

**THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOLS ON THE EXISTING GENDER
DISPARITIES ON PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SELECTED
PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF KABARNET ZONE,
BARINGO DISTRICT KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has never been presented for any award.

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APPROVAL

This research report is submitted for examination with my approval
as a university supervisor.

Signed.......... Date.....20/4/10.....

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my beloved wife Alice Chebor for making my life comfortable and granting me permission to carryout my studies in foreign country. Special dedication also goes to my children previous Jelagat and emuanuel Kipronoh who needed my attention.

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Thanks first of all go to the almighty God for the protection and care throughout my entire course.

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at investigating the influence of school on the existing gender disparities on primary education, in selected public primary schools of Kabarnet zone, Baringo district in Kenya

The following objectives guided the study: to find out how the school structure has perpetuated gender disparities in education; to assess the components of educational processes which have been responsible for perpetuating gender disparities in education, to investigate the influence of the curriculum content on gender disparities in primary education and to find out if classroom communication influences gender biases. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the study and the respondents were selected randomly. Findings showed that there was gender disparities in primary schools. Gender stereotyped messages in schools were further unearthed as teachers gave views about girls becoming Engineers in future. Findings revealed that almost all teachers had not adapted their curricular materials except for a few. Recommendations were also made. As teachers work to encourage high motivation in all of our students, they have to focus their efforts in somewhat different directions for boys and see the relationship between their classroom performance and their long term goals. Encourage girls to consider a wide range of carrier options. A teacher can promote productive attribution of girls by communicating high expectations for their performance.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Self-efficacy

A belief that one is capable of carrying out certain task and will therefore achieve his/her goals

Attribution

An internally constructed causal explanation of girl's success or failure in classroom

Stereotype

A rigid simplistic and erroneous caricature of girls

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The issue of girl child education has attracted much debate, for now sometime. A wide range of opinions exist regarding the role, scope and nature of public intervention on this issue.

According to Lockheed girl education is a human right, since it provides economic and social benefits and is an international objective. That is why a number of countries globally took the initiative of implementing free primary education, so that all children regardless of their diverse background access basic primary education without any pay. Since the increased primary school enrolment has risen steeply for both boys and girls. Recent research however revealed that about 72 million school age children were still not in school by the year 2005, and the majority of them being girls (UNESCO, 2007).

Inequalities in education have been observed to be responsible for fueling inequalities in other important dimensions of wellbeing of girls (World Bank, 2006). Factors which have been highlighted as barriers to equitable girl child education include the gap associated with gender and orphanhood, with many girls in developing countries having fewer opportunities for schooling than boys have. Fimer (2003), and where education systems are poorly developed only a tiny proportion of girls receive schooling at all (Mingat et al,

2003). This research has been carried out to investigate gender disparities in primary education.

Gender like any other basic dimension of social structure shapes the livelihood of people in a wide range of settings. According to scholars concerned with gender, men and women are different and these differences between boys and girls in school should generally be celebrated. They however become a problem only when societal and school forces limits on the growth and academic potential of learners either male or female. Gender issues have been highlighted to be controversial because sometimes in school, as a socializing agent is responsible for perpetuating gender stereotypes among pupils most especially girls. By the time they begin school, children have already learned a great deal about gender. Much of this information comes from children's books, which are used to fulfill gender stereotyped characters, where in these books; girls stay at home mostly trying to please the men in the family.

Infact according to Wood (2001), school structures, communication processes used, the curricular material are all sources of gender stereotypes. Schools together with society are blamed for the learner's different attributions about their classroom events. They also factor to how motivated these children will be to receive the learning content. Of course it is the girls who have been affected than boys.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The rate of girl child primary completion rates has been recorded to be slightly lower than that of boys. And even those girls who choose to remain in primary schools have tended to perform even poorer than boys. The researcher therefore identified a justified need to carry out an investigation as to why these gender disparities existed in education.

1.2 Purpose

This study investigated the influence of school on the existing gender disparities on primary education, in selected public primary schools.

1.3 Objectives

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To find out how the school structure has perpetuated gender disparities in education
2. To assess the components of educational processes which have been responsible for perpetuating gender disparities in education.
3. To investigate the influence of the curriculum content on gender disparities in primary education
4. To find out if classroom communication influences gender biases.

1.4 Research hypothesis

The following statements were formulated to guide and focus this study:

1. The school structure has perpetuated gender disparities in primary education
2. The school processes have influenced gender disparities in primary education
3. The curriculum material and content should be blamed with perpetuating gender disparities in education
4. Even classroom communication between the teacher and learners has impacted on gender disparities in education.

1.5 Scope

This study was undertaken Kabarnet zone, Baringo district in Kenya to investigate the influence of school on the existing gender disparities in primary education. The study focused on the school structure, processes, communication and the curriculum. The study began in October 2009 and ended in April 2010.

1.6 Significance

The following categories of people will benefit profoundly when they attempt to read this report:

Ministry of education will benefit from the information in this report because it is an eye opener on how specifically the school

environment gender imbalances in terms of educational attainments of boys and girls.

The teacher who teach the two different gender and through interaction with their learners and end up stereotyping them. This report will act as means of sensitizing the teachers on how to balance both gender when carrying out instruction.

To the researcher who wishes to gain an in-depth understanding of gender disparities and how they influence learners educational attainment of girls.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical statement put forward by experts in the field of gender.

Meaning of gender

According to Santrock (2001), gender is a basic dimension of social structure, just like class and race that shapes the lives of people in a wide range of settings.

It is the socially constituted difference between men and women, which reflected each society's interpretation of biological differences (Antioch, 1994).

While it is generally accepted that sex is biologically determined, societies construct appropriate behavior for each gender, thus producing local gender cultures, gendered divisions of labor and gendered division of spheres exist throughout Kenya. These in enact and reproduce gender inequalities.

Gender and child development

According to Santrock (2001) children are not passive recipients of messages from socializing agents, which happen to be the family from which the school and later on the wider society. They accept or reject these messages depending on their own ideas about boys and girls, men and women. By the time they begin school, children

have already learned a great deal about gender. Much of this information comes from children's books which are used to be full of gender stereotyped characters, where girls in these books stay at home to please the men in the families. By contrast boys are always busy.

Theoretical framework

Several cognitive development theorists have emphasized the impact of sex typing of children's ideas about gender and sex stereotypes. Among them was Lawrence Kohlberg (1966). He was the first major theorist to present a cognitive explanation for sex role development.

According to Kohlberg, gender refers to the biological categories of male and females. Kohlberg argument; children gender identify, their sense of themselves as male or female is critical for the sex role development. It is therefore the children's ideas about gender that will guide their behavior. They value things and objects of behaviors as they believe are appropriate for their gender.

Gender and schooling

Macrons (2002) trying to discuss gender asked a question that what about school itself? Does not it perpetuate gender stereotypes? The answer is yes indeed school have structure system, curricular content activities and materials. In schools still there is the process of communication. All the above according to Wood (2001) have been implicated to be fueling gender stereotypes, as children are being socialized.

Schools perpetuate gender inequalities

Educational institutions reflect the gender stratification of the culture at large and encourage us to see the unequal status and value assigned to women and men as normal. The actual organization of schools communicates strong messages about relationships among gender, identify value and opportunities. From the earliest experience in schools, we learn that males have authority. The head person is usually male whereas most women are subordinate positions teachers and support staff (Macron's, 2002).

School athletics are also typically organized so that for more males than females have positions of high status and authority. Ironically before passage of Title IX, which mandated equal sporting opportunities for women and men more than 90% of the coaches of women sports were women, yet today only about 48% of women are coached by women (Wood, 2001).

School limits carrier aspirations

Although most students are not consciously aware of disproportionate number of men in positions of authority in schools, they nonetheless pickup the gender messages that men are authorities and women are subordinates.

In an interesting study (Paradise and Wall 1986), researchers compared 1st graders perception of male and female principles. They found that students were much more likely to found that

students were much more likely to think that both women and men could be principals when they had a woman principal than when they had a man principal.

In mirroring gender stereotypes of our society the organization of schools instill in students the belief that men belong in positions of authority and power and women do not.

At higher levels, gendered school organizations continue to affect perception of career opportunities and appropriate roles for women and men.

Lack of role models who underline their value and encourage them to establish high personal social and professional goals. Persisting gender inequalities in education lead some people to advocate single sex education. But despite some evidence that single sex education has benefits, not everyone is jumping on the band wagon (Ormrod, 2003).

Curricular, content and gender inequalities

A number of studies have shown that academic curricular at all educational levels are permeated by materials that communicate gender stereotypes. Beginning in the 1970s, researchers examined educational content to determine what it communicates about men and women. For more than 25 years, reports have documented pervasive and persistent sexism in instructional materials and particularly in the language used in teaching and learning setting

(Brendt, 1992). More male feature as characters in teaching materials compared to the female.

The invisibility of women

Sex stereotypical portrayals of men as standard active and successful and women as invisible or marginal/passive and dependent continue in books used in schools. Women's experiences and perspectives have been.

Educational processes and gender stereotypes

Communication processes in an educational setting tend to devalue women and their way of learning and expressing knowledge. Through inequitable expectations of and responses to male and female students and though privileging masculine forms of communications, educators often unintentionally of communications educators often unintentionally communicate that female learners are inferior to male learners.

From pre-school through graduate education many teachers pay attention to male teachers. This indicates that teachers often give individualized instruction and time to male than to girls.

Another way in which educational processes foster intellectual development in boys and men more than in girls is by reinforcing different qualities, male and female learners. Teachers tend to praise boys for academic interest and achievement, they offer more support to female students for being quiet and compliant (Lister, 1997; Sadker and Sadker, 1986).

Not taking women learners seriously

Women students are frequently praised for their appearance, personalities and nurturing inclinations whereas their academic abilities and achievement receive no comment (Brant, 1994). When professions show an interest in men's ideas and encourage them to work further, but do not extend this attention to women students the clear message is that males are perceived as more academically serious and worthwhile.

Classroom communication

Education further devalues female learners through communication practice that favour and reward male students than female ones.

Gender biases in teacher communication

Teachers are more likely to know names of female students than male ones.

They maintain eye contact and more athlete postures when talking to males than female. They ask more challenging questions to males. Give longer and significant verbal and non responses to males (Sadker and Sadker, 1985).

Not coincidentally, a report found that girls entered the first grade with the same or better skills and ambitions than boys. But all too often, by the time they finish high school their doubts have crowded their dreams (Sexism in the school house, 1992 pg 62).

The conclusion is that the hidden curriculum creates a downward intellectual mobility cycle in which girls are less likely to reach their potential than boys. Cumulative effects of communication that devalue women students and present white heterosexual males as normal and important.

Teacher expectations are particularly striking in their effects on girls when they begin school, girls tend to be active ambitious and independent but teachers encourage them to be more nurturing and less autonomous. To gain teachers' approval many girls have to become more passive and dependent. Many teachers also communicate low expectations and existing evidence suggests that many teachers have gender stereotype which they communicate to students though their expectations, responses and distinct interact.

Another case of gender inequality is school games and sports which historically have been dominated by males (Kauchack et al, 2002).

Gender and attributions

According to Ormrrond (2003) learners are apt to form a variety of attributions about the causes of classroom events, they will have beliefs about why they do well or poorly in tests and assignments, why they are skilled in some activities. Boys are likely to attribute their success to ability and failure to lack of effort and this having attitude that they can make it. But girls show the reverse pattern. Usually the girls attribute their failures to lack of ability and believe

that they do not know. But this is not automatic this has resulted from the way socialization has been carried.

Parents and teachers communicate their expectations for learners' performance whether high or low in a variety of shuttle ways.

And to some extent parents and teachers expectations for learners are related to performance. Such expectations can lead to differences in student's attribution and varying levels of achievement (Ormron, 2003).

In this context boys have always been expected to be more successful in academics and girls have been looked at as weaker in ability.

Teacher expectations and attributions

Teachers draw conclusions about their learners relatively early in the school years, forming opinions about each one's strengths, weaknesses and potential for academic success. In many cases teachers size up their pupils fairly accurately. They know which ones need help with reading skills, which one has short attention spans, which ones have short attention spans, which ones have problems working together in the same cooperative group and so on. Yet even best teachers make errors in their judgments (Good and Nicholas, 2001).

All too often teachers perceive pupils ability to be relatively fixed and stable. When teachers have high expectations for their pupils

they create a warmer classroom environment, interact with pupils more often, provide opportunities for students to respond and give more positive feedback. These teachers beliefs about pupils abilities will affect their attributions of their successes and failures (Weiner, 2000).

On the above note Good and Nicholas (2001) explain that most children and adolescents are aware of their teachers differential treatment of individuals and use such to draw logical inferences about their own and others abilities. When teachers continue to give the pupils low ability messages, they may begin to see themselves as their teachers see them. This is what exactly happens when girls are given the low ability messages. They often exert little effort on academic tasks or even they may frequently misbehave. Freded and Midgey (2001) explained that teacher expectations and attributions may lead to a self fulfilling prophecy. In other words what teachers expect children to achieve becomes what students actually do achieve (Ormron, 2003).

Research indicates that teacher expectations affect pupils classroom performance and their overall academic growth. Usually girls, pupils from low income families and other minority groups are more susceptible to teachers expectations than boys (Graham, 1990).

Teachers' beliefs about their pupils as well as their attributions for the pupils performance are sometimes affected by gender and ethnic stereotypes (Reyna, 2000).

Gender differences and motivation

Boys and girls find greater or lesser value in various academic domains depending on whether they view these domains as being stereotypically appropriate for boys or girls. Many pupils perceive some domains such as writing and music to be for girls, while mathematics, science to be for boys (Ormond, 2003) such perceptions influences their effort and selection of subjects.

Gender differences appear in pupils long term goals as well, whereby girls tend to have lower long term aspirations for them. Research has established that girls report lower self efficacy for academic tasks than boys do especially stereotypically male domains. Because of this girls have a tendency of underestimating their competence and for boys to over estimate it (Ormond, 2003). Further more girls are most likely to be discouraged by their failures than boys.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used to collect data. It discusses the design, study area, sample size and sampling procedure, instruments, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

3.1 Research design

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

3.2 Study area

This study was conducted in selected primary schools of Kabarnet zone, Baringo district in Kenya.

3.3 Sample framework

3.3.1 Sample size

This study obtained information from learners aged 12 and above and teachers were used for this study.

3.3.2 Sample technique

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

3.3.3 Sample procedure

In carrying out the research, the researcher obtained a release letter from the course administrator which he presented to the schools under study.

3.4 Methods for data collection

3.4.1 Instruments

Questionnaires

These were used to extract information from teachers, learners and interviews for parents. Open ended questionnaires were suitable for investigating deeper the subject matter. Observation was also done on the status of the children.

3.4.2 Sources of data

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using questionnaires and interviews were carried out with both learners and teachers. Secondary data were gathered 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 proceeded onto 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 were then presented in frequency tabulations rendering it ready for interpretation. Quotations and field notes made were also included.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The study was carried out to investigate the role of school in influencing gender disparities in primary education. The following objectives were formulated to guide this study:-

- i. To find out how school structure has perpetuated gender disparities in primary education.
- ii. To assess the components of the educational processes which have been responsible for perpetuating gender disparities in education
- iii. To investigate the influence of the curriculum content on gender disparities in primary education

In this chapter, data that were collected about how gender influences gender disparities were analyzed and interpreted. The respondents used in this study were primary school girls selected randomly from seven schools.

4.1 School structure and gender disparities

Researchers in the field of gender had earlier on theorized that at school, it mostly male staff who usually dominate the top jobs. The researcher therefore had to investigate who occupies the top jobs in school.

4.1.1 Gender and Headship of school

Children were asked who headed their schools by

Table 1: Presents respondents opinion on who heads their schools

Head of school	Frequency	Percentage
Male	28	66.6
Female	14	33.3
Total	42	99.9

Source: Field data 2010

From the findings in table, twenty eight girls shared that their head teachers were men while the remaining fourteen girls said they were female.

This finding revealed that there were more male head teachers than females. This further reveals the presence of fewer female models for the girls to emulate in school. This could be one reason why girls may have a negative towards their education.

4.1.2 Gender and sport trainers

Sadker and Sadker (1993) cited that it is absurd to observe that even when it comes to sports and games; it is usually make to train girls in the activities. The researcher investigated this by asking the girls who was their sports teacher.

Table 2: Presents the gender of trainers

Gender trainer in games/sports	Frequency	Percentage
Male	14	33.3
Female	7	16.6
Any	21	50
Total	42	99.9

Source: Field data 2010

From the foregoing analysis fourteen girls from two schools claimed that their male teachers trained games and sports. Seven girls from one school said their sports trainer was a woman. The remaining three sets of girls from three schools said any sex whether male or female trained in sports.

This finding partly confirms Sadkers citation although in most schools, there is no significant relationship between gender and training of sports.

4.2 Components of educational process which influence gender disparities in primary schools

According to Wood (2001), the communication process in school setting devalue girls and their ways of learning and expressing themselves. In this study, under this object, the following were studied, teachers responses to the different answers given by their pupils by gender, carrier of pupils during a lesson by gender.

4.2.1 Career guidance and gender

Scholars in gender had earlier observed at times teachers advise girl pupils to pursue simpler professionals such as nursing, teachers,

secretaries. But boys were always advised to pursue medicine, Engineering among others. The research also investigated this as follows:

Table 3: Presents guidance offered to girls by teachers

Work to done by girls	Frequency
Nurses	09
Teachers	10
Secretary	3
All	19
Total	42

Source: Field data 2010

From the above table, it was discovered that nine teachers though nursing was a perfect match for girl children and they therefore advised them to study and pursue that profession. The ten teachers thought teaching was for girls. Only three teachers thought secretarial would be a perfect job for girls. Nineteen teachers however said girls can do any work and therefore need to be advised to work had just.

The above finding shows that some teachers were indeed gender biased although it is now evident that some teachers have realized that girls are stronger enough to pursue any job after all. It shows that while some teachers have persistently perpetuated gender stereotypes, there are some who are trying to suppress it.

4.2.2 Teachers perception on girls to become engineers

Teachers were asked to give their views about female engineers.

Table 4: Presents teachers views about girls becoming engineers

Should girls become engineers	Frequency
It is okay	25
Not okay	17
Total	42

Source: Field data 2010

Findings indicate that almost half of the respondents teachers did not approve of the girls to study and become engineers, although another half said it was not bad for them to become engineers.

The above analysis once again highlights the teachers gender stereotype biases. This not only discourages girls to work hard in science subjects but also lowers their efforts to succeed in education.

4.2.3 Treatment of girls during a lesson

Sadker and Sadker (1990) had earlier on established and reported that at times, when girls give an answer in class the teacher does not initiate any form of critical thinking so as to reason about she may have contributed. But boys were given tougher questions and offered enough ample time to reflect on it.

Table 5: Presents teachers opinions about what to do when a girl gives a wrong answer

When a girl gives a wrong answer	Frequency	Percentage
Probe further	42	100
Given chance to try again	42	100
Pick on others to help her	42	100

Source: Field data 2010

From the above findings, all teachers would be able to probe girls further, when they give wrong. All again cited that girls are given a second chance to try again, and lastly the teachers claimed that in case of failing to respond to the question successfully, pupils can be allowed to contribute to the questions as strategy.

From the above finding show that unless otherwise both boys and girls were treated easily.

4.2.4 How they treat boys when in the wrong

Teachers were asked about their reaction to a boy child when he gives an unsatisfactory answer.

Table 6: Presents teachers' opinions about how to deal with boys in case they give wrong answers.

When boys give wrong answers	Frequency	Percentage
Probe them	42	100
Correct them	38	92
Allow others to help them	42	100

Source: Field data 2010

From the above table, all teachers probed boys more for the refinement of the answer. Thirty teachers corrected them and all of them allowed other children to help the boys.

The above finding shows that boy's respondents were treated equally with those of girls. This finding also revealed no gender bias at all.

4.2.5 Teachers views about the mental ability of girls compared to boy

Researchers had also observed that teachers had a gender biased belief that boys were higher in mental ability compared to the girls. The study therefore investigated this.

Table 7: Presents the teachers views about the cognitive ability of girls compared to boys

Cognitive ability of girls compared to boys	Frequency
Usually girls are brighter	8
They are the same	25
Usually boys are brighter	9
Total	42

Source: Field data 2010

From the above finding, it is evident majority of the teachers (25) believed that all pupils whether boys or girls, were all equal. But eight teachers said the girls were sometimes brighter and the remaining nine said the boys were.

The findings therefore show that in schools there were some few teachers who were perpetuating gender biases. By teachers who were perpetuating gender biases. By teachers claiming that some children were brighter in terms of sex, shows that they can either discourage or encourage them to work hard in their academics.

4.2.6 Performance in science subject by gender

Researchers like Sadker and Sadker (1990) had earlier on observed that at times teachers have encouraged boys to concentrate on science

subjects, because they are better than girls. The teachers were therefore interviewed on that.

Table 8: Presents teachers opinions on who performs better in sciences by gender

Performance in science by gender	Frequency
Boys are better	16
Girls are better	8
All are equal	18
Total	42

Source: Field data 2010

From the above analysis it is evident that a big number of teachers think that boys are better in science subjects. Another biggest number thought all sexes were equal in ability in science. But only eight said girls are better.

The analysis shows how a great number of teachers have a gender biased expectation for boy's performance in science subjects. This according to Ormond (2003) is a discouraging factor for girls as they tend to attribute their success and future to factors such as adult expectations.

4.2.7 Causes of differing performance in science subjects

Teachers were asked about the causes of differences in science subjects by gender.

Table 9: Presents reasons for differing performance in science subjects

Why girls are believed to be weaker than boys	Frequency
Laziness	21
In born	6
Culture	15
Total	42

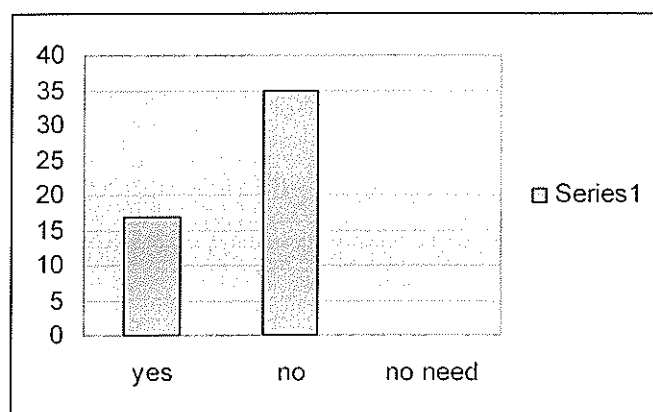
Source: Field data 2010

From the above table, twenty one teachers claimed that girls were very weak. Six teachers thought the performance of girls was attributed to their weaker gender, and the remaining fifteen said culture. Whatever the teachers gave for reasons, it is evident that the teachers they themselves have internalized the gender stereotypic messages earlier on and are helping to further pass on these messages to the pupils they teach. They themselves are gender stereotyped and behave in that manner but seen not to be aware.

4.3 Curriculum content and gender biases

Researchers have studied and discovered that even curriculum content and materials, at times show some gender stereotypes in favour of boys and disadvantaging girls. The researcher wanted to find out if this was the case in primary schools.

Figure 1: Presents whether teachers have adapted their curriculum content to suit all the genders.



Source: Field data 2010

From the figure above, only five teachers claimed that they had adapted their curriculum material to be accommodative of both boys and girls. The remaining majority did not.

When asked to explain why thirty five teachers said there was nothing with the curriculum materials and contents. This finding further exposed the teachers psychological/dionynchracies which force them to subordinate girls in schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The study set out to investigate how schools perpetuate gender disparities in education. Chapter four analyzed the data that were collected about gender disparities and school curricular, process and organization. This chapter summarizes what was established in chapter four, makes a conclusion and then gives recommendations.

5.1 Summary of findings

School structure and gender disparities in education

Findings showed that there were gender disparities in primary schools. This was evidenced from the higher number of head teachers being male compared to that of female. When it comes to sports and training of the sporting activities, it was further established that most of the trainers were male and few female were involved.

All the above findings clearly reveal how schools as institutions reflect the gender stratification of the culture at large and how they encourage us to see the unequal status and value assigned to men and women as normal. The actual structure and organization of school communicates strong messages about value, identity and opportunities among gender. Wood (2001) here gave a reason that in schools there are fewer role models for girls to observe.

Components of educational process and gender disparities in education

The guidance which both boys and girls receive at school according to scholars. Findings showed that some teachers, up till now have gendered expectations for both girls and boys. It was established that while 19 teachers guided their children to pursue any kind of profession, some 23 of them were tracking the girls to those gendered professionals such as teaching, secretarial studies and nurses.

The guidance given at school to girls, by teachers also revealed some gender messages. The teachers here in these schools appear to instill in learners the belief that men belong in position of authority and women do not.

Gender stereotyped messages in schools were further unearthed as teachers gave views about girls becoming Engineers in future. Half of the teachers believed it was okay for girls to become engineers although the remaining seventeen thought it was not at all.

The above findings concur with Ormond's (2003) citation about how pupils form attributions about their success failure in education. Ormond mentioned adult expectations and teachers in particular who communicate their belief that students are incapable of mastering subject matter. Ormond adds that those students are likely to attribute their failures to low ability and may therefore conclude that there is little to be gained by trying harder (Ormond 2003).

Further findings also confirmed Ormond's view as in the case of performance in science subjects by gender, where teachers said that the boys were better than the girls. Another greater number said both boys and girls were equal in performance.

Further more about the mental ability of boys and girls. Most teachers believed they were both mentally capable, although eight teachers thought girls were better than boys and the remaining nine said that the boys were better. Once again not surprisingly, girl pupils levels of ambition and self confidence were lower in primary schools because of what the system perceives of them. This concurs with Wood (2001).

Curriculum and gender disparities

Teachers had to reveal to the researcher whether the curriculum content and materials were changed. Scholars in gender such as Sadker and Sadker (1990) had observed that study materials used in educational institutions perpetuate gender stereotypes. According to Sadker and Sadker males are featured in two thirds of the pictures and photographs in books used at schools. And when female are shown anywhere they are shown depending on men and continue to depict in a wider range of careers.

Findings revealed that almost all teachers had not adapted their curricular materials except for a few. These findings therefore show pervasive and persistent sexism in instructional materials as cited by Wood (2001). This shows that at schools, curricular materials are communicating to girls gender stereotypes. This of course has a tremendous impact on girl children's attitude towards schooling.

Classroom communication and gender disparities

The way communication in educational settings is undertaken, tends to devalue females and their way of learning, expressing of knowledge. Through inequitable expectations and responses the male and female learners, and through privileging masculine forms of communication, educators often unintentionally communicate that girl pupils are inferior to boys.

The researcher established from teachers that were given the same attention in class, although girls tended to act in an inferior manner. The teachers also claimed to praise both sexes. The teachers denied ignoring the girl's academic abilities and achievements saying that they are both praised for this. About encouraging the boys to work harder some teachers said that in reality boys should be encouraged more to because at times some girls can easily drop from schools which boys can not do and therefore have to be praised.

5.2 Conclusion

Equality of education opportunity should be one of Kenya Pledge to every citizen. Yet if it is equal how it is that boys and girls are not reaping equivalent benefits from schooling? In this case schools which are supposed to be a powerful agent of socialization, has failed to equitably socialize both boys and girls. As evident from this study that schools have contributed to a greater extent in gendering both boys and girls. In schools there are few female role models for girls to emulate and then change their attitude towards learning. More so they have worked to make girls invisible and have distorted their experiences by using boy's standards girls' social life as whole is distorted.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations:

As teachers work to encourage high motivation in all of our students, they have to focus their efforts in somewhat different directions for boys and see the relationship between their

classroom performance and their long term goals. Encourage girls to consider a wide range of carrier options.

A teacher can promote productive attribution of girls by communicating high expectations for their performance. They must also attribute the girl's success to a combination of high ability and controllable factors such as effort and learning strategy. In time of failures let the teacher attribute this to factors which are controllable and easily changed.

All students both boys and girls have the right to attend school whose environments are free from harassment and discrimination. As teachers we need to avail teachable moments by helping children learn to appreciate the dignity of the other children. Schools can address the problem by holding assemblies, creating peer support groups requiring seminars for teachers and insisting disciplinary actions against repeated harassment.

many girls come to the classroom with strong social needs including a need to affiliate with others and gain their approval. Teachers can accommodate these needs by providing opportunities for group interactions. They should also express concern for pupils welfare and frequently indicate their approval of desirable pupils behavior.

As teachers work to encourage high levels of motivation in their pupils, they should focus their efforts in different directions for boys' open-mindedness about a wide variety of carrier options and

demonstrate quite clearly that these options are with effort and appropriate strategies well within their grasp.

Teachers should look for strengths in every pupil. Sometimes pupils weakness are all too evident. By doing this is an attempt to build on their strength and turn their weaknesses into strength.

Teachers should communicate optimistic and controllable attributions. Care must be taken about the attributions we make about students performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

Dear Teachers

I am carrying out a research on the influence of schools on the existing gender disparities on primary schools. Any assistance offered to me shall be highly appreciated.

Instructions

Please tick or fill in an answer

1. Sex

Male

Female

2. Sex of the Head teacher

Male

Female

3. What sex is your sports teacher?

Male

Female

4. What is your opinion about male trainers of girls in particular sporting skills?

.....
.....
.....

Carrier aspirations

5. What types of carriers would you advise your girl pupils to pursue in future?

.....
.....

Give reasons for your response

.....
.....

6. What is your view about encouraging girls to do engineering in future?

It is okay

Not okay

.....
.....

7. Give a reason for your answer. Supposing your pupil (boy) suggested that in future he would want to be a Kindergarten teach would you encourage him or her?

.....
.....

Please explain

.....
.....

8. What do you do when a girl gives a wrong response during the lesson? Why

.....
.....

9. What if a boy also gave the wrong response, how do you go about it? Why

.....
.....

10. What is your opinion about the ability of boys compared to the girls?

.....
.....

11. Do you think boys are better than girls in science subjects?

Yes

No

12. What may bring about these differences?

Heredity

Laziness

Attitude

.....
.....

13. Do you know the names of your female pupils?

.....

14. Do you ask challenging question to girls to the way you do to boys?

.....

15. What do you think is the factor behind the poor performance of girls in some assignments?

.....
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