

**IMPACT OF POVERTY ON SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN IN SELECTED
PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
MLOLONGO-MACHAKOS COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is the “state of being extremely poor,” or “the state of being insufficient in amount”. What’s more is the effect it has on the children living in homes plagued with poverty? Not only does poverty affect the child’s well being, but it impacts their education as well. In general, children from homes living under the poverty line have poor performance in school. Such performance has also been linked as far back as cognitive and emotional development which is lower in poverty stricken children than those children who live in homes whose income is above the poverty line. Although data has not yet been gathered to give specific details of all the cognitive effects, especially in older children, it is clear that the effects are not only present but threatening to the well being of the children involved. The exact thing that creates a rift between children from low income homes and those living above the poverty line is for one, these children lack the stability that comes with a high income home. This means having the things that other children have from adequate nutrition to weather appropriate clothing. In addition, less income generally means there are fewer opportunities for educational activities and learning experiences. In this way low income students have less experience to draw up when learning new concepts. As a result it can also mean fewer chances to apply the newly acquired knowledge, and in turn retention of this knowledge can be minimized. As stated Greg Duncan and June Brooks-Gun in their article on this issue, “Family income appears to be more strongly related to children’s ability and achievement than to their emotional outcomes”. Keeping this in mind it is not hard to understand why children raised in a low income environment often suffer from disabilities and developmental delays. As a matter of fact, they are 1.3 times as likely to have one of these problems. Furthermore, these are likely to be treated if not caught in the public school system because parents are unable to afford special help, training, or any other means of assistance to their child. It is not uncommon for children in these circumstances to also suffer from emotional and behavioral problems. Along with this factor lowering the chances of a satisfactory education is the fact that this children also have higher incidences of adverse health. With such health problems children are less likely to be present at school causing lower grades and, more importantly, less acquired knowledge. As it blatantly obvious, it becomes impossible to learn when one is never present in class. Absenteeism is a huge problem that can lead to the failing of a course without even having the chance to try. The data will be collected using questionnaire then analyzed and presented.