

Effects of Girls School Dropout on Academic Performance in Koisagat Zone, Soy Division, Eldoret West District, Kenya

Lagat K. S.

The Institute of Open and Distance Learning in Kampala International University Uganda

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the causes of school drop out on girls in Koisagat zone, Eldoret West District, Kenya and come up with possible strategies to solve the problem. In the collection of data, all sources viewed relevant to this particular study were revisited and employed. This study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The research used both the qualitative and quantitative analysis approaches in order to get a bigger picture both in number and data. Since the main purpose of the study was to determine the factors that hindered girls' accessibility of education which was blamed more on socio-economic factors. Girls were found to perform as well as boys so performance does not contribute to girls dropping out of school., It was established that nutrition was very important to the growth and development of a child and that poor nutrition led to diseases hence a poor school attendance leading school dropout. It was recommended that both the parents and the community should be sensitized on the importance of proper and stable family background and how they influence child development.

Keywords: Dropout, academic performance, and girls

INTRODUCTION

As human beings, children are supposed to enjoy basic rights such as the right to education, social inclusion and recreation that need to be recognized in policies, programmes and legal frameworks [1]. Prioritizing children's needs pertaining to their survival and development is also a prerequisite to long-term national development. Children have views and opinions that need to be taken into account in national planning and policies. If children play an active role in decisions affecting them, they will learn the skills to become active members of society and thus productive citizens who are self-confident, self-reliant and enterprising rather than becoming a further drain on both household and national resources [2]. Twenty years ago, little was said and even less was known about female schooling in Africa [3]. Although, it is no longer the case today, there are still important gaps in our knowledge base, particularly at the school level. Girls' enrollment, persistence, and success in school depend, of course, on many factors beyond the classroom and the school itself. Studies in a number of African countries demonstrate the critical importance of factors such as the local institutions of marriage, mothers' and daughters' workloads, distance from home to school, discrimination against women in the job market, demand and supply issues as determined by established policies, the parents' level of education and their socio-economic status as well as political commitment [1,4]. Globally, girls represent 60 percent of all out-of-school children. [5] In most countries, girl's initial enrollment rates are lower than those of, boys, indicating barriers to access. In a country, such as Kenya, initial enrollment rates are roughly equal, but as girls enter their adolescent years, they drop out at faster rates than boys [6]. The problem of dropout has been continually troubling the primary education system in developing countries. Dropout does not mean mere rejection of school by children. It leads to wastage of the funds invested in school buildings, teachers' salaries, equipment, textbooks and so on [7]. It also means the existence of some deficiencies in the organization of the primary education system. It is upon this background that the study was undertaken All over the world, the female gender from a tender age faces a lot of challenges. In Attica for instance, girls are subjected to various domestic chaos which hinders them from high demand of education. Among the Maasai in Kenya, some girls are forced to marry at a very tender age. Biologically girls are affected by the psychological of the age which to some extent leads to stigmatization making them less competent like their male counter parts. There is no sufficient data to show the cause of school drop out on girls. Therefore, this study will determine the causes of school drop out on girls in Koisagat zone, Eldoret West District, Kenya and come up with possible strategies to solve the problem.

BRIEF REVIEW

Magnitude and Impact of Education Inequality

For parents who are aware of the importance of and concerned about the education of girls, enrollment levels are still low and drop out high due to their inability to meet the costs of education [7, 8]. The high cost of education coupled with the deteriorating economy, which has reduced the disposable income available to the families, has made it difficult to provide an education for all the children regardless of sex. In Kenya education is financed through cost sharing, with the parents bearing the bigger share of the burden. Another issue that further aggravates this situation is the fact that, especially in the rural areas, families tend to have a fairly large number of children, cumulative effect of the finances required for education often proves to be too much for many families, in communities where girls' education is not valued, the issue of poverty further aggravates the situation of girls' lack of access to education because in such areas parents when faced with scarce resources choose to educate boys rather than girls. Low economic status promotes gender discrimination of the girl child in education. It creates a sense of dependence as always poor people seek for acceptance and recognition in a community through observing culture so as to be helped in social activities (funeral, wedding, Female Genital Mutilation, etc [9]. It ignores girls' education to avoid costs. Parents seek simple alternatives for increasing their income by marrying off young girls. Some well-off people take advantage by deceiving pupils from poor families and engage them in sex with promises of material things and hence violate children's rights to education.

Parents Attitudes and Dropout of Girls

Parents' perceptions and society expectation, part of gendered sex role socialization affect how girls and boys participate in education. From tender age, the young children are socialized into "sex roles." [1]. Thus learning "sex appropriate" behaviors and traits in childhood is one of the prerequisites for smooth functioning in society (common in rural areas). In general, most children, and girls in particular, especially those in rural areas, fail to enroll in or to complete primary schooling because their parents do not value education. In most cases, because the parents are uneducated, there is also a myth among most illiterate parents that boys are generally clever and hard working in school. Their minds are always in school but girls like playing and when they mature, they are difficult to deal with and they get pregnant [3]. The implication is that they should not be given the opportunity to go to school. Such messages are demoralising to girls, who internalize them and in return end up believing that school, is not for them. Many parents also have the attitude that educating girls is a waste of time and money, because they will eventually be married off and their education would therefore only benefit their husbands and the families they marry into. Money spent on the girls education would thus be considered lost to the girls' family. Girls are also considered a risk to educate because they were likely to get pregnant or married and drop out of school and any money spent on their education would therefore be wasted [10]. Girls on the other hand dropout of school because of low status reasons. They may be made to remain at home doing some chores [11, 12].

School Environment and Drop out of Girls

The school is a very child unfriendly environment for girls in a way that they are abused and sexually harassed by male teachers and boys. Girls are often abused, beaten and humiliated in class [13]. Because of these girls hate the school environment and therefore drop out of school. They also become pregnant and therefore have no choice than to drop out of school [14, 15]. If Education For All (EPA) is to be achieved, then an empowering learning environment characterized by "physical, emotional intellectual and sexual safety of girls" has to be created through an evolving process, an environment "in which girls are not merely protected and sheltered from danger of mankind, and their physical, emotional and intellectual growth is encouraged and nurtured, but also one in which they are supplied with the tools of knowledge, self-confidence and assertiveness that will provide some measures of defense against abuse" [16]. Most of the schools in rural areas have classrooms that are dilapidated, with floors that are not cemented and thus dusty. There are windows and doors with no shutters. Such classrooms have few desks for pupils and some of them seat on makeshift forms and/or stones. But the most worrying issue is the lack and/or poor state of toilet and sanitary facilities³. Sanitation provision can have a detrimental effect that can further contribute to low attendance and retention rates for girls [16]. Female students often missed classes during menstruation, or because cultural restrictions combined with poor hygiene and lack of privacy prevent them from using the school latrines at all. Studies show that girls' performance, attendance and retention rates are lower than boys, and poor school sanitation is one of the multiple difficulties that girls have to struggle with [17].

Traditional Practices and Drop out of Girls

According to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o [18], "harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation and other initiations rituals practice in some African societies are brutal and inhuman. Cultural practices lead to despair in schools attendances on girls both in preparations and healing processes which sometimes lead to death [19]. The ultimate lead to despair in school attendance and the performance ends up to girls withdrawing from school [20]. Many communities favor marrying off girls while still fairly young. In most cases, these girls drop out of school once they are married to start families. In some communities, especially in the Muslim communities, there is the

<https://rijournals.com/law-communication-and-languages/>

practice of betrothing girls at a very young age, sometimes at birth and marrying them off in late adolescence. The practice of early marriage often therefore leads to the end of a girls' formal education [21]. In Ghana, girls and women cross over into neighboring countries to carry out trading which is often a lucrative activity. Their success has been found to lure other school girls to try this business, leading to school dropout. In some areas of rural Tanzania, on reaching puberty (from upper primary), girls are expected to participate in initiation ceremonies aimed at preparing them for womanhood and marriage [22]. These ceremonies are often held during the school term and result in girls missing a considerable amount of school time. Participation in these ceremonies affects girls' participation in education in general in two particular ways [23]. One is that the time spent at these ceremonies is at the expense of precious school time. When these girls eventually return to school, teachers find it difficult to find the time to give them the individual attention required to help them catch up with the others. Another effect of these ceremonies is that the girls who are initiated regard themselves as adults and ready for marriage and no longer see the need to concentrate on their school work as they feel that it would be of little use to them in their future roles as mothers and wives [24].

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The research used both the qualitative and quantitative analysis approaches in order to get a bigger picture both in number and data.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was selected schools in Eldoret West district. The respondents included Pupils, teachers and community member's teachers and pupils from Eldoret West district

S = Pupils (50 of the sample suffice)

S = Teachers (3 teachers from each school)

S = Parents (20 of the sample size sufficed)

Instruments of Data Collection

Questionnaires were used to extract information from pupils. Interviews were carried out with the teachers and focus group discussions held with the community members. Open ended questionnaires were most suitable for investigating deeper the subject matter. Library search was used to search for data related to the study and observation was done on the state of the children and the way they coped at school.

Reliability of Instruments

Questionnaires helped the researcher to get a lot of information in a short period of time. With interviews, the researcher got all the required data since he was interacting with the respondents. With library search, the researcher got all the necessary information related to the study through reading relevant books.

Data Collection Procedure

A letter of introduction from the Institute of Open and Distance Learning was sent to facilitate in the data collection exercise. The letter was handed to the head teacher before Questionnaires were be distributed to pupils and interviews with the teachers. Local council leaders were approached on how to organize the community members for focus group discussions The data collected was sorted and categorized after which it was analyzed. Conclusions and recommendations were made.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The frequencies and percentages were used to determine the number of sample respondents used in the research process and the number that participated positively to the research.

Formula;

Percentage (%) = $F \times 100$ Total number of respondents

W here F = number of respondents Observed

Qualitative Analysis

Data from questionnaires were standardized hence requiring categorization. Such data were presented in a descriptive form above which was used to discuss the results of quantitative data.

RESULTS

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1: Shows the Profile of Teachers Respondents.

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	11	55
Female	9	45
Total	20	100
Marital status		
Single	8	40
Married	12	60
Total	20	100
Age		
19-24 yrs	4	20
25-30yrs	10	50
31 and above	6	30
Educational level		
Diploma	9	45
Degree	5	25
Total	20	100

Twenty-five (25) questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and 20 were filled and returned. This therefore represents 80% of the total number of questionnaires that were distributed. The study covered 20 randomly selected teachers of whom 11 (55%) were male and 9 (45%) were female. Of the 20 respondents, 8 (40%) were single while 12 (60%) were married. The age category of the respondents was divided in three groups that is 19-24 years were 4 which was 20%, 25-30 were 10 (50%) and 31 and above were 6 representing (30%) of the respondents. The academic level of the respondents was divided in three categories that is certificate, diploma and degree. 6 (30%) of the respondents had certificates, 9 (45%) had diplomas and 5 (25%) had degrees. Interviews were carried out with 18 parents both male and female. Eight 8 of the parents were male while ten 10 were female. Focus group discussions were used to extract data from the students. 45 students were included in the discussion of which 24 were boys and 21 girls.

Parents level of Education

The respondents were asked whether there was a relationship between parent's level of education and their children's academic performance.

Table 2: Whether there was a Relationship between Parent’s Level of Education and their Pupils Dropout

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	65
No	7	35
Total	20	100

The Table show that 13 (65%) of the respondents agree that there exists a strong relationship between parents level of education and their pupils dropout and 7 (35%) disagree. According to the parents their level of education mattered on how far they wished their children to pursue education. One parent was of the view that since she was a diploma holder she expected her children to surpass that level.

Socio-economic Factors

Table 3: Whether Socio-economic Factors Leads to Pupils Dropping out of School

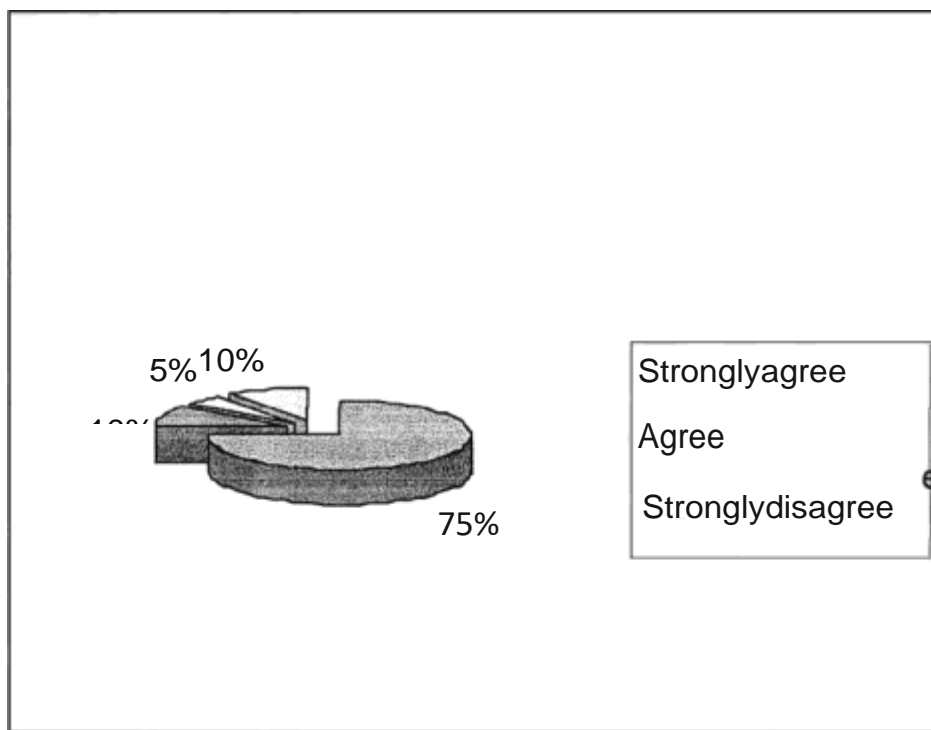
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly, agree	10	50
Agree	8	40
Strongly disagree		
Disagree	2	10
Total	20	100

10 (50%) of the respondents strongly agree that socio economic factors lead to girls dropping out school 8(40%) agree and 2 (10%) disagree this leads to some dropping out. The parents agreed that socio-economic factors contributed girls dropping out of school because children who are healthy are capable to concentrate in class which leads to performing well hence staying in school.

Table 4: Concentration of children affected by Socio-economic Factors in class

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	75
Agree	2	10
Strongly disagree	1	5
Disagree	2	10
Total	20	100

Charts 1 Response on Class Concentration



15(75%) of the respondents strongly agreed that pupils do not concentrate in class because of socio-economic factors, 2 (10%) agreed while 1 (5%) strongly disagreed and 2 (10%) disagreed. The parents said that it was obvious one could not concentrate on an empty stomach especially children. Due to lack of continued concentration they tend to drop out of school. The respondents were asked whether socio-economic factors contributed to low enrollment of pupils and this was their response.

Table 5: Contribution of Socio-economic Factors to High Cases of Girls Dropping out of School

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	40
Agree	6	30
Strongly disagree	2	10
Disagree	4	20
Total	20	100

The table shows that 8 (40%) of the respondents strongly agree that socio-economic contributes to girls dropping, 6 (30%) agree while 2 (10%) strongly disagree and 4 (20%) disagree.

Table 6 Response on Poor Nutrition as a Reason Pupils Miss Classes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	30
Agree	8	40
Strongly disagree	2	10
Disagree	4	20
Total	20	100

6 (30%) of the respondents strongly agreed that because of poor nutrition pupils miss dropout of school, 8(40%) agreed while 2 (10%) strongly disagreed and 4 (20%) disagreed. The pupils revealed that they could not attend classes when they were hungry and sometimes, they missed classes because of sickness which could be caused by poor nutrition for example diarrhea and stomachache.

The Effects of Poor Nutrition on the Achievement of Education

Table 7 Poor Nutrition Hinders the Achievement of Education.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	55
Agree	6	30
Strongly disagree		
Disagree		15
Total	20	100

The table shows that 11(55%) of the respondents strongly agreed that poor nutrition hinders the achievement of education, 6 (30%) agreed and 3 (15%) disagree. The parents agreed that poor nutrition hindered academic achievement in a way that if pupils cannot concentrate in class, then the performance will not be good which leads to depletion and hence school dropout. This means that the goal of government is not realized that is achieving education for all.

Table 8 Poverty Contributed to Girls Dropping out of School?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	20
Agree	3	15
Strongly disagree	5	25
Disagree	10	50
Total	20	100

The table and chart show that 2 (10%) of the respondents strongly agree that children from poor families are likely to drop out of school, 3(25%) agree while 5 (25%) strongly disagree and 10 (50%) disagree. Most parents interviewed agreed that they did not have enough money to buy school necessities and mostly for girls like pads.

Health Factors on the Development of Education
Table 9 Girls who are Sick may Drop out of School

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	30
No	14	70
Total	20	100

DISCUSSION

The first objective was to determine the effects of socioeconomic factors and how they affect girls' dropping out of school. The study revealed that education and girl's access to education is adversely affected by different social economic factors such as food, shelter and clothing which all comes down to poverty. They also agreed that nutrition is very important in the growth and development of children and this is supported by Levinger Beryl that nutritional programs facilitate the growth of a child in all dimensions and have considerable long-lasting effects on a child's life [25]. Hence it avails ample time top girls to concentrate in their studies and stay in school. Therefore, it focused on poor nutrition and school achievement and 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that poor nutrition leads to poor performance of pupils in class. According to Grantham McGregor [26] school attendance and achievement are affected by a host of variables including the capacity of a child as a biosocial organism to process and respond to stimuli. The study also revealed that children from poor families did not perform well in class because of hunger and therefore did not perform well and this is supported by a study in China which reveals that hunger hinders school achievement [27]. The third objective focused on the relationship between social economic factors such as family background and the health of pupils and how they affect the dropout rates of girls from school 30% of the respondents agreed that they had girls who had dropped out of school due to health. According to Heesch *et al* failure to attend school due to sickness eventually lead to pupils' dropping out [28].

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the study was to determine the factors that hindered girls' accessibility of education which was blamed more on socio-economic factors. Girls were found to perform as well as boys so performance does not contribute to girls dropping out school, it was established that nutrition was very important to the growth and development of a child and that poor nutrition led to diseases hence poor school attendance leading. The study found out that poor nutrition led to diseases and therefore because of diseases girls drooped out of school. The study also found out that nutrition was very important and that for a country to develop it had to focus on nutritional programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The government should make sure that it focuses on nutritional and feeding programs in schools.
- ii. The parents and the community should be sensitized on the importance of proper and stable family background and how they influence child development.
- iii. Parents should make sure that they provide food for their children as they go to school so that they do not go hungry and fail to concentrate in class.
- iv. A topic or subject on nutrition should be taught to the students so that as they grow up, they know the importance of nutrition and how to eat right.

REFERENCES

1. UNICEF. Educating Girls reforming the Future. *New York: UNICEF Publications*; 2000.
2. UNESCO. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003/4: Gender and Education for All, the Leap to Equality; 2003.
3. Kwesiga JC. Women's Access to Higher Education in Africa. *Kampala Fountain Publishers*; 1990.
4. Frye M, Lopus S. From privilege to prevalence: contextual effects of women's schooling on African marital timing. *Demography*.2018;55:2371-94.
5. Ma L, Me L. Getting all girls into school. *Finance and Development*. 2007;44.
6. Mukangara F, Koda B. Beyond Inequalities. Women in Tanzania. *TGNP & SARDC*; 1997.
7. Kissi BA, Issaka J. Barriers Affecting Retention of Girls in Schools in the Amasaman Circuit in the Ga West Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Geography*. 2023; 15(2):61-87.
8. Latif A, Choudhary A, Hammayun A. Economic effects of student dropouts: A comparative study. *J Glob Econ*. 2015; 3:1-4.
9. Earthman GI. The impact of school building condition on student achievement and behavior. In: The Appraisal of Educational Investment. Luxembourg: European Investment Bank; 1998. Paper presented at the international conference.

10. Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). The Education of Girls and Women in Africa. *FAWE magazine publications*; 2000.
11. Canelas C. School, market work, and household: A day of Guatemalan children. *Research Papers in Economics*. 2015.
12. Ramanaik S, Collumbien M, Prakash R, Howard-Merrill L, Thalinja R, Javalkar P, et al. Education, poverty and "purity" in the context of adolescent girls' secondary school retention and dropout: A qualitative study from Karnataka, southern India. *PLoS ONE*. 2018.
13. Gupta N, Mahy M. Sexual initiation among adolescent girls and boys: trends and differentials in sub-Saharan Africa. *Archives of sexual behavior*. 2003; 32:41-53.
14. Rosenberg M, Pettifor A, Miller W, Thirumurthy H, Emch M, Afolabi S, et al. Relationship between school dropout and teen pregnancy among rural South African young women. *Int J Epidemiol*. 2015; 44(3):928-36.
15. Grant M, Hallman K. Pregnancy-related school dropout and prior school performance in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Stud Fam Plann*. 2008; 39(4):369-82.
16. Montgomery P, Ryus C, Dolan C, Dopson S, Scott L. Sanitary pad interventions for girls' education in Ghana: a pilot study. *PLoS ONE*. 2012;7.
17. Jewitt S, Ryley H. It's a girl thing: Menstruation, school attendance, spatial mobility and wider gender inequalities in Kenya. *Geoforum*. 2014; 56:137-47.
18. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. *The River Between*. Nairobi: Nairobi Printing Press; 1996.
19. Gachiri EW. *Female Circumcision: With Reference to the Agikuyu of Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenya: Kolbe Press; 2000.
20. Grant M, Hallman K. Pregnancy-related school dropout and prior school performance in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Stud Fam Plann*. 2008; 39(4):369-82.
21. Raj A, Salazar M, Jackson E, Wyss N, McClendon K, Khanna A, Belayneh Y, McDougal L. Students and brides: a qualitative analysis of the relationship between girls' education and early marriage in Ethiopia and India. *BMC Public Health*. 2019.
22. Mbilinyi M, Mascarenhas O. *Women in Tanzania: An Analytical Bibliography*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies; 1983. Printed in Sweden by Motala Grafisca, Motala.
23. Mabala R, Kamazima SR. *The Girl Child in Tanzania: Today's Girl Tomorrow's Woman Research report*; 1995.
24. Manlove J. The influence of high school dropout and school disengagement on the risk of school-age pregnancy. *J Res Adolesc*. 1998; 8(2):187-220.
25. Levinger B. Nutrition, health, and learning. *School nutrition and health network monograph series*. 1992 Nov;1.
26. Grantham-McGregor SM, Powell CA, Walker SP, Himes JH. Nutritional supplementation, psychosocial stimulation, and mental development of stunted children: the Jamaican Study. *The Lancet*. 1991; 338(8758):1-5.
27. Hannum E, Liu J, Frongillo E. Poverty, food insecurity and nutritional deprivation in rural China: implications for children's literacy achievement. *Int J Educ Dev*. 2014; 34:90-7.
28. Heesch M, Bosma H, Traag T, Otten F. Hospital admissions and school dropout: a retrospective cohort study of the 'selection hypothesis'. *Eur J Public Health*. 2012; 22(4):550-5.

CITE AS: Lagat K. S. (2024). Effects of Girls School Dropout on Academic Performance in Koisagat Zone, Soy Division, Eldoret West District, Kenya. RESEARCH INVENTION JOURNAL OF LAW, COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGES 3(1):21-29.