THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ON SCHOOL DROP OUTS

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BY

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DECLARATION

I Anthony Kiiru Mwangi, hereby declare that, this research report is my original work. It is not a duplication of similar published work nor has it been submitted to any other institution for the award of any certificate.

Signature............................   **Date**...15th/July/2008...........

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APPROVAL

This work has been supervised and approved by..

24th. August. 2008

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my dear late Charles Mukunya Mwangi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cohort : A group of learners in one class who progresses together from
One class to another annually

Dropout : Any child who terminates his or her education at any level of
education.

Shamba boy: A young boy employed in a farm to do manual work.

Truancy : The acts of being absent from school with no good reason.

Abbreviations

F.G.M : Female Genital mutilation

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aimed at investigating the impact of cultural practices on school dropout. It was carried out in selected schools of Ithanga Zone in Kenya E. Africa. It is made up of a total of five chapters.

Chapter one is introduction. It gives an insight into a background of the topic thus culture and dropout. It also looks into the theory, objectives, statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, and significance of the study.

Chapter two is literature review. It gives a thorough analysis of different ideas of authors who wrote about culture and dropt outs in schools. Specifically, it points out different cultural practices, other causes of dropout, effects, and measures and also highlights the gap in knowledge.

Chapter three is research methodology. It tackles the design, environment, respondents, instruments, data collection procedures and statistical treatment of data. It specifies how data was collected and analyzed to come up with conclusions.

Chapter four is data presentation and analysis. It deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the field and specifies respondents' views about the subject in question.

Chapter five deals with, discussions, and recommendations. It is the last chapter of this research paper. Here, the researcher made his own discussions, conclusions and recommendations based on his perception.

1.0 CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This is the first chapter of this research paper entitled "the impact of cultural practices on school dropout". It gives the background on dropout and culture. It also specifies the theory, problem, purpose, objectives, scope, significance and limitations.

1.2 Background

In the recent past efforts have been made in the promotion of education worldwide. This is in realization that education is the pillar in which the society depends on in terms of political, economical, gender equality and social mileage.

In addition to this, the universal declaration on human right, adopted by the General Assembly of United Nation on 10th December 1948, proclaim that: -

- Everyone has a right to Education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and the fundamental stages. Elementary Education shall be compulsory.
- Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.
- Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of Education that shall be given to their children.

It is in this realization that the Kenya Government established its Education plan of 1979 and renewed it in 2003 and most current free early childhood

Education of 2007. Hence termination of Education at any level becomes a waste of Government resources and its effort to eradicate illiteracy.

In Ithanga zone there is a high rate of criminal activities. Young people are involved in pick pocketing, house braking and even stealing from farms. Majority of these teenagers had dropped out from school.
Poverty is thriving at a high rate in the zone such that 80% of the residents survive on less than 2 dollars a day. Majority of these families is made up of members who never went to school or had dropped out of school. This high rate of drop out has been greatly influenced by cultural practice such as child labor, Female genital mutilation, early marriages and boy child preference among other factors

It is on this basis that the research was carried out to determine these cultural practices and their effect on regular learners and the dropouts.

1.3 Theory

This study is based on the theory of Joaquin Rousseau (Wright:1998) which states that by the use of child entered approach, the children will enjoy learning and hence opt to stay in school rather than drop out of school. Rousseau's theory is of great importance for it advocates for right of the child rather than concentrating on the vast amount of information that you want on children to acquire. It specifies that we should rather begin by considering on what the child is capable of learning instead of beginning from the outside from subjects skills which adults think are important. We should begin from what is already in the child's capacity to develop, this will interest the learner and reduce the learners stress punishments and eventual dislike of the school.

Though this theory will develop interest in learning and hence more learners will opt to stay in school it has not stated how this theory will meet with other challenges which hinder learning, social economic challenges still see more learners staying out of school or performing poorly due to lack of finance to meet their needs or due to poor cultural practices involved in society. This theory hasn't also put into consideration the individual differences each individual has. Instead it has clustered children according to age with assumption that all children should perform equally at a given age bracket. Cultural practices for example early marriages, female circumcision will still see the majority if learners being pushed out of school systems.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Ithanga zone is found in Thika District of Kenya. It is a zone with young teenagers who are involved in criminal activities, such as pick pocketing, drug trafficking and way lying people as they go home from work. It is also a major supplier of cheap labor in the form of housemaids, shamba boys, bar maids and cheap prostitution. Drug abuse is also a known phenomenon. Of the many children who join class one only a handful of them join secondary Education and less than 1% higher learning. This has actually made Ithanga zone lag behind in any form of development and be 80% dependent on import of professional and technical workers.

Cultural practices and beliefs such as early marriages, Female Genital Mutilation (F.G.M) and child labor seems to be the main factors that contribute to lack of school participation and school dropouts. This makes the zone to produce ill-equipped people for the world of work and self-reliance.

It is this in mind that the researcher was motivated to carry out an investigation to ascertain whether cultural practices have a stronger contribution to school drop in Ithanga Zone.

1.5 Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of cultural activities on school drop out.

1.6 Specific: Objectives
- To determine the types of cultural practices in Ithanga Zone and their impact on the community.
- To identify other causes of school drop out and the implication to the community
- To Find out measures taken to alleviate school drop out
- To investigate the impact of cultural practices on school dropout.

1.7 Research Questions
1. What are the types of cultural practices?
2. Are there other causes of school drop out apart from culture and and what are their implications to the community?
3. Which measures can be taken to alleviate school drop out?
4. Do cultural practices have a great impact on school dropout?

1.8 Significance of the Study
The study was aimed at giving a clear picture of variables that affect learners in their education which eventually cause learners to drop-out prematurely. Its findings will greatly benefit all stakeholders involved in this noble undertaking.

The school administrators, teachers and the government will be helped to realize causes of school dropout and consequently devise means of how to prevent more occurrences.

The study will benefit parents by enabling them provide appropriate and early intervention as they recognize cultural and other factors affecting school attendance and its eventual consequences.

By its highlight on culture, developmental milestone and social interaction will open up avenues for students and other interested researchers in similar fields.

These findings if well utilized will eventually be of great importance to the researcher and those in similar profession, as they will have adequate knowledge on how to handle and stop poor school attendance.

1.9 Scope /Delimitation of the Study

The study covered Ithanga location in Kakuzi Division of Thika-District. The study was carried out under the time frame of one year (June 2007-June 2008).

This being an academic paper the researcher had a choice of own topic and geographical area. The choice of geographical area under study made it easier for the researcher to cover all the area. Time and finance were adequate since the study was based on one location.

Finally, content wise, this research was specifically limited to measuring the impact of cultural practices on school dropouts. This implies that other factors were given less attention.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

In carrying out the study the researcher faced some constrains.
These included:

Some of the schools did not have proper and valid statistics on dropouts and neither was the available information been categorized by gender or age. This made the researcher take more time perusing registers and interviewing pupils' and so this affected the accuracy.

In some cases the dependent variable-the dropout compounded the problem. Some children had already dropped out of school only to reappear in school more so with introduction of free primary education. This caused confusion since the researcher found it difficult to treat them as dropout or chronic absenteeism.

The researcher also met some constrains inform of sincerity of some respondents as some felt suspicious more so now that it is an offence for any child to be out of school. The researcher had to explain his intention. This might have causes loss of some relevant information.

Some of the tools used to collect data for example questionnaires were not sent back and hence the researcher had to use the available questionnaire which was 80% of all the questionnaires sent out. This made him to miss some information.

Time factor was another constraint having to attend school (work) duty and research at the same time. The researcher had to make do with the few days he was allowed to be out of the working station making it had to visit far away samples and had to depend on postage.

2.0 CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This is the second chapter of this research paper. It looks at different views on culture and dropout as put forward by different authors. Specifically, it brings out the types of culture, causes of school dropouts, measures and the impact of culture on school dropout.

2.2 Types of cultural practices

According to The World Book of Encyclopedia (1963), culture is the civilization of a given race or nation at a given time, its customs, arts and convenience. The major kinds of cultural practices in Africa include: female genital mutilation practiced by the Sabiny people of Uganda for example, male circumcision among the Gishu, Kikuyu, Kamba and others, child labour, early marriages, polygamy, witchcraft, among others.(Machionis:2002)

2.3 Causes of school Dropout.

Corporal punishment is one of the major causes of school dropout. Kocchar S.K (2002) categorically puts it that:

> "…..It is very negative in its results. It causes hatred. It ends in sullenness, resentment, lack of confidence in a teacher, a feeling of injustice. It is both un human and brutal…" It is by no doubt therefore that such punishment if administered in schools learners become fed up and leave school pre maturely.

Tyerman (1968) dropout to the nature of school punishments even if it is mild. Dropouts are in fear of scolding, ridicule compulsory games and school activities and more so corporal punishment.

Another cause is poor methods of teaching and lack of significant guidance. (Kocchar S.K:2002). Learners face so many awkward situations at home, school or with their peers. They find it difficult to get out of them. They tell lies, try to dodge and indulge in so many un desirable practices basically due to lack of guidance and counseling.

Poverty is also another cause. Most parents in Africa face problems in the purchase of school uniforms, food and s scholastic materials although the government caters for the tuition fees of their children. This has no doubt led to many pupils to drop out of school. (Kocchar: 2002). Due to this problem the elderly drop out to look after the younger children in the larger families as parents go in search of casual labour.

Teachers also contribute a lot to this. Many learners are denied free access to the teacher thus creating a big gap between the former and the latter. Venkateswaran (1997) suggests that teachers should give due regard to individual learners, take interest in their welfare, be fair to all and respect their rights.

Louis J. (1973) suggests that teacher's attitudes towards learners with special needs as a factor that may contribute to child's dislike of school and eventually dropping out of school since their inspiration to attend school is reduced. Teachers are known to expect failure of learners with special needs even before teaching and exam is done.

Cottle (1974) attributes child poor performance, truancy, delinquency and eventually dropping out to the school attitude on disadvantaged students. When the school paints disadvantaged children as "dumb" and under achievers then they believe it and "cools off" for they believe the teachers and society are right.

Low intelligence. Tyerman and Young (1968) suggest that truancy and eventual drop out is brought about by low intelligence. They say that learners with low IQ perform poorly more so in spellings and reading than in other subjects hence his participation in schoolwork is inhibited. The child is very conscious of the gap between himself and his fellow pupils. These learners are not motivated to attend, as they feel inferior. Academic works seams a useless occupation and hence choose something else, which brings if not joy at least the misery of inferiority associated with the classroom is avoided.

Rev Denny (1973) also attributes dropout to excess pressure on child performance by the teachers and the parents, he says:

> "Many pupils' attempts to please the teacher and parents by the only mean possible and that is through academic achievements. Failure to this may lead to the pupil cheating, playing adamant, truancy and eventually dropping out of school. Excessive and uncalled for pressure in schools in form of exams and tests without appreciating individual differences and that the society we live in is a society of mixed ability has led to fear of failure leading to school phobia."

On support to Louis findings Vaughan and Hodges (1973) attributes poor performance to learning disabilities, which can't be dealt with due to lack of, specialized. Personnel, materials, educational strategies and or modification of the educational process. These learning disabilities have caused school repetition and consequent dropout among learners.

Sasa (1992) in establishing factors that contribute to dropout found out that boys and girls face a big spectrum of problem, which affects their school participation and achievement. These problems include childhood diseases, child abuse, hunger, clothing, negligence and abandonment.

In support to Sasa findings Norman (1973) adds that many children from disadvantaged areas fail to achieve the academic awards which so often open up the life chances. Hostility and antagonism among these children make them drop out of school. Most of these children are frequently poorly dressed, badly fed and very resilience to school. He adds that parental attitude, family size, family income, parental education, linguistic experience and family relationship among others affect child's participation in school.

Denny (1973) attributes truancy and eventual dropout to parents' absence. In his research he found out that 60% of trounce children come from homes in which the mother is absence for prolonged period of time more so during the first five years while 35% from homes in which the father is absent.

In addition to Vaughn and Hodges findings, Hodgson et al (1974) points out: "it is difficult to conceive an ideal way of grouping pupils and organizing their learning which will meet the requirement of all who have special education needs. Much depends on school size, the

number of pupils on roll with special need, the nature and variety of those needs and the problems they represent in educational terms. In addition, a school staffing establishments, curriculum and timetable together with physical lay out all have a bearing on what is possible to be achieved

As a result to these limitations, the girls and boys with special needs are always neglected leading to majority of them dropping out of school. Court (1974) established that dropout phenomena have been along time problem. He found out that only fifty percent of Kenya's youth complete the basic seven years cycle of primary school education.

Michieka (1994) feels that wastage in all its manifestation has and continues to drain the government a lot of resources. She points out that despite the high enrolment rate. In lower Primary, the rate at which learner's dropout is alarming. This is quite in line in what is happening in Kakuzi whereby more than 40% fail to complete the eight years cycles.

2.4 Implications to the community
Maureen et al (1997) found out that dropping out of school leaves young people ill-equipped for the world of work and at high risk of poverty. This high dropout rate (22% on average) is due to language barrier, pregnancy and those who must work to support families. Their data suggest that many drop out are young people whose parents also have little schooling, reviling a multigenerational cycle of disadvantage

2.4 Measures

As way of avoiding and reducing on occurrences of dropouts, all education deficiencies (as noted above) that contribute to it should be removed. Adequate consultative and school administrative machinery should be put in place to monitor learners strictly and to guide them as well. Kocchar (2002)

Museveni (august 2001) pointed out that the only way to boost the education of girls is by dealing effectively with the conditions in which child labour thrives. He observed that girls in boarding school perform better than those in day schools. He attributes this to the fact that they do not have to be involved with disruptive cultural beliefs such as domestic chores and sexual harassment within the community. He adds that in order to keep girls in school cultural handicaps in the wider social context in form of early marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM) and boy child preference within the community and the family should be eradicated, otherwise the girl child dropout will never be reversed.

2.5 Cultural Implications on Dropout.

Macaronis (2002) defines culture as away of life shared by members of a society. Several species displays limited capacity for culture, but only human beings rely on culture for survival. Human cultural beliefs and practices have great effect on an individual of any age, and as such, people (especially boys) cut-off from legitimate opportunity may form deviant sub-culture as a strategy to gain the prestige denied them by parents, teachers and the larger society. Neglected by society, they seek self-respect by creating a delinquent sub-culture and may fall into retreats such as dropping out of school, abusing alcohol or other drugs.

According to Thio (1995), the cultural belief that man is a superior being has greatly contributed to deviant behavior. In search a culture men are encouraged to respond aggressively even to simple matters going against their manliness. If they do not respond aggressively, they are made to feel cowards. This culture of man superiority has contributed much to boys particularly the teenagers to react aggressively to insults, misunderstanding and the desire to dominate either from fellow students or teachers. Some teenagers being not able to fight teachers opt to carry out demonstrations, burn down schools, fight fellow pupils and eventually dropout of school.

Owen (1985) attributes delinquency and dropping out of school to teaching and eventual aptitude tests of society's dominant culture. This places the minority students at a disadvantage through defining majority students as smarter. The minority ends up hating the system and dislike of the school.

In support of Owen findings, Macaronis (2002) adds that bureaucratic schools run by outside specialists such as state education officials generally ignore the culture character of local communities and the personal needs of their children. Failure to meet with this culture and personal needs leads to learner having no relationship with the school and sees the school as a detention camp and are very eager to move out of the school system.

Dele (1998) found a considerable amount of effects of adolescent culture on an individual behavior. As adolescent form an Interim culture they tend to identify themselves with their peer, forming cliques and crowds. This acts as reference groups. Most of these groups happen in schools settings. When a member of the group is ejected from these groups due to some personal

problems this may lead to stress and eventually the learner opt to ask for transfer or drops out of school.

Kimani (2003) in his study on effects of child labour on education found out that the cultural belief that children are part of parents investment has led to eighty percent of school going boys and girls to participate in paid wages during school vocations to supplement parent's earnings. Fifty percent participate in waged labour during weekends while ten percent partially drop-out of school to work in coffee plantations during harvesting time. This interference with education eventually leads to learners dropping out to become full time laborers particularly during adolescence stage. In addition he found out that girls are considered to be the weaker sex and easy to control and more ready source of labour. Most of the girls are left at home to take care of their siblings.

Njagi K. (2006) found out that cultural practices are a major reason for drop-out in Laikipia District. Boys become erratic in school attendance after circumcision. Girls are forced to be circumcised so as to be married off too early. Njagi's findings are supported by Lomariwo (2003) who found out that pupils in Baringo East District drop out of school, perform poorly and repeat classes due to old cultural practices. Girls are forced to undergo circumcision so as to be married off as early as even nine years. Girls who by lack return school perform poorly due to arrogance as a result of indoctrinations. Boys consider themselves men and hence put very little value to education.

Gachiri (2001) attributes high drop out particularly among girls to female genital mutilation (FGM) she states: "Girls consider themselves 'mature' after circumcisions. They begin an unhealthy pre-occupation with their sexuality. As

a result they feel ashamed when smaller uncircumcised girls perform better in class. When this trend continues for sometimes together with the daily scolding and beatings for poor performance, the circumcised girl may end up pregnant or just dropout of school. The drop-out may eventually be driven into prostitution by poverty and frustration"

Gap in Knowledge
In this research the researcher lacked specific literature which dealt wholly on drop outs as a result of cultural interference. Though highlights have been given above, they cannot exhaust the subject in question.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design

The study employed both the qualitative and quantitative survey methods to ascertain the relationship between cultural factors and school dropouts.

3.1 Subjects

The study included: -

- Primary school dropouts, five from each primary school in the geographical area.
- Three primary school teachers from each of the six schools.
- One zonal inspector of schools.
- Six head teachers.
- Three pupils from the sampled schools.

In ensuring adequate coverage of the respondents the dropouts were randomly sampled. This avoided biasness in form of gender or interest.

The teachers were stratified in three groups, which included lower primary, mid primary and upper primary. The teacher with a longer service period in those classes was picked. This ensured maximum coverage of the school. The three primary schools pupils were randomly picked. One child was picked from the three primary stratus that is lower primary, mid and upper primary.

3.3 Sampling procedure

In getting the school's samples, the researcher applied cluster-sampling method where by he divided the location into three regions. From each region, two schools were sampled out by use of random sampling; this ensured there was no prejudice.

Table 1. SCHOOLS SAMPLING TABLE

SUB-LOCATION	SAMPLE OF SCHOOLS
KIRATHANI	ST.TERESA
	NGURUNGA
KAGUKU	ITHANGA
	MIANYANI
NGELELYA	THUNGURURU
	KARIARA

The table shows sampled schools as per sub-location. It is worthy to note that the schools sampled had wider diversity of variables under study. This is due to the cultural and social- economic difference. So as to save time and finances in obtaining a sample of drop outs and parents, the researcher used convenience sampling technique.

3.4 Environment.

The study covered Ithanga education zone in Thika District. The zone is $50Km^2$ and has 12 primary schools and 3 secondary schools. It is in a rural setting with 3 shopping centers.

3.5 Instruments.

The researcher used self-made questionnaires. There were questionnaires for the teachers, Head teachers and zonal inspector. The questionnaire assisted the researcher collect raw data.

Interview schedules were also used hence the researcher compiled guiding questions. The interview schedules were for the parents. This enabled the researcher get first hand information.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure.

A letter was addressed to the zonal inspector and the head teacher of various institutions so as to solicit permission to conduct the study. The researcher distributed the questionnaires during school meetings and also through the head teachers. The completed questionnaires were analyzed, categorized and then interpreted.

3.7 Treatment of Data

The frequency and percentage distribution was used to determine the effect cultural practices on school dropout in Ithanga zone of Thika District Kenya.

Formula:

f/n x 100

Where, f=frequency

n= total number of respondents

100=constant

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The data presented in this chapter is basically on the impact of cultural practice on dropout in Ithanga zone of Thika District, Kenya. It was collected by the use of questionnaires and interview schedule. The research dealt with three types of strata's. These were teachers, parents and the dropouts. The collected data was presented and analyzed as illustrated below:

4.2 Presentation and Analysis.
Questionnaire for the head teachers

Qn1. In the tables below fill in enrollment per class by gender.

This question required the respondent to indicate the number of pupils by gender from 2000 to 2007.

Table 4.   ENROLLMENT PER CLASS FOR ITHANGA PRIMARY

class	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Total	
	B	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**	**B**	**G**
2000	53	52	50	53	42	60	40	41	36	53	27	25	30	30	15	7	293	304
2001	52	46	41	53	49	33	32	48	35	34	28	35	29	13	12	9	278	271
2002	56	58	47	41	35	40	40	25	30	29	27	29	30	26	21	5	287	250
2003	48	56	64	46	47	41	29	39	41	41	39	61	27	34	20	6	315	334
2004	44	47	41	32	45	35	25	28	40	31	33	35	34	37	16	4	278	259

2005	51	65	48	57	47	38	55	37	33	28	29	46	25	21	28	45	314	337
2006	64	67	42	58	61	61	48	43	52	41	32	26	31	49	16	15	346	352
2007	76	72	45	50	48	56	57	50	49	43	44	45	37	36	18	30	374	377

It can be observed that the school has been registering more pupils for the 8 years. Though this is a good indication, it has also registered a very big wastage in form of dropout and repetition. In 2000, 53 boys and 52 girls joined class one. This cohort which is expected to complete primary level in 2007 has only 18 boys and 30 girls. By comparison on class one and class 8 it can be noted that less than 50% of girls and 40% of boys actually reached class 8. Due to the big number in class 7 it can be concluded that some pupils have either dropped out, repeated classes, or shifted to other schools.

Table 5.   ENROLLMENT PER CLASS FOR THUNGURURU   PRIMARY

Total	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Total		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2000	63	80	78	74	68	75	60	64	57	57	53	54	32	30	60	15	427	451	878
2001	74	76	62	65	69	65	68	61	53	65	45	40	40	42	23	21	459	435	894
2002	69	77	71	70	63	60	62	58	59	51	48	48	44	34	21	14	437	412	849
2003	7	7	78	7	6	6	6	6	55	5	49	5	48	3	20	2	44	44	88

3	0	7		1	4	2	0	8		6		2		7		0	4	3	7
2004	64	80	72	77	60	60	58	68	56	57	45	45	42	28	30	10	427	425	852
2005	79	67	62	75	62	56	54	52	52	67	42	42	30	31	23	11	405	401	806
2006	86	84	75	67	56	60	73	58	66	60	53	60	42	52	33	37	484	478	962
2007	82	90	85	83	70	65	57	64	70	56	60	52	50	56	38	42	512	508	1020

The table shows that the school has high enrollment with the girls being the most learners who join class one. It is assumed that the same number should be reflected in class eight after the eight years. This is not the case. For example of the 80 girls who enrolled in class one in the year 2000 only 37 girls managed to complete the eight years. This is 48% of the total number of girls who enrolled. Of the 63 boys who actually enrolled in class one only 33 completed standard eight. This represents 50%.

The table also reveals that the most affected class is standard six and seven. For example, in the 2000 out of 107 pupils in standard six and only 82 proceeded to standard seven. In 2001 out of 40 girls only 21 proceeded to class eight while out of 40 boys 21 preceded to class eight. This is a clear indication that most of the pupils have dropped out or forced to repeat classes; the most affected gender being the girl child.

Table 6. ENROLLMENT PER CLASS FOR   ST.TERESA'S PRIMARY

Class	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Totals		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2000	43	63	50	58	53	39	27	49	42	45	46	36	29	24	14	8	319	323	642
2001	51	61	59	60	63	52	60	51	34	46	46	41	46	38	23	13	382	362	744
2002	65	49	47	56	61	58	62	49	49	45	27	43	29	45	33	23	373	368	741
2003	50	40	56	42	47	55	48	64	66	47	32	36	33	38	32	28	364	350	714
2004	49	34	45	32	36	26	41	39	40	40	42	32	35	43	14	22	302	268	570
2005	54	53	53	43	51	47	42	44	53	55	48	47	39	45	27	28	365	364	729
2006	33	47	54	49	47	42	45	35	54	57	55	57	40	39	33	26	361	362	723
2007	55	56	61	51	40	49	34	40	39	41	50	61	50	40	29	31	358	369	727

The table shows pupil's enrollment for a period of eight years. This is the period that a child is expected to be in primary school. From the data it can be observed that while the enrollment is high in class one, class eight enrollment is very low. For resistance, the cohort who joined class one in 2000, which were 63 girls and 43 boys only 31 girls and 29 boys actually completed the eight years cycle. This presents 49.21%for girls and 46% for boys. The rest have either dropped out of school prematurely or forced to repeat classes.

Table 7 ENROLLMENTS PER CLASS FOR NGURUNGA PRIMARY

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Total		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2000	5	12	7	12	9	8	4	9	9	7	10	4	3	2	4	5	43	62	105
2001	16	14	16	13	8	9	10	9	8	8	8	12	6	2	4	2	76	69	145
2002	28	28	11	15	9	16	10	15	12	9	5	4	6	12	6	2	87	101	188
2003	11	9	28	27	10	14	6	16	7	8	15	5	3	4	5	12	85	95	180
2004	16	13	10	9	10	11	6	14	6	16	6	9	8	3	3	4	65	79	144
2005	15	15	13	15	14	4	8	3	7	13	9	3	7	9	8	4	81	86	167
2006	15	16	14	15	11	25	5	19	8	11	6	17	10	14	10	8	96	97	193
2007	20	18	18	13	13	10	12	20	4	18	8	10	4	15	8	11	95	115	210

From the table it can be seen that this school does not have a big problem in retaining pupils in school. For example the cohort that enrolled in class 1 in 2000 only 1girl did not complete the cycle. The cohort that enrolled in 2001 had 16 boys and 14 girls but only 4 boys were in class seven in 2007. The low drop out can be attributed to the size of the school population.

Table 8.   ENROLLMENT PER CLASS FOR   MIANYANI PRIMARY

Clas	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Total		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2000	40	40	28	36	32	28	34	28	34	30	26	34	26	30	30	7	233	233	466
2001	63	45	34	43	41	30	29	26	29	27	28	27	32	26	14	11	270	235	505
2002	15	55	46	41	35	40	40	25	30	29	27	29	30	26	21	5	287	250	537
2003	53	41	51	47	54	47	40	30	45	29	29	25	32	27	19	14	323	260	583
2004	55	54	38	33	60	44	44	42	31	25	27	23	27	27	16	10	298	258	556
2005	58	53	53	42	46	37	52	51	46	42	28	27	23	25	12	10	318	279	597
2006	75	52	58	52	48	33	53	39	44	45	22	35	33	26	13	12	348	294	642
2007	65	60	74	52	56	52	49	32	51	37	36	38	23	30	15	13	369	314	683

The school has also improved in the enrollment through the eight years. It has also experienced drop repetition cases. Out of 40 boys who enrolled in class one in 2000 and expected to complete in 2007 only 15 boys and 13 girls out of 40 will eventually complete the 8 years cycle. The table also reveals that in the year 2001, 14 out of 26 boys and 11 out of 30 girls joined class 8 in 2002 19 out of 30 boys and 14 out of 26 girls made it to class 8. In 2004, 12 out of 27 boys and 10 out of 27 girls joined class eight. This is a clearly indication that there is a big wastage of almost 40% of all pupils. The most

affected class being standard seven and majority being girls. This has been attributed by over repetition leading to children dropping out rather than faces the scolding of teachers and other learners.

Table 9.   ENROLLMENT PER CLASS FOR   KARIARA PRIMARY

Class	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		Total		
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2000	5	12	7	12	9	8	4	9	9	7	10	4	3	2	4	5	43	62	105
'01	16	14	16	13	8	9	10	9	8	8	8	12	6	2	4	2	76	69	145
'02	28	28	11	15	9	16	10	15	12	9	5	4	6	12	6	2	87	101	188
'03	11	9	28	27	10	14	6	16	7	8	15	5	3	4	5	12	85	95	180
'04	16	13	10	9	10	11	6	14	6	16	6	9	8	3	3	4	65	79	144
'05	15	15	13	15	14	4	8	3	7	13	9	3	7	9	8	4	81	86	167
'06	15	16	14	15	11	25	5	19	8	11	6	17	10	14	10	8	96	97	193
'07	20	18	18	13	13	10	12	20	4	18	8	10	4	15	8	11	95	115	210

Source: Annual returns for Kariara primary

The table shows the pupils' enrollment in a period of eight years. From the table, it can be noted out of the 9 girls and 7 boys who enrolled in class one in 2000 only 4 girls and 3 boys managed to complete the eight years cycle.

Cases of repetition may also be noted though at a very low level due to low enrollment rate.

Qn. 2. State factors that have contributed to drop out in both genders.

Respondents identified the following factors; Child labor, Early marriages, Circumcision, Female genital mutilation and Parental attitude towards the girl child. Poverty, Parental level of education, Number of siblings, Nature of parental economic activities, H.I.V and AIDS.

Others include; Nature of school punishment, curriculum type and its delivery, school distance from home, poor school performance, Delinquency, Peer influence.

From the factors mentioned early marriages and delinquency as a result of F.G.M among girls was the major factor while for boy's child labour was the most prevalence. The fact that Ithanga area is found in pineapple and coffee farms most boys dropout either partially during coffee harvesting seasons or permanently. Girls work to supplement their parents merges earning. Early marriages and promiscuity also have contributed, much more so among girls.

Qn 3. How many teachers do you have in your school by gender?

This question was aimed at finding out the ratio of teachers to pupils. From the numbers given only schools with low populations had adequate teacher with the ration of 1:30, school with 2 or 3 streams had few numbers with a ratio of 1:50 in mid and upper primary with some schools having up to 80 pupils per teacher in the lower primary (std 1 – 3). Schools near shopping center had more female teachers than schools in the interior. This may have contributed to more girls dropping out more so in the interior schools due to

lack of role models. The same can be said of boys who drop out mostly in schools near shopping centers.

Qn4. What is the impact of school dropouts on society?

The following reasons were given out:

i.   They become casual laborers.

ii.   Become single mothers

iii.   Get married.

iv.   Join local gangs in use of drugs and steeling

v.   Join parents in their unskilled jobs

vi.   Get employed as housemaids and shamba boys.

vii.   In addition prostitution was also mentioned.

Besides these effects on society the government looses millions of shilling in the provision of Education when a learner fails to meet government objective.

Q5. How can school dropout can be eradicated?

1. By modification of curriculum to enhance positive cultural practices.

2. By sensitizing the society on the need to change harmful cultural practices.

3. By enforcing the children bill.

4. By employing more trained teachers who are morally upright so that learners may have adequate role modes

5. By initiating laws against failure to take children to school

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS.

Qn 1. What was the enrolment of your class in January last year?

ENROLMENT OF PUPILS PER CLASS.

CLASS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1	306	272	578
2	272	243	515
3	236	217	453
4	249	208	457
5	230	236	466
6	190	206	396
7	165	178	343
8	137	111	248

It can be noted that class one has the highest enrolment of 578 pupils of which 306 are boys and 272 are girls. On going up the ladder enrolment has gone down. The highest dropout is experienced in class 5 to 6 where by 70 pupils did not enroll in the next class and in class 7 and 8 where by 95 pupils did not continue to class eight. This teenage class seems to be the highest affected. This may be due to learners dropping out due to cultural practices and luck of proper guidance in their age bracket.

Qn 2. How many learners have dropped out of schools this year in your class?

This question was meant to reveal which categories of pupils are mostly affected by drop out.
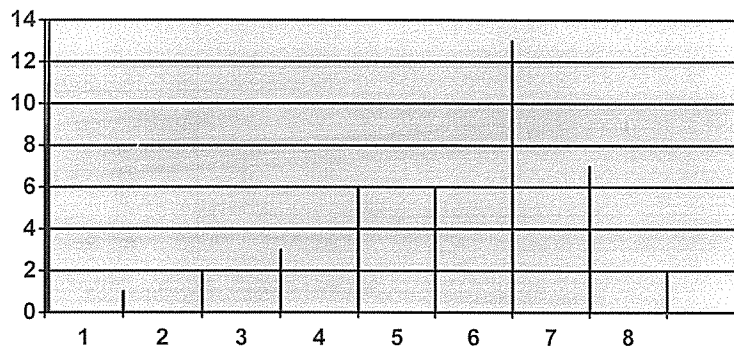
Figure 1: Number of pupils Drop out per class

The graph represents the number of pupils who have dropped out of school per class this year. It can be observed that the highest drop out rate is found in classes six and seven. These two classes alone represent fifty percent of all pupils drop out in the six schools studied. Class one has the minimal number of dropouts. Class eight seems to experience low drop out rate, which is four point eight percent. This may be as a result of cultural practices that affect adolescence for example early marriage, promiscuity, circumcision and early pregnancy

Qn 3. Among the following factors, which factor do you think has mainly contributed to pupil's dropout?

The findings were recorded with the most prevalence factors as follows; Child labour (20%), Early marriage (19%), Female circumcision (22%), poor parental attitude (06%), Lack of school levies (10%), Peer influence (08%), Drug abuse (02%), Lack of role models (03%), Harsh school system (05%), Over repetition and Health problems (04%)

According to statistics above, cultural practices contribute 61% as opposed to other factors 39%. This implies that in Ithanga, many learners dropout as a result of cultural practices, though other factors also have a contribution.

The outcome of these questions was recorded in the pie chart below.

Figure 2:

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DROP OUT

Legend:
- EARLY MARRIAGES
- CIRCUMCISION
- PARENTAL ATTITUDE
- LACK OF SCHOOL LEVIES
- CHILD LABOUR
- PEER INFLUENCE
- DRUG ABUSE
- LACK OF ROLE MODELS
- HARSH SCHOOL SYSTEMS
- OVER REPETION
- HEALTH PROBLEMS
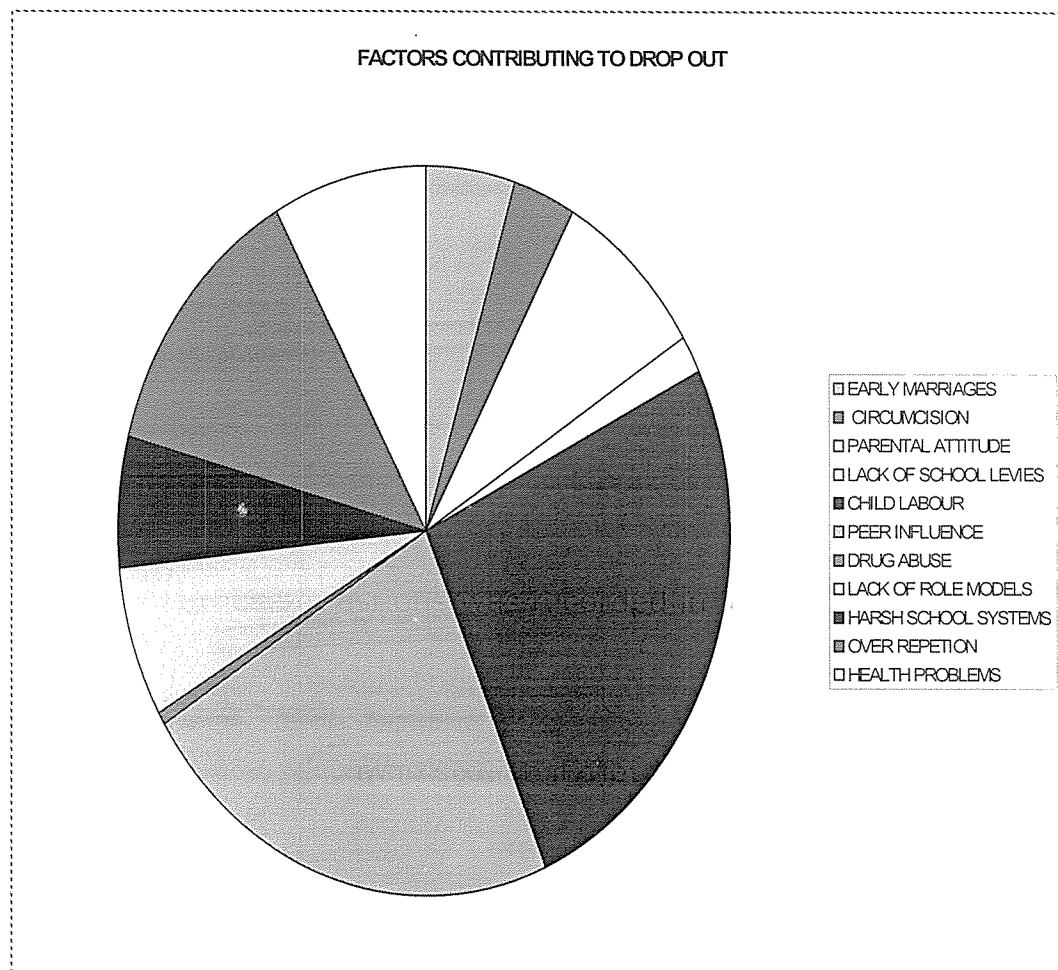
The pie chart shows the distribution of factors that contributes to pupils drop out.

As can be observed, Cultural practices such as child labour, circumcision and early marriages had the greatest impact on school attendance while drug abuse was the lowest. The other variables were placed in the following orders

include: - Lack of school levies, Parental attitude towards the pupils, Peer influence, Over repetition, Lack of role models, Female circumcision, Health problems, Harsh School systems and Drug abuse. This really implies that cultural factors have a great contribution to dropout.

Qn 4. Is the current school curriculum culture sensitive?

70% of the respondents were of the opinion that the curriculum is not cultural sensitive while 30% were of the opinion that the curriculum is cultural sensitive.

Those who disagreed were of the opinion that the curriculum has greatly ignored the local cultural beliefs and practices. The curriculum is also very general and does not appreciate different environments and background. The learner needs to gain skills in family education, cultural and environmental threats.

Qn 5. As a Teacher how do you deal with deviant behavior of your learners?

In response to this question 80% apply some form of corporal punishment such as: Caning, giving manual work, sending the child out of the class, sending the child home for a while, 10% use some form of guiding and counseling while 5% report the case to the Head teacher

Qn. 6. How can school dropout be alleviated?

The respondents were of the opinion that:

Out of time cultural practices such as F.G.M, early marriages and gender bias should be abolished, guiding and counseling pupils should be incorporated in

the school system, teachers and parents should be good role models and Government should motivate teachers through provision of seminars and in-service programs.

Responses from Interview Schedule for Parents

So as to have a wider coverage of the study interviews were also carried out. Twenty parents were interviewed priority was given to those with children who had dropped out of school.

1. State personal level of education.

The findings were recorded in a table bellow

EDUCATION LEVAL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
UNIVERSITY	1	5%
COLLEGE	4	20%
SECONDARY	5	25%
PRIMARY	8	40%
NOT ATTENDED	2	10%

The table shows the number and percentage of parents who have attended school and the level of education reached. It can be seen that majority of the parents have attended primary level. Only 25% have attended secondary education and only 5% have attended university education. Lack of role model as can be s seen may have attributed to dropout. In fact there is a notion that reaching class eight is the end of education.

2. State the economic activities you are engaged in.

The following activities were mentioned by respondents; Mining sand and stones   4, Running small kiosks 3, Casual labor 6, Small scale farming 5, Employed 2.

Those in mining and casual labor earn an average of one dollar a day

Qn.3. State the number of children do you have?

The researcher found out that 10 respondents had between 4 to 6 children.4 respondent had 7 to 9 children and 2 respondents had more than 10 children.

Qn 4. Is there a child who had dropped out of school in your family?

AGE	CLASS	BOY	GIRL
7-9	2	1	1
10-12	4-5	2	2
13-15	6-8	3	5

It can be noted that most of the dropouts were girls and in the teenage bracket of 13 – 15 years

Qn 5. State the activities the dropout the dropouts engaged in.

Respondents stated the following; Employment as house help, Small scale businesses, Assists parents in farming or Start their own families.

Qn 6. Identify the reasons that made the child dropout of school.

FACTORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Got married	4	20
pregnancy	6	30
Got employed in farms	4	20
School levies/needs	2	10
Peer influence	2	10
Don't know	2	10

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a brief discussion on the researchers findings, conclusions have also been derived from the analyses and recommendations made.

5.2 Discussions

The first research objective was to determine the types of cultural practices in Ithanga Zone and their impact on the community. According to literature available, authors specified the following; circumcision, female genital mutilation, child labor, witchcraft and early marriages. (Machionis 2002). Respondents also did not differ from the above. Infant they mentioned all the above as cultural causes of dropout in Ithanga zone.

The second objective sought to identify other causes of school drop out and their implication to the community. Authors especially Kocchar SK (2002) noted the following; corporal punishments, bad teachers, poor methods of teaching and ignorance. Others include; poor performance, low intelligence and poverty which make parents unable to purchase the school requirements.

Respondents of Ithanga had a similar view but they added low levels of parental education, poor parental attitude towards the girl child, high number of children in a family, HIV/AIDS, nature of parental economic activities, long distance from home to school and negative peer influence.

The third objective wanted to find out measures taken to alleviate school drop out occurrences. Kocchar (2002) says that as way of avoiding and reducing on occurrences of dropouts, all education deficiencies (as noted above) that contribute to it should be removed. Adequate consultative and school administrative machinery should be put in place to monitor learners strictly and to guide them as well. Kocchar (2002). Museveni (august 2001) added that the only way to boost the education of girls is by dealing effectively with the conditions in which child labor thrives.

Respondents however, said that out of time cultural practices such as F.G.M, early marriages and gender bias should be abolished, guiding and counseling pupils should be incorporated in the school system, teachers and parents should be good role models and Government should motivate teachers through provision of seminars and in-service programs.

The last and the main objective was to investigate the impact of cultural practices on school dropout. Authors noted that Human cultural beliefs and practices have great effect on an individual of any age, and as such, people (especially boys) cut-off from legitimate opportunity may form deviant sub-culture as a strategy to gain the prestige denied them by parents, teachers and the larger society. Neglected by society, they seek self-respect by creating a delinquent sub-culture and may fall into retreats such as dropping out of school, abusing alcohol or other drugs. (Macaronis 2002). Respondents also specified that certain cultural practices especially FGM, child labor and early marriages make learners to dropout.

5.3 Conclusions

According to the above, the researcher made the following conclusions based on summarized findings;

Cultural Impact on School Dropout

In Africa and Kenya in particular, cultural beliefs and practice still greatly adhered to. As the researcher found out these practices have a great impact on pupils school participation and has greatly contributed to school dropout. The researcher found several types of cultural practices that have greatly affected school attendance.

Child Labor: The researcher found out that parents have a preconceived idea that children are part of a project to develop the welfare of the family. In view of this child labour has thrived in exchange of education. 80% of school going children offers services at home search as fetching firewood, water, working in home farms. Others give similar services inn nearby towns in exchange of money, others carry out duties away from home but contribute to the well being of the family. The researcher found out that the highest percentage of dropout is engaged in paid labour. 15% are engaged in manual work in construction sites and working in the quarries nearby. 40% of girls who drop out are employed as maids in houses nearby and also urban centers. Boys are engaged in semi skilled jobs such as repairing of bicycles, car punctures and hand helps in market places.

Earnings obtained from these jobs are used to supplement family maintenance. Due to this long time cultural practice parents readily accept their children to drop out of school for they see it as of more benefit to the family upkeep. In addition, as learners get exposed to the world of money, they get the ability to purchase whatever they may need, opt to drop out of

school so as to continue earning full time. Majority of these dropouts gets employed as house helps or shamba boys. These findings are quiet in line with Kimani (2003) findings mentioned in the text.

Boy Child Preference: cultural traditions believe that boys are better than girls. This has led to boy child preference. In this context, parents appear to have a notion that girls education is a waste of resources since she will be eventually be married to a different family and hence will not benefit the family. A son is preferred since parents believe that he will eventually assist in provision of resources and therefore assist his parents in old age. This has led to more girls dropping out of school than boys as they luck role models and support.

Circumcision: The communities still value circumcision highly as a right of passage from childhood to adulthood. Girls also undergo F.G.M though it is done in great secrecy as parents interviewed indicated. The circumcised learner due to indoctrination that they are now grownup performs poorly in class as they indulge themselves in external matters. The circumcised student feels affected when smaller uncircumcised learners perform better than they do. This has led to the circumcised hate education and opts to drop out of school.

Early Marriages: The researcher found out that the institute of marriage is highly valued in this community. Girls are readily married off as early as16 years. The researcher found out that early marriage is still striving and most of the girls who mostly perform poorly in school readily drop out of school to get married. Girls who involve themselves in promiscuity and fall pregnant,

rather than face embarrassment and ridicule from peer readily dropout to get married instead of going on with education after delivery.

OTHER FACTORS

Poverty: though primary education is currently free Parents are still affected by poverty, most parents face problems in the purchase of school uniforms, food and supplementary school materials. This biting poverty has led to many pupils to drop out of school. Due to this problem the elderly drop out were looking after the younger children in the larger families as parents go in search of casual labour. Boys drop out to accompany their fathers to work mostly in construction sites.

Parental Level of Education: The education level of the parents, especially of the mother seemed to be a contributing factor to drop out. It is evident that the better-educated parents are more likely to appreciate the value of their children education. Pupils from these settings rarely dropped out of school the researcher found out that Father and mother illiteracy had impact on their children school participation. 50% of the drop out in the zone came from semi literate and illiterate parents.

Family Size: Family size had also contributed much to dropout. This can be attributed to the fact that children who come from large families lack parental attention and guidance.

Sibling's Level of Education: The education level of brothers and sisters also seam to contribute high on the dropout as pupils who have brothers or sisters who have dropped out or not pursued higher education seam to more

readily drop out of school as they lack role model. Majorities don't see the need of education.

Nature of the School: The unbalanced gender teachers staffing has also contributed to dropout. Female teachers seem to be concentrated in and around towns. Schools in the interior have 50% male teachers. This phenomenon has left girls in remote areas to have no role models while boys in towns lacked the same. When personal needs are not met, compounded with lack of effective guidance and counseling teachers then they may end up having low esteem in education, perform poorly and eventually drop out of school.

Pupils with varying degree of learning disabilities are often neglected or even discouraged from participation in academic work due to lack of set programs. In most cases they are labeled as non-performers and are forced to repeat classes for several years before proceeding to the next class. These learners due to age and continuous ridicule from younger learners opt to drop out of school. The school nature of administration and its policies is likely to cause boys and girls dropouts. Harsh corporal punishments, ridicule and intimidation have seen learners dropping out of school rather than face these school systems.

Implication of Child Dropout on Society and Government

Dropout has been major contributor of illiteracy in the society. This in turn hinders economic and social development since the society. Members lack the skills and knowledge that may have been obtained in school. Dropouts in most cases are at teenage level. These young individual proceed into social evil and immoral practices.

Due to economic hardship these young adults particularly girls choose to get married with the notion that life will get better. This is not always the case because they are too young to run a home. Free primary education has seen a revolution in school enrollment. This has in turn hiked the government expenditure, spending over 2.4 Billions a year. When any child at any class dropout of school then it becomes a waste to society and the government.

5.6 Recommendations

The researcher wishes to recommend the following in a bid to prevent or reduce on school dropouts:

(1) Outdated cultural practices such as female circumcision should be abolished.

(2) Social conditions such as poverty and unemployment must be addressed.

(3) The government should provide enough teachers to cater for the high number of pupils.

(4) Apart from setting laws against child marriage and female gender mutilation, the society should be sensitized on the dangers of these practices.

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APPENDIX.A. QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS.

This questionnaire is for an academic paper entitled "cultural practices and school dropout" by Kiiru Anthony a student of Kampala International University. Any information obtained will be confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS

-This questionnaire is to be filled by the head teachers.

-Tick the most appropriate response in the boxes provided.

-For structural questions fill in your own opinion.

MALE................... FEMALE.....................

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION: UT ☐ P2 ☐ P3 ☐ P1 ☐

DIPLOMA ☐ GRADUATE ☐

SCHOOL'S NAME: ....

Q1. In the table below fill in enrollment per class.

ENROLLMENT PER CLASS

CLASS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL			
YEAR/GENDER	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G		
2000												
2001												
2002												

2003												
2004												
2005												
2006												
2007												

Q2. Do you have learners who have dropped out of school? If yes list cultural and other factors that may have led to the dropout.

Q3. How many teachers do you have in your school by gender.

Q4. Pupils who drop out of school eventually become?

Q5. In your own opinion how can school drop out be eradicated?

QUESTIONAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is purely for academic purpose. Any information obtained will be confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS

- This questionnaire is to be filled by teachers.
- Tick the most appropriate response in the boxes provided.
- For structural questions fill in your own opinion.

GENDER: MALE ☐   FEMALE ☐

QUALIFICATIONS: UT ☐ P_2 ☐ P_3 ☐ P_1 ☐

DIPLOMA..........   GRADUATE..........OTHERS (specify)................

SCHOOL NAME...

1. What was the enrolment of your class in January 2007?

2. How many learners have dropped out of school this year in your class?

3. Among the following factors, which factor do you think has contributed to drop out among Girls …………………, …………………..Boys…………….,………….,

(i). Early marriages.

(ii). Female circumcision

(iii). Parental attitude

(iv). Lack of school levies

(v). Child labor

(vi). Peer influence

(vii). Drug abuse

(viii). Lack of role models.

(ix). Harsh school system

(x). Over repetition

(xi). Health problem

(xii). others (Specify)

4. Which activity(s) do the drop puts indulge in mostly in your locality?

5. The current primary school curriculum is gender sensitive

Agree ☐   Disagree ☐

6. As a teacher how do you assist learners with learning difficulty?

☐ There is a special program for them.

☐ There is no special program for them.

7. In your own opinion what should be done to eliminate primary school dropouts?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS/GURDIANS

1. How long have you lived in this location?
2. What is your highest level of education?
3. a. How many children do you have?
b. What is their current level of education?
5. (a)Do you have any child who has dropped out of school?
(b)At what level did they drop out of school?
(c) Was it a boy or a girl?
6. What activities does she or he involve he/she involve his/her self in?
7. Which reasons do you think made her drop out of school?
8. In your own opinion in which way can dropout be reduced or terminated?

MAP OF THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

KEIYO DISTRICT

KEY

SP — SALAWA PRY
KP — KAPCHELAL PRY
KOP — KOKWO PRY
KIP — KIBENDO PRY
X — KAPTUM PRY
Y — KABULWO PRY
KAP — KAP... PRY
6 — CHESOOT PRY
☰ — MURRAM ROAD

LEGEND

District Boundary	
Division Boundary	
Location Boundary	
Division Name	
Location Name	