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School Based and Social-economic Factors that Influence of Pupil's Dropout on Transition in Public Primary Schools in Lokori Division Turkana East Sub-county, Turkana County, Kenya

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Abstract:

School dropout has been listed to have negative impact on school transition in public primary schools. Equipping pupils with necessary skills and knowledge through education would enable them to be strategically competitive in this era of globalization. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to establish the factors influence of pupil's dropout on transition in public primary schools in Lokori Division, Turkana East sub-county in Turkana County. The objectives of the study were: to identify school based factors that that influence pupil's dropout from public primary school and to determine social economic factors that influence pupil's dropout in public primary schools. The study used a mixed methodology that consists of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The target population of the study was 1062. However, the sample size selected for study was 106. The survey instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. The main findings of the study show that pupil's dropout from school because of repeating in class, truancy, poverty, long distance to school and lack of meals in schools. The results of this study would inspire the policy makers to come up with various strategies to minimize pupil's transition dropout in public primary schools.

Keywords: Teachers, pupils, dropout, absenteeism, county, Turkana

1. Introduction

The main aim of basic education in any country is to ensure that students who are enrolled will stay in school until when they complete their education. Nevertheless, significant proportions of children who start primary school are not completing primary cycle and therefore decide to dropout. Dropout is often a process rather than the result of one single event, and therefore has more than one proximate cause (Hunt, 2008). There are always precursors to dropping out, where children can be seen to be at risk or vulnerable to early withdrawal (Hunt, 2008; Lewin, 2008; Ampiah and Adu-Yeboah, 2009). For instance, repetition, low achievement, overage enrollers, and absentees are some of the causes of pupil's dropout in public primary schools.

Primary schooling is considered important for the achievement of national development, and access to primary schools has been formally accepted as a basic human right for over half a century (UNICEF, 2009). The school dropout has reached epidemic proportions and has become a global problem confronting the education industry in the world (Bridgeland *et.al*: Oghvbu, 2008; Patrick 2008; Wotherspoon 2004). Maton and Moore (2010) posits that the problem of dropping out of school is a concern of every member of society as it leads to adverse consequences at both individual and social levels.

In Kenya, specifically in North Eastern Province there is high dropout rate which is attributed by the nomadic way of life and the school going-age children take lead (GOK, 2005). Furthermore, Waweru (2007) argues that the major problem of school dropout is more pronounced in semi-arid district of Garissa compared with relatively rich district of Nairobi and Kiambu. This is also the case in Turkana East which is a semi-arid district. The introduction of FPE (2003) has not minimized pupils' dropout from school and therefore there is need to continue investigating many factors that influence pupil's dropout from public primary schools in lokori division.

Therefore, the objectives of the study were to determine social economic factors that influence pupil's dropout from public primary schools and to find out school based factors that influence pupil's dropout in public primary schools.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1. School Based Factors That Influence Pupil's Dropout

School based factors influencing pupil's dropout in public primary schools are distance to school from the household, repetition, poor quality of the school, lack of teaching resources, and lack of teachers care, corporal punishment and absenteeism. Ainsworth *et al.*, (2005) argues that dropouts increases in areas where distance to school is longer. This leads to substantial rates of dropout and non-completion of primary school of many their brief schooling experience consists frequently of limited learning opportunities in

overcrowded classrooms with insufficient learning materials and unqualified teachers (AL-Majali and AL-Thneibat,2013; Alexander, 2008). Children of different ages and abilities are mixed together in single classroom without proper adaptation of teaching methods to improve learning and to induce school engagement (Little, 2008). Nyawira (2007) argues that lack of facilities is a major constraint in majority of schools in Kenya that leads to dropout rates. Orodho (2013) posits that head teachers are facing increasing administrative difficulties which include inadequate and constructed buildings, shortage of books and equipments, lack of proper school furniture particularly desks, overcrowded classrooms and poor communication structures. The use of corporal punishment or violence is practiced by teachers in many countries contributes to pupil's dropout in many schools (Boyle and Smari, 2002).

2.2. Social Economic Factors That Influence Pupil's Dropout

Education is the best legacy a nation can provide to its citizens especially the youth because it's considered as a basic human right that fosters economic growth and human development (GOK, 2010;Okidi *et al*,2004; Muthanje, 2015; AL-Majali, and AL-. Thneibat, 2013; Kainuwa and Yusuf,2013).Education is also considered as one of the most effective strategies to reduce poverty, give people opportunity to improve their lives and raise their voice, improve their health, productivity and fosters participation in civil society (UNESCO,2005).Education is the only weapon to enhance equity in a society. Dropping out of school is termed as a multiple tragedy because leaving school will not only increases educational costs, but also leads to a waste of human resources, teachers and students time.

Social economic factors such as poverty is the most common primary and contributing reason for many children to drop out of school (Glewwe, 2010;Muthanje,2015). In addition, Wang (2010) confirms that poverty is a contributing factor of children's dropout in rural areas of china. In India, financial difficulties are cited as major cause of school dropout (Rani, 2011). However, poverty also interacts with other factors of social disadvantage and puts further pressure on vulnerable and marginalized children to drop out of school (Hunt, 2008;Muthanje, 2015). As a result of this, pupils' educational demand may only be affected by poverty settings, low level of family income and low level of parent education and large family size. James (2006) argues that low income and poverty settings contribute to the cause of pupils dropping out of schools. Poverty is rampant among communities in the semi-arid parts of the country, particularly in the lower Eastern province, Coast Province, and parts of the Rift Valley province, where families struggle to make a living from subsistence farming or from livestock herding (UNICEF, 2005).

Over 50 % of the population in Kenya lives below the poverty line according to the UNDP 2007/2008 Human Development Report., Kenya has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.521 and is ranked 148th out of the 177 countries. Turkana County is the poorest region in Kenya that has 94% of the people living in poverty (Oxfam, 2008, Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey 2006). Onzima (2010) posits that socioeconomic determinants of primary school dropout, finds high academic attainment of the parents significantly reduces chances of primary school dropout. Moreover, temporary withdrawals in harvest times and for migrating communities pull children away from school, and often lead to more permanent dropout (Hadley, 2010; Hussein, 2010).

Previous studies in Africa (Jones, 2005; McMahan, 2005; Mugisha, 2006; Walque, 2005;Muthanje, 2015) use the household production function approach to differentiate between rural and urban households. Rural household are deprived in terms of having lower income and lower levels of education and therefore being associated with disadvantaged schooling decisions and outcomes compared with urban areas. Dropout rates particularly leads to high poverty rates, poor school attendance, poor academic performance and disengagement from school (Hammound, Linton, Sminck and Drew, 2007; Al-Majali and Al-Thneibat, 2013).Achoka, Odebero Maiyo & Mualuko (2007) posits that parents, guardians and sponsors have an obligation to provide facilities, uniform, feeding, medical care and other statutory fees upon which some parents fail to provide to their children. Thus, Socio economic status of parents determines greatly to school pupil's dropout. Pupils from moneyless and uneducated families are likely to drop out of the school system (Osagie, 2010).

3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study consists of independent and dependent variables. The dependent variable is transition in public primary schools while the independent variables are influence of pupil's dropout such as socio-economic and school based factors. The intervening variables consist of understaffing, government policy, lack of food in schools and insecurity.

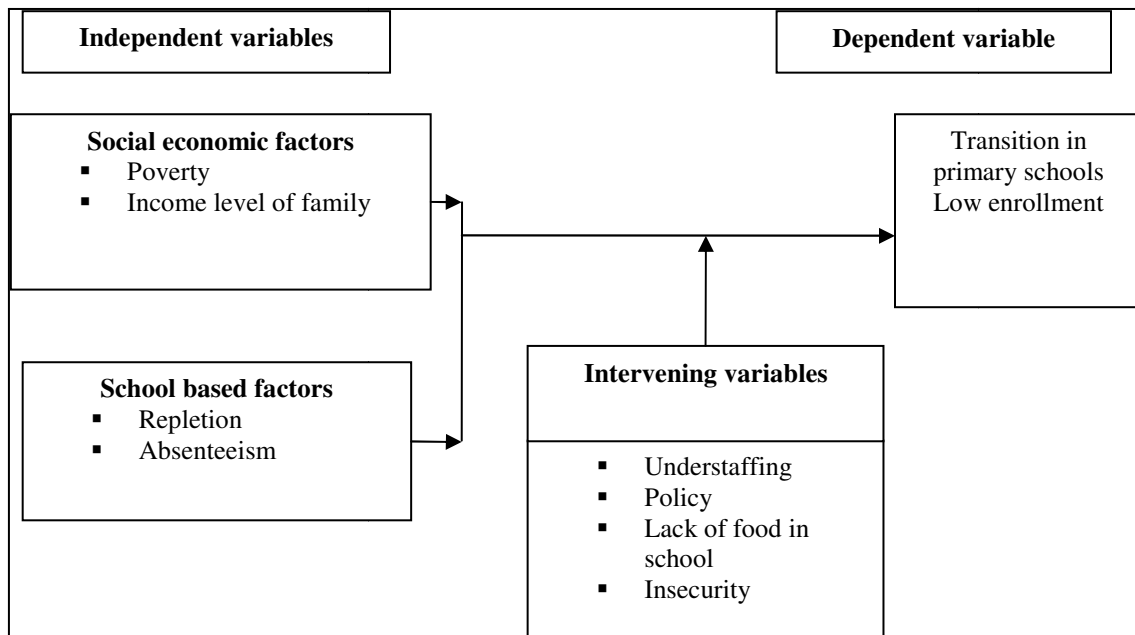


Figure 1: Conceptual framework
Source: Researcher: 2016

4. Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey design was used because allows data to be collected in a particular time and facilitates comparisons of various variables to establish the causes of certain status or changes. Furthermore, triangulation of methods of data collection was applied purposely to cross-check and qualifies correlations, descriptions and explanations of the findings (Winter, 2009). The target population for the study was 1062 respondents consisting of 31 primary school head teachers and 1031 class seven pupils. However, sample size selected for the study was 106. The main instrument of the study was a questionnaires and interview schedules (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The survey instrument was divided into three sections namely: Section A: dealing with demographics of respondents Section B: dealing with school based factors and Section C: dealing with Socio-economic factors. The variable in the survey instrument were measured using 5 Likert –type scale because it is very easy to analyze statistically (Jackson; 2009).

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Response Rate

The researcher administered a total of 106 questionnaires to the sampled respondents of which 103 were successfully filled and returned representing a 97% response rate. This was considered adequate and suitable for generalization among the study population.

5.2. Gender of Respondents

The study sought to ascertain the sex of the respondents to assess gender parity. The results are indicated in figure 2.

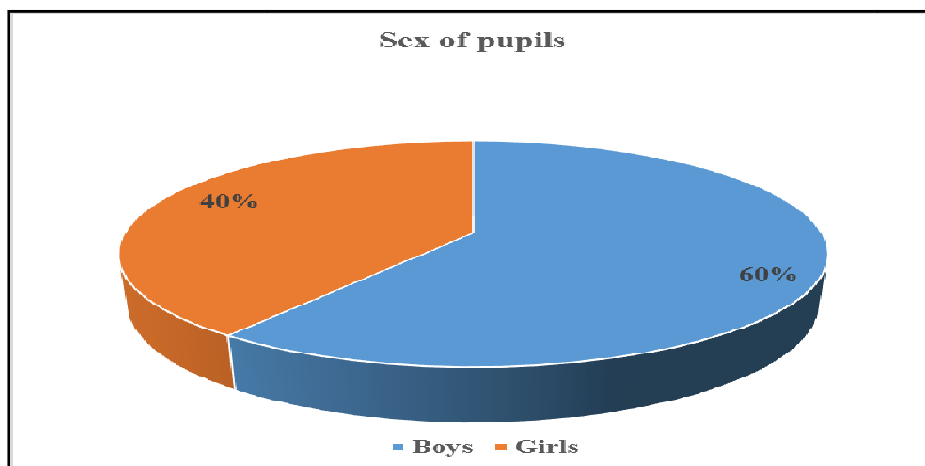


Figure 2: Gender of respondents

The results show that majority of the respondents (60%) of the pupils were boys as opposed to girls who constituted 40% of the total number of respondents. The results indicate an acceptable form of gender parity in such an area where girl child education has not been seriously entertained.

5.3. Age of Respondents

The results on the age of respondents are shown in figure3. The results indicate that majority of the respondents 44% were in age cohort of 12-15 years followed by 29% aged 10-12 years while, 26% were aged 15-20 years. Only 1, 1% was aged above 20 years.

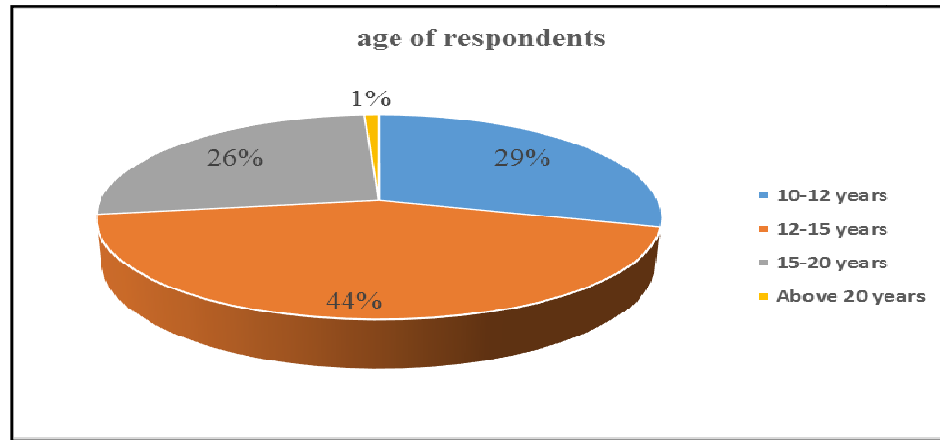


Figure 3: Age of respondents

5.4. Social Economic Factors

The results on the social economic factors that influence pupils' dropout from public primary schools are shown in Table 1.

Factor	Number and Percentages									
	5		4		3		2		1	
	(SA)		(A)		(N)		(D)		(SD)	
	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)
Pupils										
Poverty	97	94.2	0	0	0	0	5	4.9	1	1.0
Income level of family	90	88.2	1	1.0	0	0	11	10.8	0	0
Head teachers										
Poverty	0	0	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0	0	0
Income level of parents	1	33.3	2	66.7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Negative attitude towards education	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0	1	33.4	0	0

Table 1: Results on Social economic factors that influence pupils' dropout

The result show that poverty influences school dropout from public primary schools, majority of the respondents (94.2%, n=97) strongly agreed that poverty influenced school dropout. 4.9% (n=5) disagreed while only 1% strongly disagreed that poverty contributed to school dropout. On the influence of income level of the family on school dropout, majority of the respondents agreed (88.3% strongly agree, 1%, agree.). Only 10.8% agreed that the income level of the family had an influence on school dropout among primary school pupils. 66.7% of the head teachers agreed that poverty and income level of parents were responsible for school drop in public primary schools in Lokori division. 33.3% strongly agreed that income level of parents influenced school dropout. Majority of the head teachers interviewed also indicated that parents negative attitude towards education greatly influenced school dropout (33.3%, strongly agree, 33.3%, agree. 33.3% however disagreed that the parents negative attitude towards education influenced pupils drop out from school.

The results reveal a link between transition in public primary schools and socio-economic factors. All the respondents agreed that poverty was a major cause of school dropout among learners in Lokori Division. In addition, the results confirm that income level of parents was another contributing factor to poor retention rates in school. These findings are consistent with Farooqet.al, (2011) argues that children drop out of school because of financial constraints and may forcefully play a role of breadwinner to support their family. If the income level of the household is poor, a child will most likely to lack essential items for schooling hence discourage them from attending school. Furthermore, (Wang 2010; Rani 2011; Hunt 2008; James, 2006) argues that the main determinants of school dropout are poverty and low income which has put pressure on the parents of school going children and chances of dropping out of school become increasingly high.

5.5. School Based Factors

The results on school based factors that influence pupils to drop out of school and thereby affecting transition rates from primary to secondary school are shown in table 2.

Factor	Numbers and Percentages									
	5		4		3		2		1	
	(SA)		(A)		(N)		(D)		(SD)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Pupils										
School punishment	3	2.9	7	6.8	10	9.7	56	54.4	27	26.2
Shortage of teachers	4	3.9	3	2.9	7	6.8	28	27.2	61	59.2
School distance from home	20	19.4	30	29.1	33	32.0	10	9.7	10	9.7
Truancy	18	17.5	18	17.5	14	13.6	19	18.4	34	33.0
Repetition	17	16.5	19	18.4	25	24.3	25	24.3	17	16.5
Lack of school meals	12	11.7	20	19.4	16	15.5	35	34.0	20	19.4
Head teachers										
School punishment	0	0	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0	0	0
Shortage of teachers	1	33.3	0	0	2	66.7	0	0	0	0
School distance from home	0	0	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0
Truancy	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repetition	0	0	2	66.7	0	0	0	0	1	33.3
Lack of school meals	1	33.3	2	66.7	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2: Results on school based factors influencing school drop among primary school pupils.

The results indicate that majority of the respondents (pupils) disagreed that school punishment was responsible for school drop outs with 54.4% disagreeing and 26.2% strongly disagreeing. Those who strongly agreed were 2.9% while 6.8% agreed. On shortage of teachers 59.2% strongly disagreed, 27.2% disagreed while 2.9% agreed. 3.9% strongly agreed. The rest were neutral as to whether shortage of teachers influenced school dropout among public primary school pupils. On the aspect of how distance from home to school influences drop out, the results were as follows 19.4% strongly agree, 29.1%, 9.7% Strongly disagree, 9.7 Disagree. The remaining 32% were non-committal. Majority of the respondents 40.8% disagreed with the notion that repetition in class contributed to school dropout while 34.9% of the respondents did agree that repetition in class contributed to school dropout. The results indicate that many of the respondents 53.4% did not agree as to whether lack of school meals programme was a factor influencing drop out from school. From the teacher's perspective 66.7% believed that school dropout was influenced by school punishment, distance from home to school and repetition. All the teacher respondents (100%) agreed that truancy, teenage pregnancy and lack of school meal program caused drop outs. 33% disagreed with the opinion that repetition and school distance from home influenced school dropout. Only 33% affirmed that shortage of teachers influenced the decision my pupils to drop out of school.

These findings are similar to Ainsworth *et al.*, (2005) posits that dropouts increases in areas where distance to school is longer. High absenteeism, student discipline problems, repetition at primary, and student mobility are also associated with dropping of pupils from schools (Allensworth & Easton, 2005; Rumberger, 2004; Rumberger & Arellano, 2008; Theuri, 2004).

6. Conclusion and Implications of the Study

Based on the findings, education in Lokori Division is grossly affected by drop outs which lead to poor transition rates particularly from primary to secondary school. The efforts have been made to enhance access to basic education in Kenya and in Turkana County in particular, transition rates are still low and therefore the full benefits of education cannot be achieved. The factors that have been identified to be influencing pupils to drop out of school need to be seriously looked into and addressed so as to improve retention rates in school. The study results would provoke policy makers to come up with various strategies to reduce pupil's dropout in primary schools.

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations should be taken into consideration to enhance the transition rates in public primary schools.

- The community of Lokori Division should engage with relevant stakeholders to build more school also as to reduce the distance covered by pupils while seeking education.
- Parents should be sensitized on the need to encourage their learners to fully participate in education. They should be encouraged to work closely with teachers to support the education of their children.
- Early marriages should highly be discouraged in the community so that more girls could pursue education to completion.
- Parents should be supported to engage in other income generating activities and other avenues of wealth creation than to relying on dowry paid to their daughters.
- Education forums should be held regularly in order to bring together all stakeholders in the education sector so as to address any concerns that affect access, retention and transition in schools.

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