

**FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR GIRL CHILD DROP OUT FROM SCHOOL: A CASE  
STUDY OF CENTRAL DIVISION, WAJIR WEST DISTRICT, KENYA**

**BY**

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### DECLARATION

I, Abdulaziz Gabow Mursal, declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for any academic award.

Signature..........

Abdulaziz Gabow Mursal

Date ...3-5-2012:..



## APPROVAL

This research report has been submitted for examination with my approval as a  
University supervisor

Signature .....

**Ssekajugo Derrick**

Date.....

## DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my dear wife Fouzia and to my daughter Amal who have been so patient and supportive to me in the course of my studies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor Mr. Ssekajugo Derrick for standing with me whenever I needed him and also offering his professional advice where necessary.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Recent research statistics has shown that the prevalence of girls dropping out of schools in Kenya is expanding rapidly to the distraction of the society. This has meant that there is an immediate need to conduct an investigation on the factors responsible for school dropouts especially among girls.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. This helped the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the factors responsible for school drop out among girls in Wajir West district in Kenya.

Data gathered was analyzed and edited to create consistency and completeness. Information obtained from the research study was presented and analyzed using bar charts, narratives, and statistical figures.

This study provided suggestions for more effective approach to the issue of school dropouts among girls and measures based on the lessons learned from field experience.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Back ground of the Study

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. UNESCO (2003)

Twenty years ago, little was said and even less was known about female schooling in Africa Joy C. Kwesiga (1990). 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 functions 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. UNICEF (2000) Globally, girls represent 60 percent of all out of schoolchildren (USAID, 1998). 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. Mukangara, F, and Koda, B (1997):

The problem of dropout has been continually troubling the primary education system developing countries. Dropout does not mean mere rejection of school by children. UNICEF (2000).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There is no sufficient data to show the causes of school drop out on side of girls much as this has caused great alarm of recent. This study was therefore meant to identify some of the causes of girl child drop out from school in Wajir West district Kenya.

## **1.3 Objectives of Study**

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of the study was to determine the causes of school drop out among girls in Wajir West District, Kenya and come up with possible strategies to solve the problem.

### **1.3 2 Specific Objectives**

- i). To determine the relationship between poverty and drop out of girls
- ii). To determine the relationship between parent's attitudes and drop out of girls
- iii). To discuss the relationship between school environment and drop out of girls.

iv). To analyze the relationship between traditional practices and drop out of girls.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between poverty and school drop out of girls?
2. What is the relationship between parents' attitudes and drop out of girls?
3. What is the relationship between school environment and drop out of girls?
4. What is the relationship between traditional practices and school drop out of girls?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out in Wajir West District in Kenya between the months of October 2011 and April 2012. It was limited to the objectives in regard to the causes of girls' drop out of school.

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study is thought to help education planners to study the root cause of drop out of girls in Kenya.

The study will become an instrument of change in the ways in which people and communities think about the education of the girl child and their capabilities.

## **1.7 Definition of terms**

For purposes of this study, the following terms have been defined;

**Adolescence:** The period when girls develop from childhood to adulthood more especially when they start menstruating.

**Drug abuse:** the improper use of drugs or alcohol to the degree that the consequences are detrimental to the user in society.

**Enrolment:** When a school admits a new student or when a student joins a new school.

**Sexualities:** The differentiation between sexes.

**School drop out:** the number of pupils who enroll in a school during a year but leave the school before the end of the year. It does not include girls who transfer from one school to another.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature as an account of the knowledge and ideas that have been established by accredited scholars and experts in the field of low enrollment of students most specially girls.

##### **2.1.1. Poverty and Drop out of Girls**

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 World Bank (2000). 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. The 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). Earthman, Glen I. (November 1998) 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 this 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.

## **2.2 Parents Attitudes and Drop out 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." UNESCO (2003) Thus learning "sex appropriate" behaviors and traits in childhood is one of the prerequisites for smooth functioning in society (common in rural areas).

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.

FAWE (2000)



Girls on the other hand drop out of school because of low status reasons. They may be made to remain at home doing some chores. Ministry of Education Science and technology (2001)

### **2.3 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. (Gupta N and M. Mahy, 2000) Because of this girls hate the school environment and therefore drop out of school. They also become pregnant and therefore have no choice that to drop out of school. (Eloundou-Enyegue, Parfait M.2000)

If Education For All (EFA) 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 man kind, 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." UNICEF (2000) 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 facilities. Joy C. Kwesiga.(1990)

Sanitation provision can have a detrimental effect that can further contribute to low attendance and retention rates for girls. (Beusang 2004) 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. (UNICEF 2005)

## **2.4 Traditional Practices and Drop out of Girls**

Cultural practices lead to despair in schools attendances on girls both in preparations and healing processes which some times lead to death. Gachiri, E. W. (2000). The ultimate lead to despair in school attendance and the performance ends up to girls with drawing from school (Okwach, 1997)

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 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. The Daily Nation. (2003)

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 drop out.

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. Mbilinyi, M and Mascarenhas, O (1983): These ceremonies are often held during the school term and result in girls missing a considerable amount of school time. Participation in these ceremonies affect girls' participation in education in general in two particular ways. Mabala R. et al (1995): 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 Jennifer (1998).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study employed a descriptive research design since its focus was on explaining an event or scenario.

#### **3.2. Scope of the study**

This study was carried out in Central Division, Wajir West district. The respondents included Pupils, teachers and community members. 20 teachers and 30 pupils were selected to participate in the study while 40 community members were included in the study.

#### **3.3. 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.

#### **3.4. Reliability of instruments**

Questionnaires as instruments of the study were tested before administering them to the respondents of this particular study.

### **3.5. Data collection procedure**

A letter of introduction from the Institute of Open and Distance Learning was sent to the head teacher before Questionnaires were 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.

### **3.6. 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 in contribution to the research.

Formula;

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = F \times 100$$

Total number of respondents

Where F = number of respondents

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

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation; interpretation and discussion of the findings. The results are presented in form of tables and frequency counts and percentage.

**Table 1 :Socio-economic related factors to school dropout**

TYPES/ FORMS OF	POSITIVE	%	NEGATIVE	%	TOTAL
i. Those who go for bursaries	12	40	18	60	30
ii. Those with two or most children who did not complete school	18	60	12	40	30
iii. Those who have problems in fees payment	25	83.3	5	16.7	30
iv. Everybody lives below poverty line	30	100	0	0.0	30
v. Those who agreed their problems results	28	93.3	2	6.7	30

from poverty					
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Table I shows that only around 40% people get the bursaries. This is very little number because most of the population is poor. This number is very low if we compare the number of parents who have two or more children who did not complete their education due to lack of fees. The table further reveals that more than 25 parents had problems in fees payments but they (pupils) did not drop out of school. The table further shows that most of the community members live below the poverty line (income of one dollar a day)

Finally the table shows that about 93.3% of the community members agreed the main causes of their problems in poverty. This clearly shows how poverty is widespread in the area.

**Table 2: Relationship between poverty and enrolment**

CAUSES OF LOW ENROLMENT	POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE	NEGATIVE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
i. Poverty	67	94.37	4	5.63	71
ii High Education cost	64	90.14	7	9.36	71
iii. Lack of facilities	57	80.28	14	19.72	71
iv Drop out	57	80.28	14	19.72	71
v. Teachers	27	32.03	14	61.97	71

**Source: Primary data**

Table 2 clearly shows that poverty is the major cause of low enrolment in S.D.S.S. It accounts for about 94% because all the first four items of table 4.2 (ie poverty, high education lost, lack of facilities and drop out rate) all poverty related or poverty originated problems).As per this results therefore, poverty contributes significantly to the low school enrolment than high lost or education which is related to poverty since if the community members are rich, then cost of education would not be a factor. Drop out from school and lacks of facilities are



other factors that affect enrolment. Here, the main contributing factor is poverty (which is widespread in the community), drug abuse, peer influence, unwanted pregnancies, lack of better school financial management which would support school development projects such as laboratories, libraries and workshops.

If poverty and drop out rates are reduced, facilities put up and the cost of education subsidized the enrolment can be improved.

#### 4.2 On the main causes of poverty.

Table 3: Main causes of poverty

CAUSES OF POVERTY	POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE	NEGATIVE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
i. Weather conditions	51	72.93	19	27.07	70
ii. Lack of resources	46	65.78	24	34.22	70
iii. Lack of government Aid	43	61.49	27	38.51	70
iv. Social problems	34	48.62	36	51.38	70
v. Lack of	26	37.18	44	62.82	70

education					

**Source: Primary data**

**Table 3 ,clearly shows the above major causes of poverty.**

- Lack of government assistance in provision of water, infrastructure, lack of market of their farm produce (milk, potatoes and maize) and lack of a cash crop. This makes the community to believe that the only way out of poverty is through government assistance, through provision of water, food and all weather roads and ready market for their little farm produce.
- Weather condition is the other main cause of poverty. The area often has a very long dry spell of drought and unpredictable weather that cause mass crop failure and by extension and death of their livestock.
- Lack of resources, this includes lack of capital, loan facilities and even knowledge that would help the community members initiate and maintain income generating activities.
- Lack of education contributes to some extent on causing poverty. Though the investigator believes that this is the main cause of poverty,

but the community members don't want to admit their low literacy level contribute to poverty.

### 4.3 Ways of Alleviating Poverty

Table 4: Ways of alleviating poverty

WAYS OF FIGHTING POVERTY	POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE	NEGATIVE	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
Education of youth in community	59	84.37	11	15.63	70
Employment of School leavers	52	74.36	18	25.64	70
Improvement of infrastructure, water supply etc	47	67.21	23	32.79	70
Improved participation in G.O'sto community	38	54.34	32	45.66	70
Improvement of security	3	4.29	67	95.71	70
Government improving morale of farmers	8	11.44	62	88.56	70

Source: Primary data

The research found out that poverty can be fought in the following ways in Wajir West district.

By educating the youth and community members such that they can get enough means of fighting poverty. If the youth and community members can be educated, they would enhance their chances of being employed and hence increase their income.

If the school leavers are employed, their incomes would rise and their incidence would reduce. This is a good way of fighting poverty

When the infrastructure and water supply is improved then the community members would be able to improve their food crop harvests and accessibility to market for their produce

Finally, if the government improves the morale of farmers that could be by subsidies or farm inputs and provision of ready market; this would encourage farmers to realize high yield's and so achievements would be more. This leads to reduced poverty.

#### **4.4 Effects of Poverty on the Society and the Nation at Large.**

Concerning the effects of poverty in the realization of National goals, it cause increased social evils like violent robberies, prostitution, and drug abuse and a rise in illiteracy levels which lead to un attainment of societal goals and finally national goals .

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter an attempt is made to discuss the findings and come up with conclusions and the recommendations there to.

#### **5.2 Discussion and conclusions**

One of the main outcomes of the study is the confirmation it has provided that teaching learning aids were impacting on the learning environment.

Another finding has been to the effect that other factors like socio-economic factors were contributing to the learning environment in general. One of these factors adversely affecting school attendance of children is poverty. Poverty may be due to low wages, unemployment, large family or the loss of family breadwinner. There are many ways in which extreme poverty might be expected to exert an influence on school attendance.

According to Kinyanjui, (2003), malnutrition and poor living conditions are bound to have an influence on the health of the child, and so directly or indirectly affect his ability to learn. Pre-natal damage may occur in the child as a result of inadequate pre- natal care limited incomes among lower class families have been found to restrict the provision of school books, building funds, and other necessary materials to ensure good performance and attendance at school.

On the other hand lower class families have been found to have lower aspiration for their children than upper class families due to opportunity cost of the child according to Michael Todaro (1977). Some of the studies have concluded that, the intellectual stimulation that reinforces the schooling experience is less likely to be present in lower income families; and that socio-economic background contributes to absenteeism and dropout rates

Rural studies in United States of America provided valuable insight that appeared to provide a most important factor governing the school attendance. McIntire, 1918 in effects of Agricultural Employment upon school attendance; and Folks (1920) reported a strong influence of seasonal farm demands on pupils' attendance.

From the findings of the study, the roles of boys and girls before and after school during harvests do influence their attendance at schools. Over 80% of the people in Kenya live in the rural areas, and derive their income from farming. It has therefore been observed by Raju B (1973). that poor families who cannot afford to employ casual labourers during land preparations, ploughing and harvesting draw their children from school to work on the family farm or look after cattle.

Studies in Tanzania by Mbilunji (1999) and others on the school community and class found that regional and locational effects are less important than the set up of the child's family background, traditional social structure, and stratification among peasant and traders in rural areas.

Sharma and Sapra (1971) in their Indian study, found drop outs and non drop outs to differ in their attendance rates. Pupils with less than 60% attendance rate were seen to be potential dropouts. Jamison and Mc Nally (1975) found attendance to fluctuate with the farming calendar in rural areas.

The concept of social class is useful because it refers to more than just the effect of parental education, occupation, incomes or any of a number of correlated variables that are used to measure socio- economic status.

Kohu, Melum, 1963 in his contribution on "Social class and Parental-child Relationship has pointed out that, "members of different social classes, by virtue of enjoying (or suffering) different conditions of life, come to see the world differently and to develop different conceptions of social reality, different aspirations, hopes and fears and different conceptions of the desirable".

The definition of social reality and its concomitant aspirations may be the root to explaining the barriers which operate to reduce educational participation of children from lower class origins relative to those from higher ones. Levin, H.M., 1976 concluded that there are those barriers that are within the school structure. Levin pointed out that the external barriers may include family expectation, limited incomes.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The implementation of Free Primary Education is critical to the achievement of Education For All (EFA), which is a key objective under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The government must therefore continue to invest heavily and sustain FPE in order to provide an all inclusive education and training to all Kenyans irrespective of their region of origin, income status, gender, religion and any other disparities.

#### 5.3 Areas of further research

Further research studies can be done on the causes of the gap in performance between boys and girls because it is widely known that poor academic performance in one way or the other causes drop out of pupils from school



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## APPENDIX 1:

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

**Dear Respondent,**

I am student of Kampala International University carrying out an academic research on the topic "causes of school drop out among girls in Wajir West district, Kenya. You have been randomly selected to participate in the study and you are therefore kindly requested to provide an appropriate answer by either ticking the best option or give explanation where applicable. The answers provided will only be used for academic purposes and will be treated with a high degree of confidentiality

NB: Do not write your name anywhere on this paper.

#### **Personal Information:**

##### **Sex**

Male [ ]      Female [ ]

##### **Age**

18-25 [ ]      26-35 years [ ]      36 and above [ ]

#### **Poverty and drop out of girls**

1. Girls drop out of school because they cannot afford to pay for school fees

Strongly agree[ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

2. because of poverty girls have to sell produces in the market

Strongly agree [ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

3. Because of poverty girls are married off

Strongly agree [ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

4. Girls engage in sexual activities because of poverty.

Strongly agree [ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

**Parents' attitudes and drop out of girls**

5. Girls drop out of school because parents do not value their education

Strongly agree [ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

6. Parents think girls should get married

Strongly agree [ ]      Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]      Disagree [ ]

7. Because of negative attitudes girls are not encouraged to continue in school.

Strongly agree [ ]

Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]

Disagree [ ]

### **School environment and drop out of girls**

8. The school environment is not safe for girls

Strongly agree [ ]

Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]

Disagree [ ]

9. Girls are sexually harassed at school

Strongly agree [ ]

Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]

Disagree [ ]

10. The infrastructure of the school is not conducive

Strongly agree [ ]

Agree [ ]

Strongly disagree [ ]

Disagree [ ]

11. The sanitation of the school discourages girls to continue in school

Strongly agree [ ☐ ]      Agree [ ☐ ]

Strongly disagree [ ☐ ]      Disagree [ ☐ ]

12. Teachers do not encourage girls to study

Strongly agree [ ☐ ]      Agree [ ☐ ]

Strongly disagree [ ☐ ]      Disagree [ ☐ ]

**Traditional practices and drop out of girls**

13. Female genital mutilation hinders girls education

Strongly agree [ ☐ ]      Agree [ ☐ ]

Strongly disagree [ ☐ ]      Disagree [ ☐ ]

14. Girls are married off because of culture

Strongly agree [ ☐ ]      Agree [ ☐ ]

Strongly disagree [ ☐ ]      Disagree [ ☐ ]

15. Girls have to do all the chores at home

Strongly agree [ ☐ ]      Agree [ ☐ ]

Strongly disagree [ ☐ ]      Disagree [ ☐ ]

16. Girls are engaged in initiation ceremonies which hinders their education

Strongly agree [    ]      Agree [    ]

Strongly disagree [    ]      Disagree [    ]