

**FACTORS AFFECTING GIRLS EDUCATION IN RURAL PRIMARY
SCHOOLS OF NAKURU DISTRICT,
KENYA**



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DECLARATION

I, FAITH NYAMBURA KARUKU declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for award of any academic certificate or anything similar to such. I solemnly bear and stand to correct any inconsistency.

Signature



FAITH NYAMBURA KARUKU

DATE :

18th 08 2008

APPROVAL

This is to acknowledge that this Report has been under my supervision as a university supervisor and is now ready for submission.

Signatures

Date

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18/08/08
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MR. SAMSON LAAKI

SUPERVISOR

DEDICATION

This work is affectionately dedicated to my beloved Mother and children Benson, Joan, Nelius, Henry and Grand daughter Trisha for their support patience and understanding during this period of study not forgetting all those who constantly wished me success.

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My gratitude first goes to God who has given me the strength and courage to undertake this research.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting girls' education in the rural primary schools of Nakuru District Kenya

The specific objectives of the study were to assess the magnitude and impact of education inequality in Kenya's rural areas, analyze the Key economic and social- cultural features of the home environment that predisposes girls to premature termination of education and to determine the influence of teachers' and parents perception of gender and the effect of their cultural beliefs education in rural primary schools.

The methods used for data collection was interviews to the teachers and pupils in the school who were involved in the study.

In chapter four, the findings were presented and interpreted in relation to the study objectives and research questions. While linking to the existing literature, results included demographic characteristics, frequency and percentages. Based on the findings it was observed that there are some factors responsible the low enrolment of pupils.

In chapter five, development of solutions to the problem, summary of the findings and conclusions were attempted. The findings suggested recommendations on areas pertaining to the problem of education of children

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Education plays a crucial role in development, but large sections of the population in Third World countries have little or no access to formal education and are illiterate. Many school-age children in these countries are denied access to education.

Girls in the Third World, particularly girls in Africa, have very limited access to educational opportunities. Several studies have indicated the small percentage of girls who receive formal education at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels in Africa (Adams and Kruppenbach, 1987; Nafziger, 1988; Bogonko, 1992). On the other hand, UNESCO (1983) and the World Bank (1983) recognise the need to expand and improve women's opportunities in order to have meaningful development. Education is now viewed as the *modus operandi* to prepare girls for an expanded scope of participation and a more dynamic role as agents of change (Adams & Kruppenbach, 1987). However, many women still receive little or no education; the Kenyan example is described below

The introduction of formal education in Kenya during the colonial period was characterized by unequal access between the sexes, with fewer girls' than boys' schools and low enrolment rates for girls (Nafziger, 1988; Bogonko, 1992).

Expansion of educational facilities, especially at secondary level, became a priority at independence in 1963, in order to meet the manpower demands of the new state. However, discrimination against women in education continued, as girls' schools were neither expanded nor

increased at a par with those for boys. Today, the enrolment rate of girls in schools is lower than that of boys (Republic of Kenya, 1993).

Currently, the education system consists of eight years of primary, four years of "O" level secondary and, lastly, post-secondary education. Universal primary education was implemented by 2003, resulting in a high rate of enrolment at this level. A competitive national examination is administered in the seventh year to select students for government secondary schools. Some primary school leavers not selected for government secondary schools join private ones. At the end of four years of secondary education, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (KCSE) is administered.

1.2 statement of the problem

Although education in Kenya is naturally valued, there are inequalities on the basis of gender, girls being less educated (UNICEF, 2002). Disparities between boys and girls' educational participation rates in Kenya implicate distinct patterns. There is therefore need to investigate why this is so and hence the reason for carrying out this research to investigate the factors affecting girls' education in rural primary schools of Nakuru District Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objectives

The major objective of the study was to investigate the factors affecting girls' education in the rural primary schools of Nakuru District Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To assess the magnitude and impact of education inequality in Kenya's rural areas.
2. To analyze the Key economic and social- cultural features of the home environment that predisposes girls to premature termination of education
3. To determine the influence of teachers' and parents perception of gender and the effect of their cultural beliefs education in rural primary schools.

1.4 Research questions

1. What is the magnitude and impact of education inequality in Kenya's rural areas?
2. What is the Key economic and social- cultural features of the home environment that predisposes girls to premature termination of education?
3. What is the influence of teachers' and parents perception of gender and the effect of their cultural beliefs education in rural primary schools?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study was carried out in the selected schools of Nakuru District in Kenya. It was limited to the objectives of the study where by any other aspect of girl child education was not investigated. The study took place from August 2007 to August 2008.

1.6 Significance of the study

The research will help government to see the need of improving the girl-child education in order to improve the performance of pupils.

Informed decisions in policy formulations and in the building of the institutions aimed at improving the girl- child education might be made basing on the findings from research.

The research will help researchers and academicians to increase on the available literature for further studies

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In the Kenya, women's dropout rates in schools and colleges are attributable in part to their greater tendency to marry during their undergraduate years (UNESCO, 1986). Women are substantially more likely to get married during college than men.

Marriage has the opposite effect on the retention rates of men and women. Marriage sometimes negatively affects women's chances of finishing college and has a positive effect on men's chances. Women tend to drop out of school or college for personal, nonscholastic reasons, while men tend to drop out mainly for scholastic reasons (UNESCO, 1988; Assic-Lummumba, Ahmad, 1974). Family economic background ranks high in importance for men who drop out (because some men have to care for their families). and family decisions rank first for women (Thomas, 1988).

The literature attempts to highlight the factors that affect contemporary female participation in education in developing countries. Education in the Kenya, as in many other developing countries, is becoming a means of social awareness, social mobility, and economic well-being for women and men (World Bank, 1989).

The exclusion of women represents a serious violation of justice and human rights. Access to education, however, has improved significantly in the last two decades in other parts of the world, but Kenya, by comparison, still has a smaller proportion (13 percent) of women attending a college or university. The research has identified several

areas of importance. For the students, parental support and high educational aspirations for their children supply the motivation for college attendance and achievement. Academic quality of secondary schools will help determine whether one will pass the national examination. Educational resources and school environments may affect educational achievement. Women are less likely than men to take certain subjects such as English or history (UNESCO, 1988).

Women tend to have somewhat lower educational aspirations, especially beyond high school, and these aspirations decline during college attendance, while male students' aspirations rise (Youssef, 1976/77)

Robertson's (1985) study on women's enrollment in Africa, found that women enroll almost as frequently as men in both primary and secondary levels. Women are more likely to drop out of college than men, especially after marriage (Sivard, 1985). Except for those who attend allwomen's colleges, women experience the same college environment as men. Women take different subjects, more often specializing in the humanities and arts and less often taking math and sciences (Tembo, 1984, Blackstone and Weinrich-Haste, 1980).

Women are under-represented as educational administrators at all levels of education. The absence of women as college and university faculty members, especially at the higher ranks is documented by most research (Weis, 1980). The literature indicates that there are powerful constraints affecting women's participation in higher education in Kenya. Although progress is being made, the status of women as students and employees is still not equal to that of men in the developing countries (Stromquist, 1989; Ran, 1985)

2.1 Socio-cultural and Religious Factors

Socio-cultural traditions such as early marriage, dowry systems, and seclusion can all be factors in the high dropout rate as girls reach puberty in their 6th year of schooling. In Sudanese society, Islam as a religion plays a major role in shaping parents' attitudes toward education. As in many other existing world religions, Islam is patriarchal and defines women as being either inferior or subordinate to men (Saad, 1972; Abu Nasr, 1982). Their traditions require women to conform to codes that restrict their behavior. These codes were initiated through cultural norms since the adoption of Islam in the Sudan in the 16th century. Despite official state policy, it is the sociocultural attitudes and traditions that determine the status of women and girls and preserve the status quo for women's education. On several occasions, during the interviews, women commented on norms and customs as not changing. For these women discrepancies exist between visions and actuality. Being educated means status although many expressed a desire for social change or economic prosperity, they have fewer chances than their brothers. One of the respondents tried to convince her mother to change her attitudes toward certain programs.

Islamic culture plays an important role in the family. In many Islamic societies, women are put under legal as well as social restrictions. Women are generally considered to be either absolutely pure and good or evil, and to be guarded against. Various restrictions and taboos are placed upon women in order to keep them from undermining certain social orders. Tales and stories that stereotype women are of the most extreme forms and are used for socialization. Women are forbidden to participate in social, political, and economic activities outside the home. If they do appear in public, they are expected to hide themselves behind a veil. Only a few women are given the choice to participate in education and in the political arena. Most do not have a choice; their roles are

clearly demarcated as wives and mothers. These conditions stifle the personal growth of women (Goodwin, 1994).

The community provides the environment in which socialization occurs. The gender role placed upon women is defined by the needs of the society. Female values are passed on by the culture, religions, and myths; "an entire ideological apparatus, from culture, education, customs, language, and dress through all spheres of society in which she is a part, had been accepted as vital to the situation of women" (Al-Hariri, 1987; Anderson, 1951).

2.2 School Environments

School-related factors affecting students' participation, particularly the decision to drop out, include the content of educational programs and teaching practices. Yeoman (1985), in a study on college dropouts in developing countries, found that the main reason given by the young people was a lack of interest. Women reported that they spend excessive time sitting in the classroom with no interesting work to do. The same study found that people believed educating females had less value than educating males. In this study female students indicated that the teachers asked them fewer questions, gave them fewer positions of responsibility, made less eye contact, and let them get away with lower standards of work than males (Yeoman, 1985).

The pattern of intellectual and educational development for an undergraduate woman varies somewhat if she attends a women's college rather than a coeducational college. At a women's college, she is more likely to attain positions of leadership, complete the degree, aspire to higher degrees, and enter a graduate or professional school (Hyde, 1989; Kaneko, 1987; Arriogada and Horn, 1986; Heyneman, 1974; and Henires, 1974).

Research on the effects of school environments on educational achievement has been affected by the provision of equivalent resources. The peer group is a major component of the school environment. Segregation between schools or within a school, intended or unintended, may have deleterious effects on the less able group of students (possibly including the practice of segregating female students for home economics, and male students for physical education). However, many of the factors that affect educational resources and school environments can be influenced by policy decisions at the government level (Stromquist, 1989; UNESCO, 1988; and Ministry of Education; 1988).

2.3 Situational Barriers: Division of Social Roles

In Kenyan society men and women have clearly different social roles. Men do most clearing in the fields, do business or have jobs outside the home, while women do the household chores and look after the children. Consistent with the collectivist and authoritarian characteristics of the Islamic culture, women are more tied to their social role and have less authority. This means that education is not so important for women.

For many young women at the secondary level, this is just a period in which to wait for their ultimate goal, to get married. Some young women are kept at home until they reach the age of sixteen to be married off.

In the rural areas, agricultural production depends upon weather conditions; the family income is relatively low, which severely affects the education of rural children. The report from the Ministry of Education (1988) indicated that among 10,000 rural women less than 2.0 percent have a secondary education. Economically, young women contribute greatly to domestic labor. Many get married at the age of puberty, which results in a large number of school dropouts. In most areas in Kenya the

percentage of female students who drop out has reached as high as 50 percent at the primary and secondary levels.

Another cause of gender inequalities in Kenyan institutions of learning has been the families' economic condition. The parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school, especially, when the family income is low. This was indicated by a majority of the women in this study as the most influential factor. The families are faced with the problems of supporting their daughters' schooling with limited resources. Women play a central role in subsistence agricultural and pastoral life. They are the prime source of labor. Their role in feeding, or helping to feed the family, has implications for their daughters who have to work with their mothers and also have to learn the agricultural and pastoral skills they need later in life.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods that the researcher will use to select the geographical areas, from which research was carried out and methods of selection of respondents. It also explains the methods used to collect process and analyze data.

3.1 Research Design

This study followed a descriptive research design because the researcher used one District as a case study. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect and analyze data on the parenthood practices.

3.2 Study Population

The study was carried out in the selected primary schools of Nakuru District in Kenya. The area was chosen because the researcher resides in the District and has got the knowledge of the magnitude of the problem. The study involved pupils and teachers.

3.3 Sample Framework

3.3.1 Sample Size

A total of one hundred pupils and teachers were used for this study

3.3.2 Sample Technique

Using a convenient sampling technique, a total of hundred respondents were picked at random to participate in this study.

3.3.3 Sample Procedure

In carrying out research the researcher first got a release letter from the course administrators which the researcher took to the schools under

study. The researcher then was given permission by the authority to access information from the school.

3.4 Methods for Data Collection

3.4.1 Instruments

✓ **Focus Group Discussion Guide**

This was used to collect information from the pupils about what stops girls from attending school.

✓ **Interview Guide**

This was used to collect the views of the teachers and the school authorities.

3.4.2 Sources of Data

This study used both primary and secondary data:

Primary data was collected using interviews which were carried out with both teachers and pupils.

Secondary data was through Document analysis in the form of Reports, training manual, news papers, and journals for the period under study was read and the required data collected from them.

3.5 Data Processing and Analysis

Qualitative data involved three sets of activities which included editing, coding and frequency tabulations. Editing was done by looking through each of the field responses from interview guides ascertaining that every applicable question has an answer and all errors eliminated for the completeness, accuracy and uniformity.

The researcher then proceed on to coding the various responses given to particular questions that lack coding frames, she then established how

many times each alternative response category was given an answer using tally marks which was later added up.

Data will then be presented in frequency tabulations rendering it ready for interpretation. Quotations and field notes made were also included.

3.6 Statistical treatment of Data

Quantitative analysis: Data was categorized according to the research variables. Data was then coded in sheets from which it was keyed into the computer. Quantitative data generated from questionnaires were computed into frequency counts and percentages using the formula below;

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{F}{\text{Total number of respondents}} \times 100$$

Where F = number of respondents

Observed

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation, interpretation and discussion of the field results. Results are presented in tables and in form of frequency counts and percentages.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

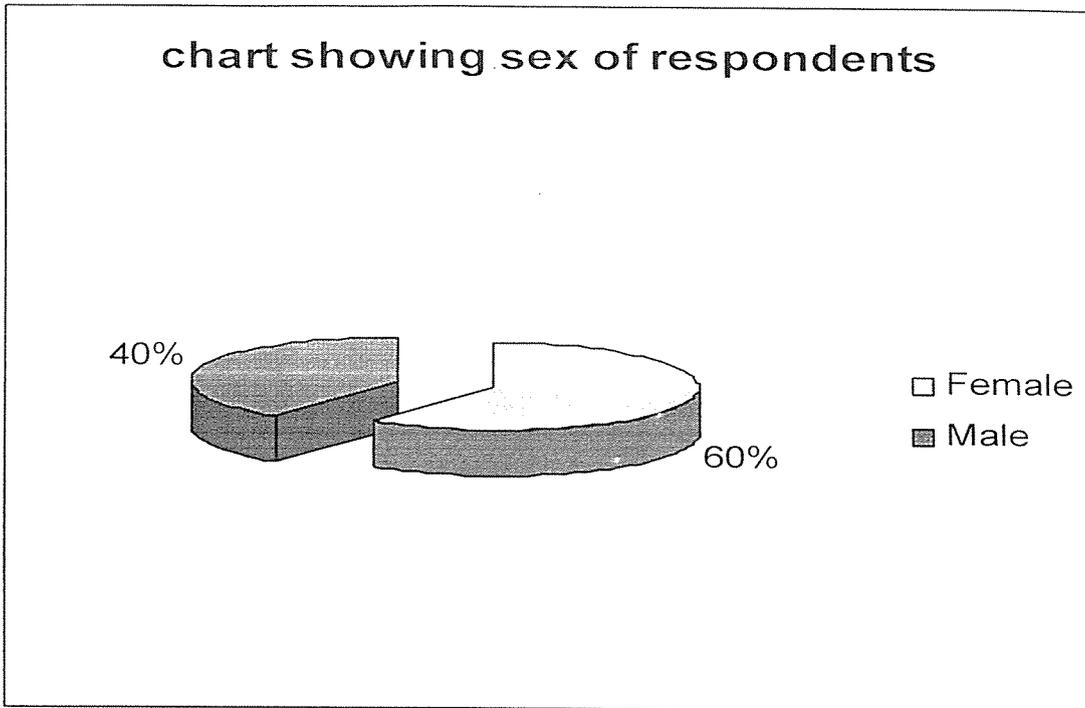
4.1.1 Sex of Respondents

During the survey 60 female respondents (60%) were given the instruments, while 40 male respondents (40%) were given the instruments. Because of the close links of the researcher with these pupils and Teachers, all of them helped her answer the questions asked in the interviews, which is 100% response. This is illustrated in the tables below:

Table I: Distribution of the Respondents by Sex

Sex	Respondents	Percentage
Female	60	60%
Male	40	40%
Total	100	100

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)



Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from table I and chart shows that most respondents were female (60%). This was because the issue being discussed concerned more of the female than the male though the views of the male (40%) were also necessary in this study

Table II: Age of pupils (N= 70)

Age	Respondents	Percentage
8-10	10	10%
11-13	50	50%
14- 16	40	40%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from the table show that the age of the pupils interviewed ranged mostly from 11- 13 (50%) and 14-16 (40%). This was because the pupils in that age group are mature enough to give answers that best satisfies the questions

Table II: Age of teachers (N= 30)

Age	Respondents	Percentage
20-24	5	16.7%
25-30	20	66.6%
31 and above	5	16.7%
Total	30	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from the table show that the majority of teachers interviewed were in the age bracket of 25-30 (66.6%). This was because most teachers found in these schools are of ages ranging from 25 to 30 years.

4.2 Culture and religion and education of girls

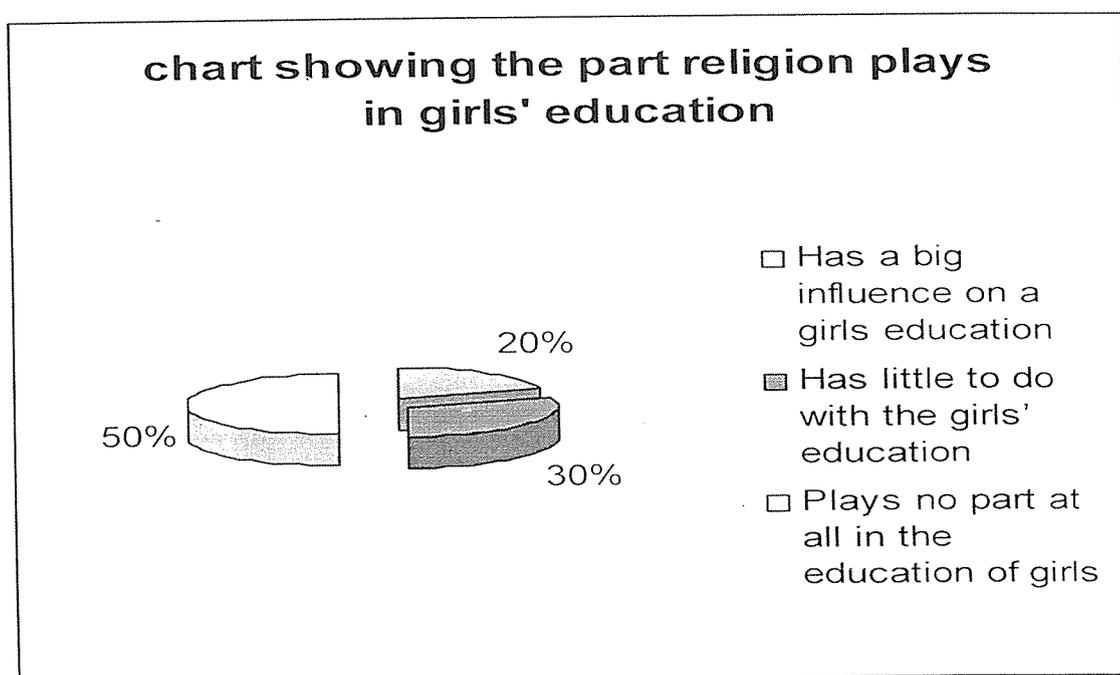
4.2.1 The part religion plays in the girls' education

The findings are presented in the table and graph below;

Table III: The part religion plays in the girls' education

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Has a big influence on a girls education	20	20%
Has little to do with the girls' education	30	30%
Plays no part at all in the education of girls	50	50%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)



Results show that the respondents in the selected schools of Nakuru were of the view that religion played no part in smaller number of girls in school. This was because the religions practiced in this region supported education for girls rather than opposing it.

4.2.2 Religion's views on female education

The findings are presented in the table and graph below;

Table IV: Religion's views on female education

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Girls should get the education the boys get	50	50%
Girls should get a little education to get them married	30	30%
Girls should not be educated at all	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from the table show that the majority of respondents replied that religions in their area actually believed in the education of girls as much as that for boys (50%). However there were a sizable number of respondents who felt that their religions did not support education especially those who practiced traditional religions.

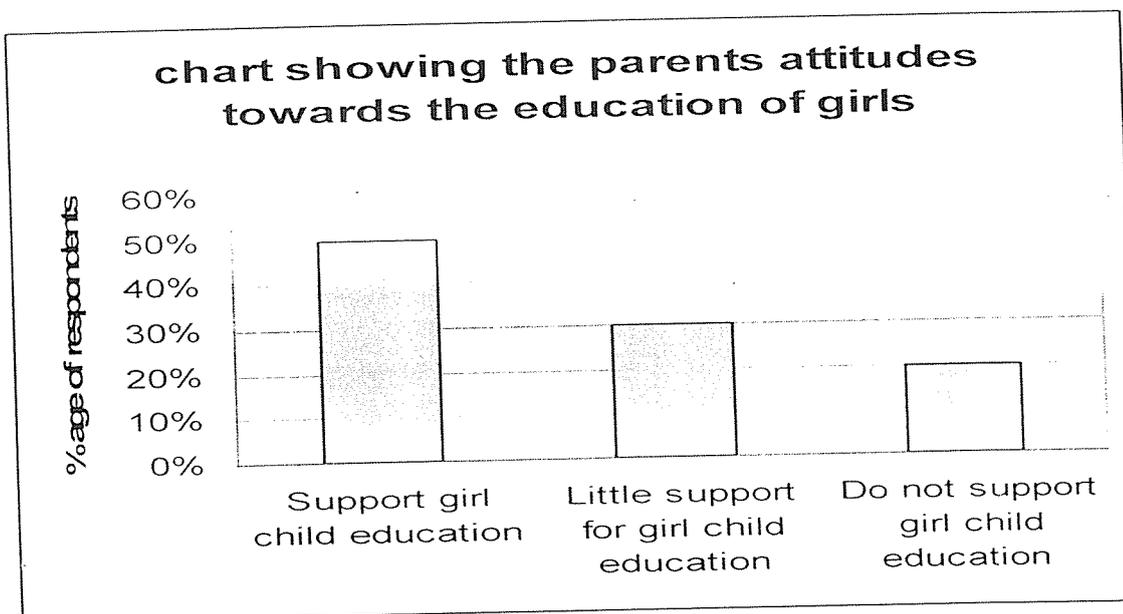
4.2.3 Parents' attitudes toward girl's education

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table V: Parents' attitudes toward girl's education

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Support girl child education	50	50%
Little support for girl child education	30	30%
Do not support girl child education	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)



Results from the table show that most parents in the district support the girl child education (50%). However, there is a sizable number of parents

in the area especially the traditionalists who have little no support for the girl child education.

4.2.4 Parent's academic expectations of female child and the male child

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table VI: Parent's academic expectations of female child and the male child

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Boys should perform better than girls	80	80%
All should perform better.	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

chart showing parents academic expectation of the male and female child



The attitudes of parents towards the performance of pupils were that they expected the boys to do better than girls in examinations (80%). This was because they had higher expectations of their male pupils compared to girls.

4.3 School Environments and the education of girls

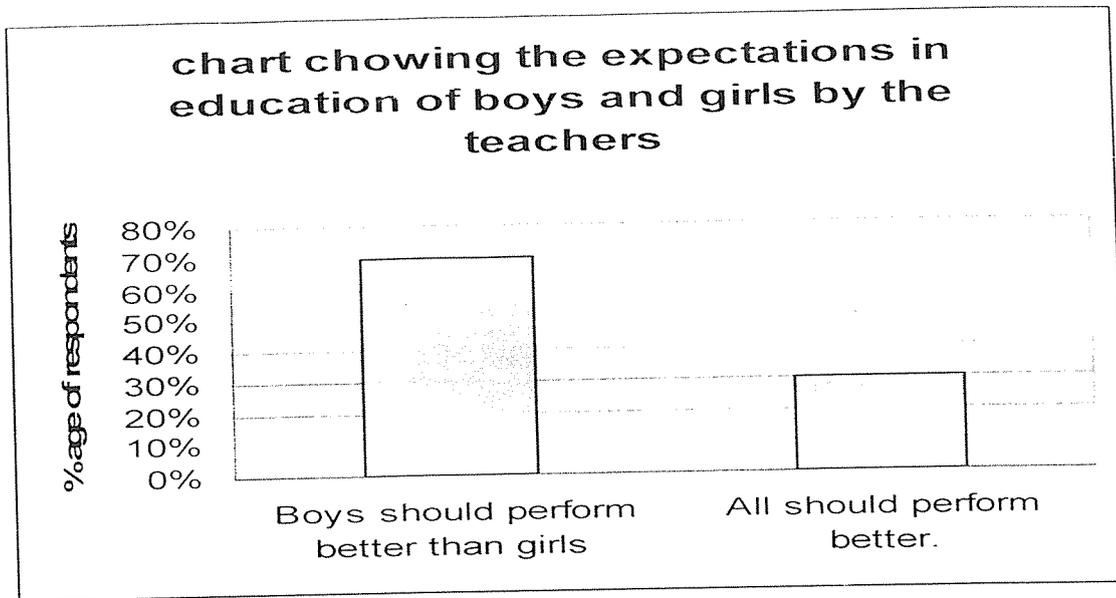
4.3.1 Teachers' expectations of girls

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table VII: Teachers' expectations of girls

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Boys should perform better than girls	70	70%
All should perform better.	30	30%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)



The results from the table and chart show that the teachers them selves expected boys to do better than girls in examinations. This was because they thought boys needed the education more than girls do need it. This view was expressed by the pupils them selves who felt that boys should perform better than girls in examinations.

4.3.2 Aspirations of girls in life

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table VIII: Aspirations of girls in life

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Be a mother	60	70%
Get a job and work	40	30%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from the table show that most girls preferred to be stay home mothers as the tradition in their area stipulates. This meant that there was only a few who worked hard to be educated.

4.3.3 Subject interests of girls in education

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table IX: Subject interests of girls in education

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Arts	90	90%
Sciences	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

An over whelming number of girls said they preferred arts subjects to sciences (90%). This shows that girls do not take education very seriously as the most serious subjects are thought to be for boys.

4.4 Situational Barriers of education of girls

4.4.1 Poverty and education of girls

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table X: Poverty and education of girls

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Only boys are preferred t go to school because of poverty in the home	60	60%
All children do not attend school because of poverty	40	40%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

Results from the table show that the tough economic condition of families in the district force parents only to send boys to school instead of girls because of the cultural significance of the boy child in the area. How ever because of this bad economic condition even some boys are not able to attend schools.

4.4.2 Family roles and education of girls

The results of the findings are presented in the table and chart below;

Table XI: Family roles and education of girls

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Girls stay at home to do house work	60	60%
Girls stay at home to take care of the family as boys study	40	40%
Total	100	100%

Source: Fieldwork Nakuru District (2008)

The results from the table show that most parents prefer to live the girls at home to do the house work or take care of the family in case the parents are too old or too weak to do so. This is done to the girls on expense of their brothers who are usually in school in the hope that they are the only capable ones of taking care of the family financially.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions from the study and the recommendations made are presented. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

5.1 Summary

Chapter one gives a background to the study and problem statement, three objectives and three research questions were given

Chapter two is a review of related literature, and the literature was reviewed under four themes and linked to the problem under study.

Chapter three explains the method and procedures used in the study which included the research techniques and design, population and sample size; sampling method and procedure; sources and types of data collection methods; data collection instruments and procedures.

Chapter four is a presentation, interpretation and discussion of the field results. Hence data was analyzed, interpreted and discussed in line with the study objectives and research questions. While linking to the existing literature, Results included demographic characteristics, frequency counts and percentages.

Chapter five presents the summary conclusions and recommendations to the study.

5.2 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting girls' education in the rural primary schools of Nakuru District Kenya

The first objective of the study was to investigate the influence of Socio-cultural and Religious Factors on the education of girls. The findings indicated that cultural and religious factors impacted negatively on the education of girls as they did not support education of girls.

The second objective was to investigate the influence of School Environments on the education of girls. The findings indicated that if school facilities are lacking girls will not be motivated to attend school. Further the attitude of teachers towards the education of girls negatively affects the education of girls.

The third objective of the study was to investigate the influence of Situational Barriers like poverty on the education of girls. The findings indicated that situational barriers like poverty impacted negatively on the education of girls.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The government should construct facilities at school for girls to learn in a conducive environment in order to aid the better performance in examination.
2. The government should have a policy in place that encourages the education of female students who at times think they are not good enough for education.
3. The girl students should be encouraged to relate equally with their fellow boy students in all subjects.
4. The community should be sensitized to encourage the sending of girls to school so that they get equal access to education.

5.5 Present areas for further research

There is need to explore the following areas that are closely related to this study;

1. Attitudes and academic performance of both boys and girls in mathematics
2. Attitudes of teachers and academic performance in mathematics

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INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PUPILS

1. What part is religion playing in your education?
2. What are your religion's views on females?
3. What are your parents' attitudes toward girl's education?
4. Do you feel they had the same attitude for women as they for men?
5. What are your parent's academic expectations of you and your brother?
6. What are your teachers' expectations of you?
7. Do you feel they have different expectations of female and male students?
8. What are your own aspirations?
9. Are there subjects that you want to take but are discouraged from taking?
10. What subjects interests you most?
11. What reasons do parents give for not allowing the girls to go to school?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

12. What part is religion playing in education of girls?
13. What are your religion's views on females?
14. What are the parents' attitudes toward girl's education?
15. Do you feel they had the same attitude for women as they for men?
16. What are the girl parent's academic expectations of girls and boys?
17. What are your expectations of the girl child?
18. Do you have different expectations of female and male students?
19. What are some of girls students' aspirations?
20. Are there subjects that girls want to take but are discouraged from taking?
21. What subjects interests girls most?
22. What reasons do parents give for not allowing the girls to go to school?

