

## **Early Boarding enrolment and its influence on child-parent bonding in Bungoma South Sub County, Kenya**

**Margret Wanambisi ,Wafula Robert & Dr. Lucy Chikamai**

Boarding schools are an intensive form of education, in which students live at school, and visit their families only for weekends and vacations. Cookson et al. (2008) argue that by doing so, parents hope to provide their children a sense of discipline and prepare them for leadership positions. The explicit goal of these boarding schools is to operate a substitution between the two main inputs of the education production function, namely school and home environment, under the presumption that this will generate better outcomes for students. However, very little is known on the effects this substitution actually produces. Also, not much is done in Kenya to establish influence child separation with parents will cause in their bonding. This is because studies indicate that young children and other human beings of all ages are found to be at their happiest and to be able to deploy their talents to best advantage when they are confident that, standing behind them are one or more trusted persons who will come to their aid should difficulties arise. The person trusted provides a secure base from which his (or her) companion can operate. (Bowlby, 1973: 407) Bowlby further argued that many families have not been able to provide an experience of security for their children and will find the positive attachment offered by a therapist a new and possibly daunting experience, for example, ‘can I trust this person when I have grown to think I must only ever rely on myself’?. The developmental Attachment theory developmental theory developed by John Bowlby (1969) to offer an understanding of the formation of psychological problems in children and adults revealed that early experiences of separation and emotional deprivation could have long-term negative consequences for children’s development. It seems that his interest in this was not simply a ‘scientific’ one. It was also an attempt to understand his own experience of the separation he had from his parents who sent him away at the age of 7 to boarding school and who generally believed that showing affection to or spending time with their children was unnecessary. In many ways, Bowlby followed Freud in noting that negative events in childhood, such as separation, trauma and abuse, were at the core of later mental health problems– neuroses and pathologies, as they were called. However, Bowlby was interested to develop an understanding of the mechanisms whereby such negative effects could occur, and thus, he turned to a wide range of theoretical perspectives. In effect, attachment ‘theory’ is best described as an umbrella term for a set of inter-related theories. Central to his thinking was the idea that we possess a fundamental survival instinct to seek protection from our parents (or careers) when we experience dangers. This instinct is shared with other mammals and serves to foster the survival of each species. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to establish prevalence of early boarding enrolment, determinants of early boarding enrolment and its influence on child-parent bonding. The Research Designs to be used will be ex post facto and descriptive survey. The location of the study is Bungoma south sub county which has well performing public and private schools. The sampling designs will be stratified and purposive to cater for boarding schools. Questionnaires will be administered to head teachers, class teachers and interview schedules for children. Researcher will personally administer questionnaires and interviews. The data will prepared, coded and analyzed using the PSSS version 20. Findings will be presented by frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts.