a dilemma and raises interesting questions over rhetoric, ethics
and practicalities on the ground. The embeddedness of teachers through their practical
needs and the socially hierarchical position they hold means they have greater leverage and
influence shaping the students’ social and educational trajectory. Students activities in the
market and the transaction between teachers and students is unavoidable however, the
extent of its influence positively or otherwise is not realised. For example through this
normalised interaction teachers and the school are unable to see their own role in
encouraging or undermining students’ educational progress, as well as promoting
interrupted educational careers including dropout. It is also an illustration of the situated
teacher’s experience in context of rural places with its own challenges of meeting everyday
needs.

6.5.3 Practices of reproducing inequality and transformational tendency

Many don’t even pass their Ministry\(^\text{85}\) and of the few that passed it very few go on
to Bozena\(^\text{86}\). Mostly boys go there as they can get the marks and can also look after
themselves. Very few of our girls go to secondary, most of them stay at home,
marry or go to city to work in people’s houses. (Group discussion with teachers in
Kore: 2009).

The above quote sums up the view of the teachers in Kore. They regard the study of many
of their students as pointless. There is a slim chance of children making it through the
system. This view is consistent with the findings of the survey analysis I had discussed in
chapter four. In existing literature too, this appears to be one of the key reason that
parents do not send their children to school. However, this also seems to provide a
rationale for teachers to act in a particular way towards some of the students. As young
teachers in their early career they reflect on their own experiences and struggles to get to
the teaching profession and expect only a few of their students to be able to succeed as
they did. A teacher commented ‘even in our times it was so hard. Many students didn’t pass

\(^{85}\) A national exam before joining secondary school.
\(^{86}\) The next town where the nearest secondary school is found.
the national exam’ (teacher in Kore, 2009). They themselves also have friends who are married, stayed on to be farmers or are still dependent on their families.

According to the teachers, the outlook for many of their students and especially for girls and the poor is bleak. I will illuminate below how such views inevitability impact on teachers’ own motivation and teaching practices thereby reproduce the disadvantage of rural children in schooling.

One way that this operates is in the identification of individual students as ‘stars’ who are then favoured with the majority of opportunities. This became clear to me when I asked why a particular boy, Lenka, had been chosen to lead a study group and act as a monitor to the class. Why not one of the girls? The teacher responded:

The girls have their heart divided, there is only one girl in grade 7 that is clever. The girls might come to the study group but most of the time they don’t. [The girls] are not as dedicated and as hard working. He is a very good student, clever and we all like him and help him. He can even take a class to teach. He always wins the prizes in our school. He is good in sport too and leadership. You can talk to him, he is very clever and he will talk to you even in English. (Teacher Kore: 2009)

Indeed my interview with Lenka captured that he wants to become a president of the country one day because everyone says he is able to achieve more. He likes leading and helping students who like to study. This boy was clearly central to the school activity and the majority of the teachers were willing to help him because they believed he will make it.

The school administrator said:

We are sad that we will lose him next year because he will go to the school in next town to take grade 7 there and prepare for ministry exam to enter secondary school. He is going because that school will give him a better chance to pass his ministry. His friend was very clever too and we lost him last year to another school. (School administrator Kore: 2009)

The teachers and school administrators appear to have internalised the education system that these rural children stand a narrow chance of making it through especially if they stayed in the Kore site. As they said they know many of their students will fail their ministry
exam in grade 8 and even if they make it to lower secondary school the overwhelming majority will not progress to upper secondary level therefore their limited attainment will not translate to what they aspire to achieve. This means teachers naturally tend to invest more of their time, energy and resources on prospective achievers and fail to give uniform attention to all. The case of giving majority of support to those who do well is also the case in the Kara as I was asked by the teachers to give ‘shilimat’ (rewards) usually a pen as an encouragement. While girls also were in the selected group at the Kara school most were boys. Clearly, the social standing, greater mobility and visibility of boys mean that they start with an advantage in the school and continue to have better chances compared to the girls. It seems even when girls are enrolled to school with support of their parents, their challenge didn’t end at enrolment because they have to strive even more to be noticed and helped at school.

In contrast to that of the boys the avenues of having a support for girls entails questions over their personal safety which is not the case for boys. As it was the case for Lenka amassing support from his teachers and his relative freedom as a boy allowed him to consider moving to the next village even before completing primary school to maximise his chance of joining secondary school and aspire for more. It would have been much more difficult for a girl to manage going to another school in another place as he did for instance. Jennings (2011) had reported similar observation in Ethiopia noting lack of schools in some placed from grade 5 upwards, and lack of secondary school a reason for dropout, the financial burden on parents wishing to send their children to another town as well as their disillusionment about educating their children where there are not employment prospect for them.

This was in stark contrast to the school in the Kara where the teachers encouraged more girls to stay and progress in school. Particularly the more experienced older teachers encouraged their students to come and talk to me. One teacher with agreement of staff at the staff meeting insisted to take me around to every classroom (both morning and afternoon shift). He then presented me in front of the class and introduced me as an example of ‘girls that can do anything’ his line of introduction went on:
This girl is a little bit older than you and look she has stuck by her education and now holds more degrees than I have and now even lives in Englize (England). Like her if you stick to your education, you will also achieve and get to the same places as her. (Teacher in the Kara: 2009)

While this action and the speech sounded close to propaganda and he chose to ignore my advantages as a city and privately educated girl as well as other elements and challenges I encountered, there are undeniable differences between the two schools in how they approached their students, working in a personalised way to maximise existing advantages on the one hand, and taking a more structural approach to seek to overcome inequalities on the other.

My time use across the two schools was different too and this reflect the differences between the schools. As the teachers in the Kara aspired to achieve yet more in their profession they used my time to explore opportunities for their school, their students and their own such as scholarship or networking, technology. Perhaps the relative lack of experience and exposure in rural site meant the teachers didn’t seem to display similar interest and aspire to the same level, in fact the more immediate concern expressed by Kore teachers is waiting to ‘serve time’ and to be ‘promoted’ which is about transferring to urban location. Often getting on with school administration was a major concern as this is perceived to speed this up as much not getting on could slow it down. Perhaps the Kore teachers already being in that position have advantage and could look beyond and outward to build on more on their skills. Indeed this raises the question on the assignment of the less experienced teachers to the most structurally disadvantaged schools thereby allowing reproduction of the disadvantage in schooling in quite legitimate way. As I have noted in chapter two, this was consistent with an observation made by the Ethiopian scholar Tekeste Negash (1996; 2006) emphasising location bound inherent disadvantages see also, Porter 2011; Pini et al. 2014). Also noted by Ames (2005) in Peru where teachers are reported ‘to have low expectation of rural children ‘even lower for girls’ (Ames 2005:159).

87 While there were some errors and slight exaggerations that considered I was younger than I actually am, and that I waited to finish my degrees before I thought of marriage I let that pass unchallenged in front of the children as I took his intension for a genuine effort to empower the girls.

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Selective rewarding: gender and poverty at play

Here I want to go back to the case of Tesfa introduced in chapter five. This is the girl whom I introduced in the context of children’s agentic engagement. Here I compare her case with that of Lenka.

Tesfa is a female student in grade 5 from poor family who did not want her to study but to work and earn money. She was determined to stay in school and work outside school hours cooking and cleaning for teachers. She also reported her parents to the kebele for beating her, and asked the kebele to give her an empty hut adjacent to her family’s home as her own place.88 This daring, unconventional behaviour brought her much condemnation. She was labelled as *highlenga (boisterous)* by her teachers in the school, which connotes unfeminine behaviour (Emebet Mulugeta 2004; Guday Emie 2005; Poluha 2007). This contrasts strongly with the case of Lenka above, whose effort was rewarded with on-going recognition and got him selected for leadership. To me it appears that Tesfa possessed the same quality of determination as Lenka. In fact (given that Lenka has supportive grandparents) in terms of hardship and overcoming hurdles Tesfa was more worthy of the school’s recognition but in practice she got no encouragement but scrutiny. This suggests her behaviour didn’t fit the locally expected gendered norms and behaviours attributed to girls so her effort is unrecognised, invisible and misunderstood.

Such cases illustrate the paradox introduced at the opening of this chapter, that teachers at once fail to see ‘the social’ in not viewing challenges as an issue of gender or poverty, and have an over-socialised view, in letting the local society construction of gendered outlook in what is appropriate for whom guide the judgements they make of children. In the rural context this means that they see both girls and poor children ‘through the social’ and so render most of them as ‘unable to make it’.

This may be more of a problem in Kore because there is a lack of real examples among the poor or the girls that succeeded from that village. Of the few girls considered to have a ‘good life’ these often are through marriage or migration. Further, teachers’ own experience of being from a ‘rural’ area and the difficulties of going through the narrow opportunity of the education system is reflected in their actions. These coupled with the reality of poor families’ inability to support their children (particularly girls) through paying

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88 It is considered inappropriate for unmarried village girls to live alone.
fees and other expenses are reasons why teachers appear to write off sections of their students. This is crucial for children’s experiences like Tesfa particularly in the context of seriously low enrolment and high dropout rate that the area has.

6.5.4.1 Age and Inequality in schooling

Other similar observation practices of reproduction amounted to lead me to this view of inequality being a tied to gender and poverty also has a dimension of age. I mentioned I will come back to this in the section about figure massaging and school readiness. I will draw on again on the example I noted above where the teacher states ‘the girls have their heart divided, there is only one girl in grade 7 that is clever’, this suggests only one girl being visible out of the many that are making effort to continue with their study in that class. The girl the teacher is referring to as ‘the only clever’ girl was age 12 who is clearly an outlier compared to many of Kore girls that are usually enrolled later. Her father is highly supportive of her studies and she has highly educated aunt in the capital city (a doctor).

However that is in fact the class where Worke age 17 also studies. As I have discussed in chapter five she has successfully negotiated to remain in school by disappearing to her sister’s house in another village until her family agree that she study instead of being married. She is dedicated and good student too but in the teacher’s view she remained invisible. Consistent with my observation in other cases this may be that the teachers thought despite her effort being an older girl (late enrolee) she is considered too late to ‘make it’ and therefore unlikely to pursue her schooling in secondary school located in Kara. This is not necessarily that she won’t afford to go because her family fall in the middle rank in terms of wealth but, a reflection of how age and schooling is constructed in confusing terms age 7 being too early but at ones also desirable to make it through schooling career successfully.

6.5.5 Self-exclusion

Finally as I have shown in the analysis of the school level data so far where teachers see the children through the social and seems to write them off based on children’s age, gender or their families’ economic status, at the same time they seem to ‘forget’ their economic circumstances when it comes, for example, to expectations of fund-raising for the school. This is the subject of the next section.
As a result of decentralisation, schools are more and more encouraged to find innovative ways of engaging the community and to raise their contributions. Further, promoting school clubs to raise awareness of important issues like child rights and HIV/AIDS meant schools organise events, school days, and sport days. This on the surface indeed promotes important issues like health and as schools get together to participate in sports competition it brings an element of fun to what is usually a regimented landscape of schooling. On such days the competitive atmosphere between classes, schools, even teachers and the enthusiasm to display the best event is so vibrant thus no doubt it will foster a healthy experience of schooling. This is also an economic opportunity for some children selling sweets and drinks. However, amidst so much vibrancy there are groups of children that are silently excluded and watching literally from the corner. One such child, Yonatan, put it this way:

I don’t want to go into class because they all have contributed and I don’t want to be in there...because I don’t want to eat their food.....I don’t like to eat other people’s food because I didn’t bring any wheat.

Similarly, others are also stopped from taking part in football or volleyball group as it is exclusively for those children who contributed money for the purchase of the ball. Children again mentioned feeling ‘embarrassed’ when they are asked to contribute as well as during sports periods when they can’t take part in the games involving balls. Teachers were again busy administering their own rules and were not able to reflect on the effect of this on children’s experience of schooling. For them asking for contribution is legitimised by the official encouragement of the community participation. While teachers didn’t see how this practices impacted on children’s feeling and school experiences as Yonatan told me however, the children themselves invited him to eat with them. When I raised this issue with one of the teachers, he thought it was a trivial matter and that ‘if they want to come and eat, no one will stop them’. He didn’t see how they themselves felt ‘embarrassed’ for failing to contribute and this was not ‘trivial’ matter to them as shown by their decision to withdraw from the celebration day. Moreover as I have discussed Yonatan’s case in chapter four this practices also promoted family conflict as children strived to fulfil the demand of their school at any cost including stealing from family.

In this section I have presented the problematic nature of school’s practices and school based activities such as a big events that exclude categories of children albeit
unintentionally. And that it is concerning how the nonparticipation and isolation of some of the children goes unnoticed. I have illustrated how the gendered division of labour is extended to the school ground and used to the benefit of the teachers at the cost of girls’ learning time. This is a serious impediment given the already overloaded schedule girls and boys have in the village. Another problematic area I highlighted was the boundary between teachers and students and potential ethical issues it raises. I then went on to illustrate further issues of inclusion and exclusion drawing on teachers’ views of their students and how these were shaped by gender and class. This indicates that the teachers in Kore failed to see the implication of their actions and how these reproduced rather than counteracted patterns of inequality amongst their students.

6.6 Discussion and Conclusion of the Chapter

Bourdieu’s (1990:13) concept of habitus as ‘a system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level’ clearly helps to explain the predisposition teachers bring to their work and its implication for their day to day practice. In the case of the two studied schools most of the teachers themselves came from across Oromo speaking regions and they have a recent history of their own schooling in rural setting, under a similar educational system where rural children struggle to attain education. This of itself will mean they read the circumstances of their students differently from the way an outsider would.

Where habitus might seem to fall short is in explaining why the teachers in the two schools display such difference in their handling of their students. However, taking accounts of other factors such as length of experiences as teachers, qualification and training, exposure over time it is possible to understand how some differences in their habitus might emerge. This draws attention to seeing habitus as ‘an open system of dispositions’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:133). The culture of the ‘fields’ of the two schools is also affected. The longer established Kara school, with its more mature, better trained and experienced teaching manpower and various other forms of social capital displays a very different institutional culture to that of Kore. Their differences are displayed in how they interact with their own students, parents, the community and even with myself as an individual placed in that social space.
According to Bourdieu change is possible but it needs the conditions that permit what he called ‘an awakening of consciousness’ or simply put reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). As shown in most sections of this chapter gender issues cut across the field of the school in various forms.

The empirical findings of this chapter are consistent with much of the rural school findings as discussed in the literature review chapter (e.g. Ames 2005). On another level the findings resonate with those of Mills (2008), in showing that some of the more experienced teachers displayed a transformative tendency while for less experienced teachers in the less advantaged school more reproductive tendencies were observed. This confirms Bourdieu’s (1990:76) comment: ‘to explain what people do, you have to suppose that they obey a certain ‘feel for the game’,[…]to understand their practices, you have to reconstruct the capital of informational models that enables them to produce sensible and regular thoughts and practices without any intention of behaving meaningfully and without consciously obeying rules explicitly posed as such.’ In other words, while it appears that everyone is free to play the game of schooling that is not the case in reality.

As this chapter and the one before it have shown, neither school, home, nor community itself offers an even playing field. In each of these social spaces the individuals are set in hierarchical fashion with some better positioned to improve or maintain their position while others struggle. For example children assume varying positions in relation to their teachers, parents, and peers across different fields. This is further complicated and changing over time as in the case of the children they themselves evolve thereby changing their positionality through growing up, migration, taking up jobs, completing or leaving school, acquiring or losing the capital set assimilated. But often the changes appear seamless as all of this ‘passes in an implicit, tacit manner’ (Grenfell and James, 1998:20). The shared identity of being from rural area, a rural family, rural teacher, rural child, rural student clearly tends towards a common outcome, though the room for diversity and change should never be denied.

Addressing the challenges of rural schooling the first part of this chapter concentrated on the campaign designed to draw children into school. I pointed out the conditions in which the teachers administered the campaign including the location situated challenges they faced. I also outlined some of the key differences the schools possessed such as the level of
teachers’ experience and the context in which they operated, how the teachers were able or otherwise to act upon the information they have gained about the children. Reading off from the analysis it seems a relaxed registration system and minimal procedures could encourage more children to join school.

In terms of the school practices, I pointed out Kore school was pragmatic in taking a measure of abolishing uniform as an obligatory requirement. While there may be a utility for uniform (as an equaliser effect) in the context of Kore children imposing it would hinder rather than help, so in this case the school administration appear to have responded by considering the local context.

I then pointed to the way teachers’ practices reinforced the differences already made within households about children categorised as ‘other’, or having a disability or chronic illness. I made the point that if these group of children are neglected the education is not for all. Arguing that teacher’s and the local authorities have an over socialised view of children, I showed how there was a reluctance to question certain household heads over their decision about their children’s schooling, while they found it easy to speak to the poor, often female-headed households. The over-socialised view of children was also evident in the ways that their class and gender biases led them to write off the prospects of the majority of their students and concentrating on the few.

While community engagement is advocated in the education sector policy documents and it is for all the good reasons; in the context of rural Ethiopia it is not been well theorised in how this must also be managed as to avoid overdependence of teachers and the effect it can have in undermining their autonomy and thus ability to implement the intentions of the sector that is drawing and retaining children in school. However, even the new ESDP (2015) largely had uncritical view of community participation.

I then discussed the tensions inherent in the personalised relationships between teachers and students, and showed that female as well as male teachers are liable to use these in exploitative ways. The exploitation is not seen, however, as the actions are interpreted as ‘closeness’ or ‘affection’. There was a spatial dimension to this, with more neutral, professional relationships observed in Kara school, and more personalised practices in Kore
that in Bourdieu’s terms corresponded with transformational and reproductive tendencies respectively.

Following the theme of seeing the social, in this chapter I have illustrated the embeddedness of the teachers, and through them one could trace the state. The chapter showed the paradox of teachers being at once unable to see the social as a target for action (what I termed under-socialised view) and having an over-socialised view such that their own actions reproduced existing inequalities with implications for school non-enrolment and dropout. I have shown that teachers don’t look at the children’s background in order to apply what is an appropriate demand, expectation or action. Instead, teachers are very much bound by and apply local judgement. For instance, they tend to view action in terms of locally (in) appropriate behaviour rather than in educational terms. Unintentional discrimination results from this failure to reflect on themselves as teachers and the school as a whole. This has serious implications for whether children come to and stay in school or not. I have alluded of the possibility that the target focused culture of the state does not help to promote such reflections.

As this chapter illustrates the survey snapshot data has benefited from the ethnographic observation in a sense of putting another layer explanation on it. Building on the findings of the last two empirical chapters in a nuanced and highly contextualised way this chapter explained why low enrolment and incompletion persist in rural context. As discussed further in the conclusion, this chapter has described the ways in which social stratification unfolds in the field of school and is seemingly justified by strategic positioning. This goes some way to explain how some children and their families successfully negotiate and dominate the game to improve their social standing through education while many do not achieve their goals.
7 CONCLUSIONS: SEEING THE SOCIAL

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this concluding chapter I draw together my key findings about rural children’s schooling and suggest the wider implications for scholars of education and international development in general, and their application in the context of Ethiopia in particular. Indeed the key findings of this study are manifold, but all in some ways demonstrate the value of voice and the importance of understanding the social context and how this shapes social practice. As I have highlighted at the start of the thesis, this study is not a policy study nor does it aim to contribute to policy. Nevertheless, as I refer to school level practices and education systems I am aware that power lies way beyond the average rural school or its teachers and in many ways multiple interests and influences underlie school level actions and inactions. Such influences must be recognised as I present the final chapter of this thesis (see Klees et al. 2012).

7.2 RELEVANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD

The topic I have taken to investigate - primary schooling for rural children in developing countries, taking in particular the case of Ethiopia - is a key area of concern at both national and global level. While there are numerous studies looking at rural children’s schooling, village-based ethnographic studies are rare, particularly in Ethiopia. Methodologically this study has made a valuable contribution in emphasising not only the importance of bringing local people’s own voices into the debate, but also drawing attention to the ways voice may be utilised and calling for greater sensitivity to the way it is interpreted in scholarly and policy circles. Theoretically, the study shows the value of applying Bourdieu’s approach to social reproduction in analysing the challenges faced by rural children in completing primary school. Empirically, it has shown, first, that many more children are out of primary school in rural Ethiopia than the official figures suggest. Second, it has also shown that these absences are not simply explained either by the quantity of primary schools available, or a lack of value being accorded to education, or deliberate acts of discrimination (e.g. against girls). Rather, it has argued that discriminatory outcomes, or the reproduction of social inequality, have to be understood as the outcome of social practice, where ‘choices’
are made in circumstances of considerable constraint. Furthermore, it has shown that these patterns of social reproduction are as characteristic of teachers and the field of the school as they are of parents and children and the field of home and community. Rather than the school operating as an external change agent, as imagined in much of the education literature, the school is very much part of the local social context. The application of policies and the social practice of staff are significantly marked by their location within the communities which they serve. The next section covers the key findings.

7.3 Key findings

7.3.1 Key findings #1

The first implication of my study is the need to be cautious about official figures and claims. The recent international and national literature portrayed Ethiopia as a paragon of virtue in terms of its educational achievements. Lenhardt et al. (2012) declared that Ethiopia was on track to meet the education MDG after a 500% increase in the enrolment rate. The World Bank (2004) also stated Ethiopia could look back with pride on its achievement. Indeed Ethiopia has come a long way, but recognition of this progress is significantly different to saying that it was set to reach the MDG goal. Such international acclaim reflected highly positive national reports of over 100% enrolment rates, except in peripheral areas or with particularly ‘hard to reach’ groups (e.g. ESDP III, IV, GMR 2009, MoE 2010). My study suggests, by contrast, that even within relatively accessible areas there remain significant numbers of children who have either left school completely or are experiencing very intermittent school careers. Ironically, as 2015 arrived it became much clearer to all that there were still significant issues regarding access to and completion of primary schooling and this is even more the case once concerns around quality and learning are raised (UNESCO 2014, World Bank 2005; Tekeste Negash 2006; Tessema 2006; Pritchett; Pritchett and Charles Kenny). In part the problem lies in the prevailing methodology (Carl-Hill 2012) with good quality statistics difficult to find (Bevan; Kiros). In addition, however, the collection of data is extremely politicised, especially where there are strong incentives to meet high profile targets such as the MDGs (Elizabeth Mekonnen and Bizuayehu Feye 2010; Yamada 2007). The quality of education, which can rarely be captured statistically, is also a significant concern, with children declaring of the evening school ‘we learn nothing’ and some parents reluctant to send children to the local school.
because they doubt its quality will enable children to achieve the access to higher status jobs that education supposedly promises.

7.3.2 **Key findings #2**

A core methodological finding of the study concerns the **complexity of voice**. As I have established in chapter two and three of this thesis, it is important to listen to what people say. But what do we mean by voice? Literature on voice tends to focus on including children as direct respondents, local participation, or even consulting children to formulate research questions or have them conduct research themselves. All of these are important. For me, however, the key point about voice is the need to spend sufficient time with respondents where researchers attempt to really hear, to unlearn what they know and allow themselves to be challenged by what is said relearn’ (Chambers 1983). This means hearing beyond the most superficial meaning to the deeper factors that constitute ‘common sense’ and the boundaries of what is possible. It also means constant reflexivity, starting from conceptions of research problem, through design, fieldwork, and working with data and writing it up. Remaining in that reflexive moment allows us to build layer after layer of respondents’ context. This ultimately reveals a deeper level of understanding of the value of voice, which is far beyond, ‘a child said to me that....or this’. It also raises the question of habitus. Clearly people internalise constraints and this is an effect of power, however, in listening carefully to people’s voices, one comes to understand that while people may have an acceptance of what has to be, this doesn’t necessarily mean they internalise it as what should be. In the case of children’s schooling, for example, parents may accept they cannot send their child to school, and yet believe that their child should have the right to education, and that it is social injustice that stands in their way.

7.3.3 **Key findings #3**

Staying with my discussion of voice above it is worth considering the way poor and uneducated people are imagined and treated more generally in educational and development policy discourses. Lacking sufficient understanding of people’s perspectives and contexts results in the tendency to identify their actions in moral terms, as a kind of personal (or group-wise) failing. Claims that poor parents don’t value education or girls, are not committed to their children’s schooling, or are ignorant are all value judgements. If, by contrast, researchers listen to what people are saying they realise that the difficulties people are dealing with are really significant, so much so that development practitioners
and researchers would find it equally hard to come up with an alternative solution. Thus a deeper understanding of people’s situation leads to it being framed less in terms of moral failure and more to considering the political and pragmatic ways that their situations might be addressed.

7.3.4 Key findings #4
A further finding is that parents’ and children’s perceptions of children’s relationship to school may be quite different from the way the education system sees it. Both the education literature and the structure of the education system tend to categorise and label children in fixed terms, for example as a *dropped out child*. By contrast, local people themselves see the whole process in a much more fluid way. The fluidity meant that people have a sense of hope and possibilities, reflected in an all year round process of preparation, negotiation (e.g. readiness), and soliciting support, even if this is eventually unsuccessful.

While this sense of the current situation being temporary or provisional may be positive in keeping opportunities open, at the same time it seems that children and parents actually don’t admit or recognise what is going on. In that sense there is a phenomenon of ‘misrecognition’ of their situations, to put it in Bourdieu’s terms. This can be seen as adaptive as it is about a sense of their hopes and the perceived value of education that makes them believe their children are going to somehow be in school ‘in September’ even when it might seem quite obvious to outsiders that they are not going to. By staying positive they hold on to those hopes, feed their aspirations, and in some cases they do manage to go back, but in a lot of cases they can’t or come to drop out again. The main point I am trying to highlight here is that people locally look at a school career in the sense of flow and possibilities rather than seeing their children as categories of individuals in particular states, which is the way their position is constructed in the broader education literature.

7.3.5 Key findings #5
A further key finding speaks to the ongoing debate about the relations between child work/labour and schooling, which is a pertinent issue in relation to rural children in particular. My findings show, however, that when it comes to the effect on education, what matters most is not, as the literature tends to suggest, whether work is done for the family or is outside employment. Rather, the key factor is the nature of the task. If a child can
manage tasks around with regular breaks and fit them around the school day, this is very
different to tasks that require constant presence and so are impossible to combine with
also going to school. This is true of tasks at home as well as going out to work. Indeed there
are other studies showing how physical tiredness and lack of study time have implications
for children’s schooling (Orkin, 2012).

So, in terms of thinking about the relationship between education and work firstly, yes,
children can go to work in a way that enables them to support their schooling. However, it
is important not to be too optimistic about this. The constant demand of some kinds of
work mean children cannot also go to school. Even when they do go to schools such as
evening schools they may receive poorer quality of schooling because it is a low status
option. For most parents and children, for children to work to support their own schooling
(or the family itself) is not the ideal choice, but one born out of necessity.

7.3.6  Key findings #6
One of the key empirical findings to emerge from this study has been the geographical
mobility of children. This confirms the observation of Tatek Abebe (2008); Koohi-Kamali
(2008) that children are much more mobile than is often assumed. This results in them
dropping in and out of schools, as well as dropping in and out of work. This is an area where
the structuring effects of the broader state system and the global political economy, which
are often hidden, begin to be visible. Thus the state’s commitment to foreign direct
investment has direct effects in the displacement and resettlement of families (see chapter
five). The resulting investments in the form of flower farms, for example, also have a direct
impact on children’s schooling by providing opportunities for children’s employment.
Similarly, the school system’s bureaucratic demands for Meshenga (see chapter five and
six) and the policy to teach in local languages, can make it very difficult for children who
migrate to sustain their schooling careers.

So it seems that state structures are imagining rural people and their children as a much
more settled population than is the case in reality. Moreover, the actions of the state and
global investors are themselves responsible for some of that mobility. There is a need to
recognise what children’s lives are actually like and then think how education can respond
to those realities rather than ignore them and create barriers to children going to school.
7.3.7 **Key findings #7**

Gender has been an important crosscutting issue throughout the thesis. This of course is widely recognised in the existing literature, and intersects with many other factors (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005; Cornwall et al. 2007; Unterhalter 2007; Fennell and Arnot 2008). A particular contribution of my thesis, however, is to argue that we need to consider gender not just at the level of the individual student but also at the generation above. Patriarchal structures are affect the wellbeing of children in households, particularly when headed by women after divorce. This in turn has gendered effects for both boys and girls. Gendered divisions of labour may work against boys or girls depending on what particular tasks need to be done in the household. However, repeated life events such as the birth of siblings clearly do have a particular effect on girls. The life cycle of households thus means there is predictability in the demands that are made on girls’ time.

Beyond gender, there is also the critical issue of relatedness that arises in the question ‘who is this child to me?’ Again, this has been recognised in the literature, however, I argue that it particularly applies to rural children and their schooling because of the mobility discussed above and the growing number of orphan children (see chapter two).

7.3.8 **Key findings #8**

In terms of school, my argument throughout the thesis was the need to see school as part of a society and not see it as separate from the society. Teachers are part of a local community that is hierarchically organised and they therefore reproduce the biases that are there within society. Paradoxically, this means that they are both under-socialised and over-socialised in their views and treatment of children (chapter six). They are over-socialised in the sense that they don’t challenge rich people and also reproduce gender inequality through their own actions. They are under-socialised in the sense they don’t give enough recognition to the sorts of struggles different children are facing.

Here again we see the importance of relationality as an issue. Rural teachers and local parents are related in multiple ways, beyond the simple professional relationship. This is particularly evident in the more rural site, where teachers were in many ways dependent on their relationships within the community. Their own needs for material support combined with a reluctance to challenge wealthier people because of their status in the
community. Their material needs also meant that they used local children to run errands or do household work.

Just as the teachers as individuals are reliant on community support, so is the education system itself highly reliant on community contribution. My study confirms previous studies (Cook and Kothari 2001; Yamada 2013) that show this does not mean an expanded role for local participation or empowerment, but is mainly concerned with economic resources. Increasing participation without resources means additional burdens on poor parents and poor communities and can reinforce the tendency of teachers to turn a blind eye towards richer parents while exercising strict surveillance of the poor. As more broadly with my argument of the importance of ‘seeing the social’, these points are not intended to suggest the moral deficit of rural teachers. Rather, we can see rurality as a structure that shapes behaviour with consequences in terms of social reproduction.

The structuring of rurality is evident in other ways also. Rural schools have less experienced teachers, meaning that people who are more vulnerable in terms of their career location are also most vulnerable in terms of their physical location. Schools in the two sites had quite different institutional cultures, as evident in the way they related to me. This suggests children too experience schooling differently by location. What this means is that the place where there is critical need for a stronger and progressive presence of the school is the place where this is least available. This is a long standing problem not just for Ethiopia.

One way in which these issues have been analysed is in terms of ‘urban bias’ (Tekeste Negash 1996; Uzobo et al.2014). The preferential allocation of well trained and experienced teachers to urban areas, as well as preferential investment in urban schools is a long recognised and continuing problem. In this study we have seen its effects in that rural teachers exist in a provisional state telling us they are ‘serving time.’ Being a rural teacher doesn’t carry much prestige (Gould 1993) and thus it is not surprising they are waiting to move to a better opportunity. Parents and children are also highly aware of the issue of school quality, and see their local, rural schools as providing poorer opportunities than the urban or private schools available to more advantaged children. To address these inequalities would require considerable investment and might be resisted by teachers themselves. However, it is an important aspect of the rural schooling problem that needs to be recognised.
7.3.9 **Seeing the social**

The underlying argument of all these points is the importance of ‘seeing the social’. This means recognising the centrality of relationality, and how children, parents and teachers’ room for manoeuvre is very much constrained by their relationships to each other. This challenges the moralistic tone of some education literature by pointing out that most people are doing the best they can in very difficult circumstances. Thus in the case of teachers it is unrealistic to imagine them simply as progressive agents who can somehow be parachuted in and unaffected by the social context. Instead, it is important to see how they themselves are socially embedded actors.

7.4 **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

While I don’t claim to be an anthropologist, I identify strongly with the statement of Janet Carsten (1995:223) that ‘what I present here would not seem strange to most of the villagers I know. Of course, my account is incomplete, but I do not take completeness to be a proper aim for an anthropologist’. Indeed, the facts I set out to find, the narrative I constructed and the accounts I chose to write are valid for that time and place and for the persons who shared their experiences with me. I am also confident that what I found can be seen as being representative of the many children living in this specific rural setting at that specific time. Nevertheless, I expect that there will be more things to be added to my findings, not least because as I discovered ‘time’ is critical and the situations are dynamic. Changes over time are particularly evident given the incorporation of many rural parts of Ethiopia in the global political economy. As infrastructural changes in roads and electricity reach many remote areas and as small farms and farmers begin to be pushed away in favour of larger corporates and horticulture industries such as flower farms, the way of living and surviving is kept in flux also\(^9^9\).

In terms of the generalisability of the findings, it is limited to the case study sites, which is the downside of being highly contextualised and grounded in a particular time and space. Furthermore given the heterogeneity of Ethiopian society, to generalise based on this small-scale study will be undesirable and unwise. However, while many of the findings are specific to the people and places studied here, they are of value in a wider context because

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\(^9^9\) This was beyond the scope of this thesis to go in more detail however, as I commented in the empirical chapter of this thesis during my fieldwork investment related displacement and change in livelihood of the community was happening. For more coverage of issues related to ‘land grabs’ in Ethiopia see Lavers (2012).
they highlights some key processes of schooling in rural contexts and issues that need attention. Most critical is the emphasis it places on the views of local people themselves. More broadly, the credibility of my evidence and argument is supported by the detailed account I have provided in the methodology chapter and throughout the thesis.

7.5 IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE POLICY AND STUDIES

Despite the considerable effort put into universal education of children, this study suggests that access to a good quality school in Ethiopia and in many developing countries remains unattainable for many, especially in rural areas. As Ethiopians would say, it is like having a cow in the sky which one could imagine but never get to drink her milk. It is an aspiration and a desire, but not one that is likely to be fulfilled.

The main focus of the global community still remains on primary level schooling along with an emergent focus on learning while at primary school and continuing to secondary level. For those genuinely concerned with rural children’s education and rural development in developing countries, some serious questions need to be asked about this emphasis on primary schooling. Two simple points can be raised here. The first is that education cannot be the whole remedy. The second is that – as many rural people themselves recognise - primary education alone will not be enough to secure employment.

There is a long history of unfulfilled global level commitments that justify doubt about whether the SDGs will be any different from the MDGs. However their continued efforts to bring marginal voices into this debates will be a valuable input for future studies in this field. Future studies would make valuable input by researching issues around adolescence girls’ reproductive health in relation to school from international development and education point of view, in addition sociology of family in Ethiopia is undertheorised not surprising given the limited exposure of Ethiopian scholars work and I see this as an area future research can usefully take on.
7.6 PERSONAL REFLECTION

In closing, it is appropriate to add a note of personal reflection. As mentioned above, my own biography is as a person of urban Ethiopia with rural roots who has had extensive exposure not least in my professional work as a development practitioner. My claim that I have come full circle in understanding the perspectives of the children, parents and teachers also applies to myself. I too have come full circle in my own perspectives as some of my beliefs have been shaken or abandoned as I developed new understandings. As I continually challenged myself on the basis of the voices I was hearing, I began to be conscious of my own ideas from my primary socialisation - or habitus. I come from the same culture and learning where human capital theory is an entrenched discourse leaving no room for alternative options. In the process of this research I found my own past actions, personal commitments, and constructions of development solutions were shaken. More than before I come to see both the yawning gap between the claims made about the value of education and the reality of unfulfilled and perhaps in many terms unfulfillable aspirations held by my research participants. On one level I consider this as valuable transformation that helps me challenge myself by admitting that not all development ideals are obtainable and asking difficult questions about whether the primary education that is on offer can deliver on its promises. Of course as I have shown in this study the answer is no. So, should we abandon the aspiration for good change and social justice between the rural and urban, the poor and the rich, the men and women, the north and the south, seeing it as an unattainable goal? How might the enduring gaps of educational inequality and inequality more generally be pursued? With regards to education, the answer for these in my view is not found in ‘de-schooling’ (Illich 1973 cited in Gould 1993) or educational inequality (what Tekeste Negash 1996, echoing Freire (1972), calls a two tiered system of schooling). Instead, I am of the view that the best place to start is by acknowledging the realities. This means being honest about what people might and might not gain in taking part in primary education and acknowledging what they already know about inequality and unrealistic aspirations. It also involves acknowledging their struggle to achieve and the limits imposed on them beyond their control. On another level, it is about researchers and development professionals’ role in challenging the orthodoxies and bringing such issues out at all levels: global, national, regional and local. As noted above, a key dimension of this is to shift attention in terms of the structuring of action from any idea of moral deficit on the part of local people to the social and political contexts in which they are set.
In concluding, a word to policy. My research makes me critical of the one school per village approach. This is not because there is anything wrong in supplying a school to every village, however, full primary education will not be achieved by parachuting in schools in the expectation that children will flock to them. Rather, what is required is a package of provision. This should include support that frees rural teachers from being reliant on the rural elite in a way that constrains them being agents of transformation. It should also reconsider the Ethiopian administrative categories of ‘well served’ and ‘underserved’ to take account of the physical accessibility of schooling in particular settings. Finally, accessibility and inclusiveness need to be considered on many levels and for different types of children, including issues of language.


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Appendix 3.1: Expanded discussion in positionality

Epistemological and Ontological Overview.

Epistemological (how we can know the world and the relationship of researcher to researched) and ontological (the nature of reality) considerations influence the choice of research method and are considered first in this section.

The basic principles of positivism takes an ontological stance of ‘naive realism that suggests knowledge as apprehendable and an epistemological stance that claims objective reality and truth (Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

In contrast, constructivist ontology ‘asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors’ (Bryman 2004:538) and argue that reality can never be fully apprehended, only approximated (Guba 1990:22 cited in Denzin and Lincoln 2000:9).

Chambers work ‘Whose reality counts?’ raises important and enduring ontological questions for researchers, development practitioners, governments, institutions and policy makers on the construction of ‘reality’, i.e. whose reality counts. Regarding this, he is critical of the ‘methods and analysis that feeds into myth that supports policies, projects and programmes’ (Chambers 1997:30). In his view, people’s ‘professionalism’ (a certain way of learning), ‘distance’ (physically, organisationally, socially, and cognitively), and ‘power’ (position in hierarchy), can combine with vested interests to offer spirited resistance to new insights (Chambers 1997:32). Consequently, he calls for a research method that gives the realities of the poor people to be known in their own terms and not interpreted by those higher in status (‘uppers’). He stresses the importance of Self Critical Epistemological Awareness (SCEA). That is, to him the realities of life and conditions are: local, complex, diverse, dynamic and unpredictable. The SCEA stance underlines that one has to be constantly ‘examining and reflecting on how and what one learns’ (ibid:203) and that through this process a gap will open to relearn, as well as the researcher coming to an understanding that realities are multiple (ibid). Although much of Chambers’ work has been
focused on participatory methodology, it is proposed here that his thinking regarding how we get to know people’s reality is transferable to the context of understanding rural problems. In particular, Chambers was clear about practices in the development field and in research that ought to be avoided, such as: projecting ones values, power, and preconceived ideas. Instead the researcher should seek to empower the subjects by enabling them to draw their own reality (voice). There are some parallels here with the newly emergent field of the sociology of childhood and it has relevance in this study as I am seeking to hear local voices including children’s on schooling.

Drawing on Hardman 1973 who described women and children as ‘muted groups’, James and Prout 1997:7) highlight that ‘The history of the study of childhood in the social sciences has been marked not by an absence of interest in children [...] but by their silence’. There has been increasing call therefore for researchers and policy makers to attend to children’s own views on matters that affects them ‘even to the point of carrying out research themselves’ (Lewis 2004:2 in Fraser et al, 2004; also see Mayall 2002; Lewis et al, 2004 ). Related to this view Morrow (2001) notes the shift towards using participatory research methods and the emphasis being ‘on generating knowledge from the perspective not only of the researchers but also of the researched’ (Morrow 2001:256). In the case of research involving children therefore it became essential to take their own views into account. Similarly in development literature it is increasingly acknowledged that traditionally the views of the poor, uneducated and rural along with women and children have been neglected (Chambers 1983; Hart 1992; Fraser et al, 2004; Cornwall et al, 2007). In part the idea of participation emerged to address this imbalance (Chambers 1983; Mishra 1984; Cooke and Kothari 2001). Such thinking had resonated in methodological approaches in the study of childhood, education, and rural development, increasing an interest in peoples (children’s) own perspectives, as well as consideration of power relations arising from age, gender, and socioeconomic differences, including the ethical issues they entail (Panelli et al. 2007; Morrow and Richards 1996). Boyden and Ennew (1997) argue that the implications of this view for policy and interventions are that ‘research about children’s lives is essential if policies and programmes are to become more responsive and relevant to their concerns and needs’ (Boyden and Ennew 1997:10 cited in Morrow 2001:256).

In listening to the voices of children I believe it is important to adopt a subjectivist ontological position, which means that I try to see ‘reality as made up of the perceptions
and interactions of living subjects’ (O’Gorman and Macintosh 2015:56). The implications of this are that individuals’ responses to similar situations (for instance school setting, teachers’ treatment of them) would be different depending on their own background, including cultural, economic, social and gender aspects, that may influence how children and families respond and the process of social reproduction. For example the rural school environment and the system in general claims to be or may appear to offer universal service to all children, however, the perception and experience of individual children in how they engage with and articulate this may vary. For example, the experience of the boys could be different from girls, and the experience of working children may be different from the children that do not work for reasons that are overt and observable, but also hidden from view and inapprehensible (Nieuwenhuys 1994; Woodhead 1998, 1999). Their own response to their school level experiences may be structured by societal expectations in accordance with their individual personalities, attributes or social place. Therefore in my attempt to have an insight about the schooling problems of rural children it is important to me that I strive to avoid simplifying the range of factors that influence schooling trajectories. In that way my stance differs from an objectivist ontological stance that assumes that reality is accurately measurable. Before I move to discuss childhood theory to extend the above discussion on voices of children I will go back to the above discussed epistemological and ontological stance.

The critical realist stance

I am mainly coming back to this discussion to continue the point made above in listening to children’s voice or indeed the local voices two concerns arise one about the fallibility of children’s voice and the other dealing with conflicting voices between adults and children. Aside from the above discussed positivist and constructivist extreme stance opposite to each other there are other philosophical underpinning that somewhat stand on the middle ground between the two positions. With this regard Bhaskar’s (1989) notion of critical realism is often cited, which rejects constructionist as well as objectivist ontologies and it holds the view that the ‘social world is reproduced and transformed in daily life’ (Bhaskar 1989:4 cited in Bryman 2004:440). From this perspective therefore, ‘social phenomena are produced by mechanisms that are real, but that are not directly accessible to observation and are discernible only through their effects’ (Bryman 2004:440). Indeed many researchers that seek a middle ground to bridge between the positivist and constructivist stance find
critical realism appealing. This is because critical realism mixes a realist ontology with a 
constructionist epistemology therefore encompasses the view from both natural and social 
science (Benton 2004). At the basic level critical realism holds a realist view with critical 
edge (Benton 2004). Benton states ‘Critical realist make a clear distinction between the 
independently existing real being, relations, process, and so on...critical realists reject the 
relativism...which emphasize the socially constructed character of knowledge. Without 
commitment to unsustainable notions of “ultimate” or “absolute” truth’ (Benton 2004).

Drawing on the work of Dyson and Brown (2005), Walsh and Evans (2014) offer a simplified 
description of critical realism depicted in a form of a tree which corresponds with Bhaskar’s 
realist ontology that sees to explore causative mechanisms, and structures at three levels 
‘the ‘empirical’, the ‘actual’ and the ‘real’” (Walsh and Evans 2014:e1). Walsh and Evans 
explain,
The first and most superficial is the ‘empirical’ which is what can be observed or 
experienced [represented as tree branches] Underneath this empirical level is the ‘actual’:
what is going on that may not be observed but which is regulating the empirical 
[represented as tree trunk partially obscured under the ground], [and] the final layer which 
he called the ‘real’ that underpins the ‘actual’ (tree roots). These are ‘generative 
mechanisms’ that contribute to our understanding of the ‘actual’ but which are not fully 
explanatory. Rather, they are ‘tendencies’ or causative agents (Walsh and Evans 2014:e2).

As implied in the above depiction of its stratified ontology, a critical realist approach aims 
to identify structures and explores actions of agents within the social, political, institutional, 
cultural context. According to Mayall’s discussion of critical realism in sociology of 
childhood for example, critical realism ‘sets out agency and structure into ontologically 
distinct entities’ (Mayall 2002:39) therefore enables one to pay attention to distinctive 
aspects of structures (for example policy, school rules, institution culture and practices, 
social practices) (Mayall 2002). Mayall also highlights and I agree with her sentiment here

‘on agency, critical realism identifies motivating forces stretching from the past into 
the future : established dispositions, reasons and experiences, feelings on the day, 
wishes and goals for the future. This analysis is useful again in drawing attention to 
processes across time, and in providing a method for considering children’s 
While elements from postpositivists, constructionist and critical realist positions are applicable to my own view, no one position captured it. As outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:6) ‘it is not uncommon for researchers to work between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms’, provided this is not attempted between contrasting paradigms such as the extreme version of positivism with that of constructivism.

For example I believe that the number of the children who are out of school and the number of girls relative to boys can be counted and reflects reality at any given time. This might be seen as a positivist view, however, I don’t believe in the existence of an objective reality that we can apprehend using natural science methods. Meaning making activities are of importance which are central to the constructionist within which voice is crucial. In applying the ‘critical’ side of critical realism I am also of the view that reality is layered and complex therefore difficult to claim certainty. This position is beneficial and consistent with employing Bourdieu’s analytical tools in that it pools the perspectives people convey and attempts to explore it with considerations of the available discourses within which certain perspectives are established. I hold the view that it is important as a researcher to acquaint myself with the different perspectives and to carefully engage in these however, I recognise the increasingly ‘blurring’ of boundaries too (Denzin and Guba 2000:167). This meant that as advocated by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Bryman (2004) I recognise the overlap across postpositivists, postmodern orientation within which one has to navigate the terrain without necessarily boxing oneself in oppositional terms.
### Appendix 3.2: Fieldwork design:

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<th>Fieldwork period</th>
<th>Sites worked (main focus)</th>
<th>Purpose of fieldwork</th>
<th>Number of households surveyed</th>
<th>Number of children interviewed</th>
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| **March 08-Aug 08**  
Phase 1 | Kara town Kebele 05 (Site 1) (main focus)  
Kore farmers association (site 2) – (short visit) | exploratory survey and School based observation | 133 survey with household head’s Site 1 = 73 Site 2 = 60 | **Total = 61 children**  
40 = Extracted from survey list (including children enrolled and not enrolled)  
**purposive sampling 11** = in-depth interviews a full story (trajectory of their life in the span of ETC 2000-2003 with grade 4&8) | Parents both site = 61  
39 = in-depth)  
Teachers in school’s at both sites multiple short and long interviews, a director, a deputy head, and 2 hardship committee members in school (site 1) | 61 | 61 |
| **March 09 – July 09**  
Phase 2 | Kore farmers’ association (Main focus)  
Kara town Kebele 05 (Site 1) (short visit) | School based observation, qualitative interviews, life histories | A follow up of earlier groups | A follow up of earlier groups | 10 young adults these were Out of the 61 parents | 10 | 10 |
| **Dec 09 – Jan 2010** | Both sites | Short visit checking the findings with few teachers, and students in a classroom, Delivering more printed photographs | | | | | |

Note: The Ethiopian school calendar starts in September and ends in August therefore I was able to cover from Ethiopian school calendar 2000 – 2003.

Note: I had various informal interviews with various members of communities, elders as opportunity arises.
### KaraKore - Household Survey Questionnaire

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<td align="center"></td>
<td align="center">(DE1DAY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td align="center"></td>
<td align="center">(DE1MTH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td align="center"></td>
<td align="center">(DE1YEAR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Household Demography - Section 1 household profile**

1. Respondent name: ........................................................(S1RESID)  
2. Relationship to household: ..............................................(S1RESRLTN)  
3. Kebele / Gebere Mahiber: .............................................(S1SITECODE)  
4. House number: ............................................................(S1HOUSENO)  
5. Religion: .................................................................(S1R1RGN)  
6. Ethnicity .................................................................(S1R1ETH)

Please complete the roster below for all persons living in the household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Relationship to Household Head</th>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>First enrolment (Year)</th>
<th>Current schooling status</th>
<th>Ever stopped in the middle of your study (e.g. 1 Year)</th>
<th>If yes, how long for?</th>
<th>INDIVID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>M / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1-2,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>university, college</td>
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<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<td>04</td>
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<td>05</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<td>06</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<td>07</td>
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<td>08</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M / F</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 2 about child (age 5-19) - pattern of attendance, dropout, never enrolled (reasons) AND Re-registration path, supporting other, (opportunity, support)

(Note. Only complete for those children aged 5-19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.1</th>
<th>2.2</th>
<th>2.3</th>
<th>2.4</th>
<th>2.5</th>
<th>2.6</th>
<th>2.7</th>
<th>For later use to be expanded according to response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child ID</td>
<td>Is this person currently in full time education?</td>
<td>For those answered (03) for Q 2.1</td>
<td>If child is in school which school does child go to?</td>
<td>Who took child to register in school?</td>
<td>If child has stopped education in the past, has child ever re-registered in school?</td>
<td>Was there any problem in taking back the child to re-register?</td>
<td>If yes, please specify the main problem:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

00=No, but has previously been in school
01=Yes, attending regularly,
02=Yes, but attending irregularly,
03=No, has never been in school
77=NK (If yes, Skip to Q 2.3)

ID (S2CHSTILL) (S2WHYNOT) (S2CHSCHL) (S2WHOREG) (S2REREG) (S2REGPRB) (S2REGPRB1)

01 = Finance (Fees, books)
02 = Health/Disability
03 = Health illness
04 = Poverty (Food, clothing)
05 = Work/Housework
06 = Work/Paid work
07 = School problem (Ill-treatment from teacher/staff)
08 = Threat / Abuse from peers, 09 = fear of abduction
10 = Access Far from home, seasonal problem e.g. river
11 = Cultural Marriage,
12 = Cultural no need for schooling for girl
13 = recent change/shock in self or family (specify) (e.g. parent died, divorced, ill)
Section 2 continued about child (age 5-19) - pattern of attendance, dropout, never enrolled (reasons) AND Re-registration path, supporting other, (opportunity, support)

(Note. Only complete for those children aged 5-19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>2.8</th>
<th>2.9</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>3.1</th>
<th>3.2</th>
<th>3.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has child been frequently absent from school? 1-2 days a week</td>
<td>What is the main reason for irregular attendance? (to note down responses in S-hand &amp; code)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01= Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02= No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ID (S3ABSNT) (S2WHYNOT)
### Section 3 Relationship, Provision, and Orphan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>Who knows (identifies, follows up) what the child’s material and educational needs are?</th>
<th>Who funds the material needs of the child? (food, clothing etc…)</th>
<th>Who funds educational needs of the child? (registration, Uniform etc…)</th>
<th>Who decides whether child is to go (be enrolled) to school or not?</th>
<th>If child not living with biological parents is parent alive?</th>
<th>How often does the biological parent provide anything towards child’s upkeep?</th>
<th>Does child have all he/she needs for his/her education?</th>
<th>Does child what do you think are your child’s needs? (open)</th>
<th>If NO What do you say your child is lacking?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 = Father</td>
<td>01 = Father</td>
<td>01 = Father</td>
<td>01 = Have both</td>
<td>01 = Yes</td>
<td>01 = Finance (Fees, books)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 = Mother</td>
<td>02 = Mother</td>
<td>02 = Mother</td>
<td>02 = No Mother</td>
<td>02 = No</td>
<td>02 = Health/Disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 = Self</td>
<td>03 = Self</td>
<td>03 = Self</td>
<td>03 = No</td>
<td>03 = No</td>
<td>03 = Health illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 = Older Brother</td>
<td>04 = Older Brother</td>
<td>04 = Older Brother</td>
<td>04 = Older Brother</td>
<td>04 = Older Brother</td>
<td>04 = Work/Paid work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 = Older sister</td>
<td>05 = Older sister</td>
<td>05 = Older sister</td>
<td>05 = Older Sister</td>
<td>05 = Older Sister</td>
<td>05 = Work/Housework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 = Grandmother</td>
<td>06 = Grandmother</td>
<td>06 = Grandmother</td>
<td>06 = Grandmother</td>
<td>06 = Grandmother</td>
<td>06 = School problem (Ill-treatment from teacher/staff)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>07 = Threat/Abuse from peers,</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>08 = fear of abduction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 = mixed source (specify)</td>
<td>09 = mixed source (specify)</td>
<td>09 = mixed source (specify)</td>
<td>09 = mixed source (specify)</td>
<td>09 = mixed source (specify)</td>
<td>09 = Access Far from home, seasonal problem e.g. river</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>10 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>10 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>10 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>10 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>10 = Cultural Marriage,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 = Have both</td>
<td>02 = No Mother</td>
<td>03 = No Father</td>
<td>04 = Other (specify)</td>
<td>05 = Grandfather</td>
<td>06 = Cultural no need for schooling for girl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 = Grandfather</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>09 = other (specify)</td>
<td>08 = Effective kin</td>
<td>09 = other (specify)</td>
<td>07 = recent change/shock in self or family (specify) e.g. parent died, divorced, ill</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90 Effective kin are those with whom social contact is maintained by visits, services, attendance at family social and religious ceremonies, exchange of gifts or correspondence (Chekki. D. A. (1974:p36) - in Ethiopia this includes Godparent, old neighbour or family friend etc.)
# Section 4 Child Health and access to health treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>4.1</th>
<th>4.2</th>
<th>4.3</th>
<th>4.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child ID</strong></td>
<td><strong>Was child born healthy and normal?</strong></td>
<td><strong>If not, what were the problems?</strong></td>
<td><strong>In the past 2 years up to today - If/when child was unwell has he/she had any medical treatment?</strong></td>
<td><strong>If not - why?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Yes = 01</strong></td>
<td><strong>01 = Disabilities</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>02 = Illnesses</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>03 = Accidents</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>04 = minor problem</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>05 = Other=04</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes = 01</strong></td>
<td><strong>01 = Money problem</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>02 = No Clinic</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>03 = Used traditional healer</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>04 = Other (specify)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No = 02</strong></td>
<td><strong>01 = Disabilities</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>02 = Illnesses</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>03 = Accidents</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>04 = minor problem</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>05 = Other=04</strong></td>
<td><strong>No = 02</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>(S4CHLTH)</th>
<th>(S4HLTHP)</th>
<th>(S4HLTRT)</th>
<th>(S4HLTRTP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

320
### Section 5 Child work

| Child ID | 5.1 Does child do any work? (at home, on field (HH land), for other people relative or otherwise, employed) | 5.2 How much time per week child spends working at home? *(help in calculation)* | 5.3 Are there any activities (WORK) child does that generate money? | 5.4 What happens to the earnings?  
01 = Child give it to father  
02 = Child give it to Mother  
03 = Child spends it  
04 = Child spends on schooling material  
05 = Other(specify) | 5.5 Has there been incidences that child has to miss school because of his/her work? | 5.6 *IF Yes to Q 5.5*  
What happened? *(Explain)* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>(S5CWRK)</td>
<td>(S5CWKTIM)</td>
<td>(S5CWKPY)</td>
<td>(S5CWKERN)</td>
<td>(S5CWKMIS)</td>
<td>(S5CWKMIS1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Yes** = 01
- **No** = 02

---

321
### Section 6 Parent / Child School attachment/engagement/view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>6.1</th>
<th>6.2</th>
<th>6.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you ever been to your child school other than registration day?</td>
<td>How often do you go to child’s school?</td>
<td>What was the reason of your last visit to child’s school?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|          | Yes = 01  
No = 02 | 01 = Once a month  
02 = Once every 6 month  
03 = Once a year  
04 = Never  
05 = Other (specify) | 01 = Invited for parents meeting  
02 = Called b/c child caused problem  
03 = To complain because teacher caused problem  
04 = To follow up my child’s progress  
05 = To participate in building work  
06 = Other (specify) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>(S6PSVIST)</th>
<th>(S6PSVFRQ)</th>
<th>(S6PSVWHY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

322
### Section 7 Parents’ perception and value of education

(Note. Only complete for those children aged 5-19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>7.1</th>
<th>7.2</th>
<th>7.3</th>
<th>7.4</th>
<th>7.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|          | My child school is ……. compared to other schools in the area.  
1 = a very good school  
2 = good school  
3 = it is OK  
4 = bad school  
5 = a very bad school | What do you think make your child school very good in your eye? (see piloting stage for most reasons to help the coding alter) | What do you think made your child school very bad in your eye? | Education of my child is …..  
01 = Very important  
02 = Important  
03 = Moderately important  
04 = Not so much important  
05 = Not at all important | What do you think is the benefit of education to your child? | What do you think is the disadvantage of education to your child? |
|          | (S7PSVAL) | (S7SGOOD) | (S7SBAD) | (S7PEDUVAL) | (S7EDBENF) | (S7EDBENF1) |

1) Future job and good salary  
2) making friends, playing and being happy (socialisation)  
3) getting knowledge, qualification and respect because of it  
4) to help me and my family in future  
5) to learn about good manner
### Section 8 Aspiration, expectations, hopes and fear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child ID</th>
<th>8.1</th>
<th>8.2</th>
<th>8.3</th>
<th>8.4</th>
<th>8.5</th>
<th>8.5.1</th>
<th>8.6</th>
<th>8.7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you expect from your child? (when he/she is a grown up)</td>
<td>what do you aspire/hope for your child?</td>
<td>Do you have any fear about your child?</td>
<td>If Yes to Q 8.3 What are they?</td>
<td>Where do you wish your child to reach when he/she is an adult?</td>
<td>Do you think child will reach where you wish them to reach to?</td>
<td>If NO for Q 8.5 Why? (specify)</td>
<td>How is education of your child important in these (8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>(S8PEXP)</th>
<th>(S8PHOPE)</th>
<th>(S8PFEAR)</th>
<th>(S8PFEAR1)</th>
<th>(S8FULFL)</th>
<th>(S8FULFL1)</th>
<th>(S8NFULF)</th>
<th>(S8EDROLE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### EXPECTATION FROM CHILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>To look after me at old age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>To look after other siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>To get married, have children and live near me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>To get good grades and be successful in his education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>have a good life and be a credit to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOPE / AMBITION FOR CHILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>To become a university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>To get a good job (teacher, doctor, police, driver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>To become a good farmer (Continue the family tradition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>To become a civil servant (Work for government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>To travel to the city or abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>To be happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FEAR FOR CHILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Migration never coming back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Abduction on the way to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Accident at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>School failure (Dropout, repetition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.1 Compared to other households in this VILLAGE, would you describe your household at the moment as:

- 01=The richest
- 02=Among the richest
- 03=Richer than most households
- 04=About average
- 05=A little poorer than most households
- 06=Among the poorest
- 07=The poorest
- 77=NK

9.2 compared to 5 years ago would you say your HH’s situation is better or worse off?
## Observation of the household

### Poverty and Wealth of household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>House type</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mud hut=01, mud house=02, Mud and cement = 03, Concrete = 04, Other=05,</td>
<td>(S10HMADE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>Number of rooms</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Floor (Earth=01, Cement=02, Plastic=03, Other = 04)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>Roof (Plastic = 01, Thatch = 02, Tin roof =03, Other = 04)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Piped in compound=01, Well with a pump in compound=02, Well without pump compound =03, Well communal=04, Capped spring communal=05, Uncapped spring communal =05, river=06, Other =07</td>
<td>(S10WATER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Electricity available? (Yes = 01, No = 02)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>Toilet available? (Yes for HH = 01) (Yes Communal=02) (No = 03)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>Total number of domestic animals (e.g. cow, goat, sheep, horse)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>Television (Yes = 01, No = 02)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>Radio (Yes = 01, No = 02)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>Bicycle (Yes = 01, No = 02)</td>
<td>[     ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 3.4: Phase one List of participants and meetings with relevant informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research tool</th>
<th>Key Participant / encounters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>household heads (see detail in appendix 3.2) above for fieldwork design and appendix 3.3 questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In depth and Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>With teachers and school heads, children a local civil servant and village elders, informal discussions with general members of community (see detail in appendix 3.2) above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple mini conversations</td>
<td>With children in school, school aged children working (on street small businesses or individuals homes), dropout children, never enrolled children, the children’s parents/significant others and their teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td>In class rooms, staff rooms and school compounds and communal places like local markets, water collection points (Kore in particular). For Kara the majority of my observation notes were generated in the schools as the setup of the community meant it was less accessible than Kore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Ministry of Education capacity building staff and consultant to the Ministry, local education desk bureau, attended meeting with group of senior educationists and MoE representative reviewing the history of the education system – including address by the senior MoE representative, DFID staff in Ethiopia, a DAG (development assistant group ) member on theme of education. These meetings were highly valuable in understanding the views on primary schooling on higher level in addition to my reviews of policy documents but not analysed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>Photos of children, adult, families, animals, lands, homes etc. in schools, communal places, homes, at play and at work. The photographs I have taken were all valuable in aiding my memory and to give back to participants as a thank you but were not analysed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3.5: Phase two dominant research tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research tool</th>
<th>Key Participant / encounters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Participant observation (teaching English at the primary school in Kore) | School children  
Teachers  
Classroom  
School environment/community and its interaction with the wider community around it and the local market |
| Semi-structured interviews                  | With children parents and teachers,                                                            |
| Mini-life histories                         | Young adults(parents)                                                                         |
| Photography                                 | Photos of children, adult, families, animals, lands, homes etc...In schools, communal places, homes, at play and at work. |
Appendix 3.6: Experiences of immersion time with Saba

Saba was an eight year old girl brought from her rural family by my landlord to study but also as a companion to his grandson. Her main responsibility is looking after this boy called Abush (3) and consequently time for schooling activities was limited to the school day. She liked coming to my room whenever she was free from her extra duties, like making coffee, washing and cleaning chores in addition to looking after Abush. Usually she came to play with me, with the excuse that he wanted to see me, but she also liked coming to see me. Abush liked coming because I would provide him with a corner and paper to draw on while we chatted. He was popular and different from many of the other children, being scrupulously clean, having many toys, nice clothes and travelling to Addis Ababa on most weekends to visit his biological parents. Given his popularity, other children from the neighbourhood liked to come and play with him and his toys, often ending up in my room. There was Mimi (3) who was orphaned and lived with her retired grandparents, Mamush (6), whose mother and thirteen year old unschooled sister worked in the main house, amongst others. We would sing, talk, eat and play.

Saba was a confident girl with a lot to say about the whole neighbourhood, the school and the family. She had perfect command of three languages\(^1\) and was able to get on well with everyone in the compound. Through her, I knew about most of the children in terms of where and who they lived with, their schooling status and about their parents. She also told me that her ‘uncle’s’ children (my landlord) did not go to school in this town, but instead ‘they are sent to Addis Ababa to good schools’. Regarding her school, she told me she enjoyed going, but did not like ‘insulting teachers’ and ‘likes the kind teachers that don’t beat us, and help us’.

She was great help to me too, whenever a power cut happens which was nearly every evening she would run to check if I had candle and offers me matches. She would talk and ask me questions as well as bringing messages from others too. She wondered why I was living there, for how long and, whether I could get a job for the young adolescent girl (Melat) who was living with them and had finished tenth grade, but didn’t pass the exam as she couldn’t find a job locally, she was looking for one in Addis Ababa. Saba also told me about

\(^1\) She spoke Amharigna, Oromigna and Guragegna.
missing her home, particularly her twin sister she had left back in the village, as well as her parents and she had not been back to see them despite the promises given to her by her ‘relatives’ that she would go for holidays. It was the same for her older sister (Salem age 13) who was earlier brought by the relatives of another landlord living close by and who still hadn’t been back to visit. They were ‘brought up’ by the ‘relatives’ and so they had no monthly salary, instead getting clothing, food, shelter and the opportunity to go to school.

There were other girls too in the compound, one a teenage girl who lived in a small room with her young male employer and a young female who was another young man’s girlfriend. It was hard to establish the nature of the relationship the teenage girl had with the young man, she did not go to school and during the day she cleaned the room, cooked food, washed their clothes and made coffee when he brought his male friends to chew chat on some evenings and at weekends. Either because the room was too small, or as she was the only female and young, when the men gathered to socialise I would often see her sat outside the room or in the wood burning kitchen. Sometimes, Saba, and Melat hung out with her talking and giggling sat by the fire in the corner of the injera making room. Observing the socially expected behaviour of a person like me (a married female living alone), I didn’t extend my relationship with these men beyond a formal greeting of bowing my head down as I passed their doors to get out of the compound. This limited how much I was able to find out from the girl herself. I also turned down the landlord’s invitation for food and drinks on multiple occasions as I did not want to miss out on my valuable friendship with children, for if I had become too friendly with his family, this would almost certainly have alienated them. The only place I socialised sometimes in that compound was when having a coffee with one of the teachers and his partner which felt appropriate, as they were couple.

Just before I was about to leave the site, I became friends with Melat as she too started coming to hang out with me during the late evening. She told me how she had lost hope for her future as she didn’t pass the exam to study in college and could not find a job. Worse still, she was being harassed by a boy she knew in the area when she was in school and now was threatening to harm her if she would not marry him. She said she did not want to marry and had ambitions to study, get proper job, and be independent. She is fearful of what he could do to her and generally says she feels stuck and has no hope for the future.
as both further studies or finding formal jobs are out of her reach. She told me how she had started to talk to one of her girlfriends about her experience of living in the Middle East after she travelled there for domestic work. However she later told me that she was fearful about it too as she knew of girls that had returned having nervous breakdowns after being abused by their employers or who had even died but she says this is the only option she has.

At the second site, there was no place for me to rent but was privileged with an equally fruitful living arrangement amidst the community as I explained in my methodology chapter.
Appendix 3.7: Researcher duty and politics of fieldwork time with Yonatan

This is a case of Yonatan and sports day celebration. As I mentioned in the methodology chapter, it was in my interest to get along with the teachers. The incident described below regarding the case of Yonatan illustrates the mistrust even among educated people who one would assume understand the nature and importance of research. I am presenting it as to not to gloss over the difficulties involved in a commitment to learn from local perspective and privileging of children’s voices. I also hoped it will be valuable insight for other researchers who might find themselves in the same circumstances.

Soon after I arrived in the community of Kore, the director of the school proposed that I teach English subsequently, with the English teachers’ approval, I was given grades seven and eight to teach as they often added a period for group study. One morning as I was coming to school for my usual observation, I saw a boy (Yonatan) playing outside. It was midmorning and therefore too early for the afternoon shift so I decided to find out what he was doing there. He told me he is a morning shift student, he was not going to class instead he wanted to go to his father (who is married and living in the nearby village) to ask him for wheat so he can contribute to the classroom effort like other children for the forthcoming sports day celebration. I became curious so I asked him why he did not want to be in class. He said:

I don’t want to go in because I have fallen out with my mother. Why did you fall out with her? She found the wheat I was hiding. Why did you hide wheat? Because I wanted to bring to school, all my friends have brought some and I thought she wouldn’t give me any and decided to take it and to bring it without telling her. How did she react? She thinks I am stealing it to sell it so, she chased me to punish me and I ran and came here (smiling she couldn’t catch me). I don’t want to go into class because they all have contributed and I don’t want to be in there...because I don’t want to eat their food. I asked him if he had to contribute and he replied:

No but I don’t like to eat other peoples food because I didn’t bring any wheat. What will you do now? I am going to my father he will give it to me. He lives in Lominat village with my stepmother.
The main issue here was that week the whole school was enthusiastically organising a sports day and had invited other schools from neighbouring villages to come for volleyball and football matches to be held among the teachers and the students. Every class was getting ready for it. In fact there were very few taught classes instead all students were requested to bring two jugs of wheat, at least, which they mixed with that all other students in the same class. Some were involved in clearing it from stones and pounding it, whilst others were carrying it to the mill. Some of the girls then took the flour home to bake and brought back a big round traditional bread loaf carried on their backs on the day of celebration. There was also an element of competition between classrooms about who could make the tastiest and largest loaf. On the sports day, they made a colourful drink they called ‘juice’, the sachets of which being bought locally and mixed with water from the nearby river. There was a spirit of teamwork and sense of great fun. But there were some, who for reasons I don’t know but most probably similar to Yonatan’s case, just turned up and sat in the corners of the school compound, not taking part.

In sum, Yonatan was feeling embarrassed to go to class that day because he couldn’t contribute in the same way as his peers. So, he tried to steal from his mother few cups of wheat but she caught him and chased him away.

The reason I tell this story is that while I was chatting to Yonatan just before he left running to his father living in the other village, a teacher passed by and saw me standing there. Later at break time, the homeroom teacher holding Yonatan’s shoulder came to the bench I was sitting outside the staff room and said ‘this is him isn’t it?’ I said ‘what do you mean, I don’t understand?’ ‘The student who spoke to you?’ I was confused and upset and had no idea why he needed to know this and I said ‘I don’t know, I speak to many of them every day’. He said ‘I know it is him’ and he took him away towards the classroom. I felt very concerned as I quickly became aware of my responsibility to the boy and as a result, how I must protect him.

I later found Yonatan and asked him what that was all about. He said when he was back in his class the teacher came to the classroom and called him out to ask him if he had been speaking to me. He then brought him to me, for me to confirm that he has the right child. After seeing me, he then took him back and asked him to tell him exactly all the things we
spoke about. He told him nothing much, I had just wanted his name and class, but he had pushed him harder and kept asking him are you sure you didn’t speak about anything else, to which the boy had made no further response and so he left him alone. I asked him if he had punished him and he said no. I apologised to Yonatan as this must have been frightening experience and asked him to come and tell me if he had any more trouble.

I reflected deeply on this incident, wondering why he would react in this way to a child speaking to me from his class and what I should say when I saw him next. I felt embarrassed about speaking to this boy and guilty that he had been taken to one side and scrutinised as a result of our encounter. I was also angry with the man for doing so because none of our conversation was about him. I was also frustrated as I was there with a proper permit from the central authority and the local village kebele. Moreover, the director had already introduced me to the staff and said they were pleased to have me there, heaping praise on my educational achievement and my being a woman. If I had reported this to the director I know this would have been shared around and this would have a detrimental impact on my relationship with Yonatan as well as with the other teachers. Regarding the former, his situation would become far more uncomfortable. I decided to play down the teacher’s reaction, but keep an eye on Yonatan. While this was troubling it also has an interesting dimension worth noting here. The case of Yonatan’s teacher’s extreme reaction was an isolated one. However, as discussed in the methodology chapter I have sensed formality and distance especially at the start of my study, and how it eases overtime as well as the contrast between the two schools.

When I saw the teacher next, he said he knew he didn’t have any child in his class with good Amharigna except Yonatan and when he heard about his student talking with someone in Amharigna he knew it could only be him. I smiled and told him he must be really good at teaching them, as they appreciated his teaching a lot, particularly because he was helping them to learn such good Amharigna that they would be able to compete in future with city raised children. I also played up his capability of being able to speak three languages fluently and asked him about himself. This completely turned the situation away from the child, for he proudly told me about his academic achievements. I still wasn’t able to elicit exactly what he feared about his student talking to me. Of course I considered it could simply be Yonatan’s absence from class, however, I was unsure because the manner
the teacher dealt with it and the questions he asked Yonatan suggested to me that he was perhaps uncomfortable that this student was talking to me and it might be about him. Therefore, I concluded that my primary duty was making sure that my research subjects were not put to any harm (Bryman, 2004). I also noted how the teacher actually missed the opportunity to notice how the seemingly benign sports day initiative was affecting children’s social relations, and the implications for their schooling.
Appendix 3.8: General set of questions employed for interviews

**Interview questions and probes**

Examples general questions and probing rough translation to English

**School** - getting there and being there – Experience and feeling

Dropping out – Experience and feeling

Never been – Experiences, Assumptions, Feelings, desires

Tell me about being in school?

What did you like about being a student?

What did you not like about being a student?

**After dropping out**

Why did you dropout? (reason)

When did you dropout? (Time and reason e.g. when I became orphan or grade 2…)

What would make a difference for you to stay in school?

What use to happen before and how it changed now if any changes:-

How did you spend your day when you were a student?

Will you or like to go back to school?

**CHANGES**

How did that change when you stopped being a student?

Did you still played same games or changed?

Plans for summer, September

**Support sources before and after leaving school**

Tell me about friendship – sibship – other social support

Were you still friends with your friends after dropping out from school?

Did you make new friends?

**Work at home or outside home**

Tell me about work

What time of the day you like most? Why?

What are the times and activities you like least? Why?

**Preferences and feelings**

Reason, time, Choice, aspiration, expectation

Hopes and fears (esp. parent)

**Experience**
What was the experience of schooling? (within school compound)
What was the experience of being a student? (at home, with friends, neighbourhood – did it changed before and after DO)

**Values**
What has been the value of education for you during and after the period of schooling?
Outcome, reflecting on sense of self (feeling)
Do you feel to have benefited from the partial exposure to schooling?
How does person feel about your friends / siblings that continued?
Is there a difference between those in school and those not in school? In what way? What is the best ways of being?

**Reasons of none enrolment and dropout**
If the reason was a family decision – how do you feel about that decision?
If reason was to benefit siblings – what impact has it had on you?
If reason was b/c of gender – how do children feel about it?

**Time and activities (influences on time use), perception of safety**
Getting to school time, have protected time for school, pushed for time and frequently late
Play/games time, within school time, classroom time, getting home time

**People and experience – having, doing**
Friends, Teachers, Other students in the school, other staff, other people outside of school

**Expectation and Outcome (academic)**
What subjects did you like – why?
Were you happy with your results?
What was difficult about being in school/ being a student from your family?
(same above)What was easy and positive?
Did you get good marks? y/n – what do you think/feel....
Any Repercussion /Reward at school or home?

**Facilities, water home/school, toilet at home / school, classroom**

**Responsibility, tasks before and after school**
Work time
School day different from other days?
Work type same each day?

**Welfare**
Meal time, Material (school and everyday), health

**Relationships**
Being away v being at home
Appendix 3.9: Examples of Questions

Examples of Questions adopted from WeD protocol about young children that guided with interviewing teachers

1. In what ways are you involved in the learning and education of children in this community (apart from as a parent)?
2. How do you think children should be raised? What are the differences for boys and girls?
3. How is this different, if at all, from the way in which you were raised?
4. Do you think that children have any rights? If so what are they?
5. What are your views on appropriate forms of rewards and punishments? Do these differ for boys and girls?
6. How does the formal schooling provided by the government fit with your ideas?
7. How, if at all, might formal education be changed to fit better with the community's goals, norms and values?
8. What is the value, if any, of educational qualifications?
9. Does it matter if children drop out of education? How does it affect them personally?
10. In what ways are adult men who have been to school different from those who have not?
11. In what ways are adult women who have been to school different from those who have not?
12. How important is it for boys to work to contribute to the family livelihood?
13. How important is it for girls to work to contribute to the family livelihood?
14. How important is it that boys go to religious school?
15. How important is it that girls go to religious school?
16. What do children learn at religious school?
17. How important is it that boys go to primary school?
18. How important is it that girls go to primary school?
19. What good things do boys learn at primary school?
20. What bad things do boys learn at primary school?
21. Are there things that are not taught to boys at primary school which should be?
22. What good things do girls learn at primary school?
23. What bad things do girls learn at primary school?
24. Are there things that are not taught to girls at primary school which should be?
25. How important is it that boys go to secondary school?
26. How important is it that girls go to secondary school?
Appendix 3.10: Introduction letter & consent forms

Dear __________________________

I am currently a research student at the University of Bath, in the Economics and International development department. As a requirement towards my PhD degree, I am conducting research project into ‘children’s primary Education in your village, focusing specifically on parents and children views about children’s Education.

Besides fulfilling the academic requirement for my degree I hope that the outcome of this research will make a worthwhile contribution towards current understandings of ‘Child Education’ in rural Ethiopia.

You have kindly volunteered to take part in the survey lasting approximately one hour and possibly one-to-one interviews at later stage, in which I wish to question you about your views on child Education broadly, and related issues.

This interview will be conducted on a one to one basis and all the data I collect will be number coded and the information given will be strictly confidential. To ensure this information is not traceable back to any particular person I will be employing professional data protection practices; keeping all original data stored securely (either in physically locked cabinets or in secure computer formats) until at least my research is completed for a maximum of 4 years, then if you request so I will destroy it after that period. During my analysis and writing up I will only be working from number coded copies of the data gathered where the individuals’ identity will untraceable by anyone except me.

Please note that you are not in any way obliged to finish the interview once it has started, and you remain free to terminate it at any time. You are also free to withdraw yourself and any comments from the entire study at any stage by contacting me via the contact details given above. Please note terminating the interview will not have any impact on anyone, including myself. Similarly, if at any stage you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself, or, if you prefer, my supervisor Dr. White at the Department of Economics and International Development, Bath, UK using the address above or an independent person Dr Ben Reid on same address above. More information about this research with possible questions you may be thinking of is attached.

I would like to thank you again for taking time to listen to me – I hope you will decide to take part and hope that you will enjoy the experience of participating in this interesting study.

Tigist Grieve
Information about this Study for Participants. (Adults)

1. Study Title: ‘A study of child Education in KaraKore, Ethiopia.

2. What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to deepen understanding of the problems on Child Education your area. This is a pilot study to find out the subjective view of parents regarding their Child’s Education and the means and constrains of achieving it. To find out these I will be asking the personal views from parents, children and teachers in the area. I will also be going in schools at the village and talk to students and their teachers. I am interested to know why some children go to school, who some don’t go to school, the process of going to school and their experience there as well as not going to school and their experience of it. There is no right of wrong answers this is all about your personal view on the questions I will be asking you in relation to children and Education.

3. Why have I been chosen?

The primary aim of this research is for educational purposes and I am required to study this for my PhD degree, but also aspire to contribute to the wider understanding of child Education in a village situation. You have been invited to take part in this research because you live in this area and have a school aged child.

4. Who is organising the study?

The study is being organised by myself Tigist Grieve, a student from the University of Bath, England. With all of the interview it will be me who will be in contact with you and my fieldwork assistant will accompany me.

5. What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part, the initial study of the survey will require approximately 1 hour of your time to be interviewed privately and you will be asked to help complete a simple questionnaire related to the topic and your answers will be filled on the form. In the future also, from time to time I will come and talk to you more on the more open ended way to discuss similar issues that were on the survey. I am really interested in your view. If you give me permission to talk to your child I would also talk to them/him/her on issues related to their education and their experiences in school or generally living in the village. But, in addition to your permission to speak to your child I would also like ask consent from your child too.

6. Are there any risks or disadvantages to taking part in this study?

No emotional or physical risk is involved with this study as it is solely interview based with no experiment or testing method, and there will be no come back as a result of what information is given. Your identity and responses will be confidential with data protected securely throughout. I do this in my student capacity and not involved with government or charitable organisations.

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The study outcome will help me gain an understanding of parental views on Child Education and Wellbeing specifically in your village. I also hope it will give a general picture of the issues related to child education in areas with same characteristics of your village to help others doing similar study in Ethiopia. Once the study is completed the information may contribute to a broader understanding of Child Education. I would also like it to may be used by those who are in a position to set up policy strategy related to child education in Ethiopia.
8. What if something goes wrong?

Should you wish to complain about how you have been treated or spoken to, please contact

Dr. Ben Reid, Ethics officer of Department of Economics and International Development
University of Bath
Bath
BA2 7AY
United Kingdom

9. Confidentiality - who will know I am taking part in the study?

All information, which is collected about you during the course of the research by me and those helping me, will be kept strictly confidential. After the interview all the names of participant like you will be number coded (not your house number but random one) so that you cannot be recognised from it. If you request so, once the study is completed all information will be destroyed the maximum length of time this data will be kept will be until the completion of my study.

10. What will happen to the results of the study?

I will write up the results of the study for my PhD degree. If you would like a summary of the results on completion please let me know at anytime during the interview or contact me on the following address.

Tigist Grieve
Department of Economics and International Development
University of Bath
Claverton Down
Bath
BA2 7AY
Email: tdg22@bath.ac.uk

11. What next?

Now you can ask me any questions you may have and after this if you still wish to take part in this study I will come back to ask you to sign a consent form. Before signing I will again ask you whether you have understood all about the study, your input and my position and still like to take part. If you do take part we both sign two copies and take one each. I will then begin to ask you the questions.
Information about this Study for Participants. (Child)

1. Study Title: ‘A study of child Education in KaraKore, Ethiopia.

2. What is the purpose of this study?
   The purpose of this study is to know about Child schooling in your village. I am interested to know about your life (even if you don’t go to school), about your school (if in school), about your experience of school (if you like it or not and what you do and don’t like), (if you use to go to school before) and your life in general at home and your community. I would like to talk to you, your parents (carer), other parents and other children in your area. I will also talk to teachers in schools but all of the discussion I will have with everyone is going to be secret. I am not going to tell you what other people tell me and I will not tell others what you tell me unless you tell me something that I feel is putting you at risk and that others can know and help you about it. There is no right or wrong answers this is all about your personal view on the questions I will be asking you in relation to your Education or not being in education.

3. Why have I been chosen?
   Because I am a student and students like me wanting to do PhD have to talk to people and write about it. I have chosen your area because I feel studying about children here will be good as I know the place before. I need children your age to participate in my study and you fit that requirement.

4. Who is organising the study?
   The study is being organised by myself and my name is Tigist Grieve, a student from the University of Bath, England. It will be me who will contact you at all times and I will have a friend helping me but, he will not come to meet with you on his own. You will only see him with me. After I leave the area, you are not to continue to talk to him about this project because the project ends when I leave from the village.

5. What will happen to me if I take part?
   If you decide to take part, the study will take up to 1 hour of your time from time to time and we will be talking about several things related to your education and your life. I have asked permission to talk to you from your parent but I also want to make sure you are happy with this and want to participate in the study. We might also do some activities with other children in group such as drawing, and discussion. If you like me to take photos I will take photos, so when I am not here anymore I can see it all and remember what I learnt here and if you like to keep a copy I can print for you.

6. Are there any risks or disadvantages to taking part in this study?
   This study is all about talking no physical contact, hurting, punishment is involved. When we talk I will record what you tell me and I will listen to other children too and then I will use it to write about children’s education, but when I am writing I am not to mention your name on it everything will be anonymous and no one can find out about who told me what. I am not going to give you
mark for what you tell me, there is no wrong answer you can give me, it is all about talking like you do every day with other friends.

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?
The study outcome will help know what children and their parents think about Child Education in your village. May be others who are doing a study like me might use it to learn about children and their education in this area. Also, may be the people who are in charge of making rules about education can get some information on how to do their job in the way that is relevant to children in your area.

8. What if something goes wrong?
If you are not happy about the study please tell me anytime or even now and we will stop. Also please tell your parents or your teacher to tell me that you don’t want to be involved in this study. This happens and you can change your mind any time. There will be no problem for me, for you, your parents, your school. No one even know you are not talking to me anymore as I am not allowed to discuss what me and you agree on to anyone.

9. Confidentiality - who will know I am taking part in the study?
Your parents and may be some children that see us together know you are taking part in the study but they don’t know what you told me about that is only for me and you as much as possible except when you are in danger then I might have to tell another adult to help you. When I finish the study I will have the written documents with me and will need to keep it until I finish my study, and I would like to keep and use it more but if you want me to destroy it after that period please let me know now or during our future meetings. Remember no one is allowed to listen or read the original but the one without names so, no one can tell who you are from that.

10. What will happen to the results of the study?
I will write up all of the results of the study to get qualification called PhD degree. If you would like to know what I learnt about children and their education I can tell you about it when you see me anytime just ask me or ask your parent or another adult to contact me in writing on the address below.

   Tigist Grieve
   Department of Economics and International Development
   University of Bath
   Claverton Down
   Bath
   BA2 7AY
   Email: tdg22@bath.ac.uk

11. What next?
Now you can ask me any questions you may have and after this if you still wish to take part in this study I will ask you to sign a consent form. Before signing I will again ask you whether you have understood all about the study, your input and my position and we both sign two copies and take one each. I will then meet you again to ask you the questions. Please remember at any point of this study you can withdraw and that will cause no problem to you, me, your parents, your school or anyone else.
Date ______________________________________
Time _______________________________________
Name of participant:____________________________

Consent Form

Study of Child Education in KaraKore, Ethiopia.

Research Student: Tigist Grieve, Department of Economics and International Development, University of Bath, Bath, BA2 7AY, UK

Please write your initials in each box to show that you agree with each statement.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated ______________ for the above study.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

__________________________________________  ______________________  ______________________
Name                                      Date                                   Signature

Tigist Grieve

__________________________________________  ______________________  ______________________
Researcher                                 Date                                   Signature
Appendix 6.1: Reasons for drop out as sourced from the administration data

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<tr>
<td>91.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>92.</td>
<td>بقحيرة</td>
<td>change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93.</td>
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<td>94.</td>
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<td>96.</td>
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<td>97.</td>
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<td>98.</td>
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<td>103.</td>
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<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
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<td>114</td>
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<td>132</td>
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<td>የእርገት</td>
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<td>የሚቹም</td>
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<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td>Rakko maatii</td>
<td>የሌለውጥ</td>
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<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>Rakko maatii</td>
<td>የሌለውጥ</td>
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<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>Da’umsa ‘haadhaan ’</td>
<td>የእንከት</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Family Name</td>
<td>Problem Type</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>151.</td>
<td>Rakkoomaatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152.</td>
<td>Iddoo</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153.</td>
<td>Rakkoomaatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154.</td>
<td>Rakkoomaatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155.</td>
<td>Iddoo</td>
<td>Change of location</td>
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<tr>
<td>156.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157.</td>
<td>Iddoo</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158.</td>
<td>Dhukkuba</td>
<td>Illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>159.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>160.</td>
<td>Dhukkuubaa</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164.</td>
<td>M/B jijjira</td>
<td>Changed school</td>
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<tr>
<td>165.</td>
<td>Dhukkuubaa</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167.</td>
<td>Rakkoona</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168.</td>
<td>M/B jijjira</td>
<td>Change of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169.</td>
<td>Fedhiibamdhaboon</td>
<td>Lack of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170.</td>
<td>Dhibeen</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171.</td>
<td>Rakkoomatti</td>
<td>Problem with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172.</td>
<td>8A ittigalee</td>
<td>Moved to 8a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173.</td>
<td>Rakkoomatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
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<td>174.</td>
<td>Rakkoomatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>175.</td>
<td>Rakkoomatti</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176.</td>
<td>Herumaan</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
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<td>177.</td>
<td>Dhibeen</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>178.</td>
<td>Dhibeen</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179.</td>
<td>Dhibeen</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix 6.2: Extracts of records for reasons of dropout from school sorted thematically

The following tables show what is recorded in the main record book about reasons for non-completion of school. With the help of the coordinator, I have put them here thematically as health related reasons, those appearing to refer to ‘change’ and those termed simply as ‘problem’, and those recorded with non-specific and specific terms. These were all put in one big file for all of the children across grades. This again presents a considerable difficulty to anyone wishing to analyse the data.

Table A - Example of recorded ‘health’ related reasons for dropout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oromigna</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SababaHaftee</td>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhukkubaa</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawa</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dibeen</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/Maadaa</td>
<td>Kusef – Illness from injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harki Miidhamuu</td>
<td>Illness -Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhakkaan</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhukkuba</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School official record on incompletion: 2008/09

Table B - Example of recorded ‘change’ related reasons for dropout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oromigna</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SababaHaftee</td>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jijjiiraa</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakkajijjiiruu</td>
<td>Change of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakkikiikkiiraan</td>
<td>Change of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IddooJireenyaa</td>
<td>Place of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iddoojjjiiruun</td>
<td>Change of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jijjiiraamaatii</td>
<td>Family change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jijjiiraaaf</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iddoogeddare</td>
<td>Change of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iddoo</td>
<td>Place</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: School official record on incompletion: 2008/09

Table C - Example of recorded ‘problem’ related reasons for dropout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oromigna</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SababaHaftee</td>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakko</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RakkoMattii</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakkoomaatii*</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RakooWaati*</td>
<td>Family problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakoon*</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakkon*</td>
<td>Problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School official record on incompletion: 2008/09

*possible spelling mistakes
Table D - Example of recorded nonspecific reasons for dropout

<table>
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<th>Oromigna</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SababaHaftee</td>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ollaan</td>
<td>Neighbours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbaabuddee</td>
<td>Stepfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duuludeeche</td>
<td>Running from quarrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du’aahaalaa</td>
<td>External mourning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** School official record on incompletion 2008/09

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Table E - Example of recorded specific reasons for dropout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oromigna</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>SababaHaftee</td>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herumaan</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aadhamanaati</td>
<td>Head of household(female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaariioofuuf</td>
<td>Driving cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hojii qabaachu</td>
<td>Found job</td>
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<td>Abaabottiqacaraawaan</td>
<td>Flower farm work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Du’aAbbaatiin</td>
<td>Death of father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da’umsa ‘haadhaan ’</td>
<td>Death of mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fedhiibamdhaboon</td>
<td>Lack of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/B jijira</td>
<td>Change of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8A ittigalee</td>
<td>Went to class 8A</td>
</tr>
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<td>YerooQormaataadhabat</td>
<td>Absent for exam day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yerooqormaataadhaafa</td>
<td>Absent for exam day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warragargaaruf</td>
<td>To help family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** School official record on incompletion 2008/09