

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

How Effective Has Education Policy Been at Addressing Gender Inequality in Kenya?

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Abstract:

Over the last two decades, gender inequality has been of great concern to the world leaders, development practitioners, and scholars. There is an overwhelming literature demonstrating the socio-economic, political and environmental benefits at macro, meso and micro-levels when women become empowered and gender equality achieved. Using literature review, findings from empirical studies and scholarly articles were analysed and synthesised to assess how and to what extent the implementation of the education policy has been effective in addressing gender inequality in Kenya. Findings show that while the Kenyan government has put in place an impressive policy that details how gender inequality will be addressed, the implementation of the same has been rhetoric. Although the policy document integrates Gender and Development approach seeking to sustainably address the root causes such as poverty, economic and labour-related inequalities, cultural norms and stereotypes and the school re-admission policy for teenage mothers; the implementation of the education policy has instead focused on numbers of women/girls accessing and participating in education – anchored on Women in Development approach. To achieve gender equality, therefore, there is need to address the deeply entrenched causes of inequalities that disadvantage women and/or men.

Keywords: *gender equality, education policy, Gender and Development, Women in Development*

1. Introduction

Since the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), gender equality in education has gained traction with an appreciation that equal opportunities and fair treatment of girls and boys can help them fully exploit their potentials (UN Millennium Project, 2005). In the post-2015 agenda and related discussions, there is a shift in terms of thinking from quantitative changes that are anchored on gender parity (comparing numbers of girls to boys in the classroom) to gender equality since overemphasis on the former, according to Unterhalter (2015), has left serious obstacles to girls' and women's educational opportunities, including gender insensitive curricula and learning materials, classroom practices that undermine gender equality, and school management ignoring or minimizing incidents of school related gender based violence.

Kenya has developed a comprehensive law and policy framework to protect and implement the right to education and ultimately achieve gender equality. For example, in 2007, the government developed the Gender Policy in Education and in 2010 promulgated the new Constitution of Kenya. In addition, the Sessional Paper No.14, 2012, the Basic Education Act 2013 and the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2014-2018 integrate gender aspects. Further, Kenya is a signatory to international frameworks that address gender inequality in education such as the Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals and the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite these impressive legal and policy provisions, girls' education continue to be affected by early marriages and pregnancies, gender stereotypes and social norms which overburden them, sexual abuse and poor economic conditions which disproportionately affect them. Although literature indicate that a marginal progress has been made in gender parity in education in Kenya, the national statistics masks serious variations on the basis of economic status/conditions, urban and rural, marginalised and non-marginalised communities/regions and the ASALS and other parts of the country- with girls being more disadvantaged than their male counterparts (Suda, 2002; UNESCO, 2012; Munyao, 2013). While rates of participation and completion of basic education for boys in Kenya are very low, the rates for girls are far lower (UNESCO, 2012). In fact, UNESCO (2009) asserts that education in Kenya face serious challenges in achieving gender equality due to retrogressive cultural beliefs and practices (in some parts of the country) such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and early/forced marriage, lack of gender-responsive curriculum and teaching/learning materials, lack of gender friendly schools and lack of gender-sensitive teachers- all of which hinder attainment of gender equality in education.

Overwhelming evidence show that enrolling girls in school is one thing, while keeping them there and ensuring they acquire a good-quality education and stand an equal chance [as boys] of getting a well-paying job after completion is another. Although the Gender Policy in Education (2007) among other policy frameworks have established mechanisms to eliminate all gender disparities in education and achieve gender equality by emphasizing inclusiveness, affirmative action, gender mainstreaming and partnerships to achieve gender balance in education in Kenya, much emphasis has been put on the quantitative aspects (girls' enrolment and

participation) and neglected qualitative aspects such as the factors hindering girls participation, retention, completion and after-school life in employment. In fact, Aikman & Unterhalter (2007) asserts that statistics on gender parity in education do not tell us anything about gender equality more widely in schools and related environments.

This paper seeks to examine how gender inequality in education in Kenya manifests itself, and how policies, including the implementation of the Gender Policy in Education (2007) has succeeded or failed in addressing gender inequality due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and practices, high levels of poverty, poor implementation of the re-entry policy on teenage mothers and lack of reliable measurement mechanisms in Kenya. The paper analyses these issues in the light of the Gender and Development (GAD) and Women in Development (WID) approaches, demonstrating how the Kenyan government has integrated the same in policies and programmes, and contribution in addressing gender inequality in education.

The paper begins with a background description of gender issues in the Kenyan education and goes ahead to examine gender and education in Kenya. It also highlights the theoretical framework used and the rationale and the analysis of gender inequality in education in Kenya. Under the theoretical analysis, criticisms of the approaches will be discussed and implication on gender policy implementation in Kenya. In the conclusion section, key issues and arguments of the paper will be summarised and way-forward suggested.

1.1. Gender and Education in Kenya

Addressing gender gaps in education has been deemed necessary to address most of the social injustices faced by women in their quest to advance in their socio-economic spheres (Wasanga, Ogle, & Wambua, 2011). Acknowledging the role of women and girls in improving the economic development, the Kenyan government has singled out education as an important vehicle in the social pillar in the Vision 2030 that will propel the country into a middle-income economy (Ndolo, Simatwa, & Ayodo, 2016) by promoting the Education for All goals. Envisaged in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 as a right to both boys and girls, education has undergone reforms such as the free and compulsory basic education for all children, setting up of talent and career options for secondary school students and streamlining adult and continuing education to reduce levels of illiteracy (Cheserek & Mugalavai, 2012) and other girl-child-focused interventions such as distribution of sanitary facilities, re-entry by teenage mothers and mentorship programmes to encourage girls take up Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

As a demonstration of commitment, the Kenyan government has developed several policy frameworks in addition to increasing the budgetary allocation for the education sector every year. One of the key frameworks - the Gender Policy in Education (2007) - envisages gender concerns in education such as: conducive and gender-friendly learning environment; gender-sensitive curriculum; strengthening legal and policy instruments to check gender violence; sexual harassment and child abuse; school re-entry for teenage mothers; gender balance in recruitment and deployment of teachers; outlawing the female genital mutilation (FGM); empowerment of girls through mentorship/moulding programmes; encouraging girls to study Science Maths and Technology; initiate social support programmes (conditional cash transfer) and most vulnerable children support grant; and most importantly, make measurement mechanisms (monitoring and evaluation systems) more gender-sensitive (Wango, Musomi, & Akinyi, 2012).

Developed and launched by the Ministry of Education in 2007, the ambitious Gender Policy in Education was aimed at ultimately eliminating gender disparities in the education sector by 2010 and achieving gender equality in education at all levels by 2015. Evidence, however, shows that although achievements have been made in regard to eliminating gender disparities, gender equality is far from being achieved even after the 2015 target elapsed. For example, using the Ministry of Education statistics and other empirical data sources, Wango, Musomi and Akinyi (2012) assert that although strides have been made in ensuring that girls are enrolled in schools, the implementation of the Gender Policy in Education has not helped in addressing gender based violence against girls such as rape and sexual violence, low support by communities mainly due to poverty and attitudinal change, conflicting role of the girl child at home and schools coupled with poverty and other cultural factors that limit the chances of completion and result in school dropout and girls' increased burden of care work.

The Education for All 2015 national review conducted by the Kenyan government through the Ministry of Education in 2014 established that there was impressive and notable progress in improving access to education attributable to the Free Primary Education and the Subsidised and free day secondary school education initiatives though the national statistics on access do not speak about regional variations such as in urban/rural areas, the ASALs, conflict-affected and the marginalised communities (Republic of Kenya, 2014; Muganda, Mukasa, & Riechi, 2016).

While the Kenyan government abolished day secondary school fees and subsidised boarding secondary school fees thus reducing the costs for households; indirect costs, according to UNESCO (2012), still remain high (twelve to twenty times as much as the monthly income of parents in rural areas) leaving secondary education out of reach for the poorest households. Further, even with the government's introduction of mobile schooling and low cost boarding schools in the ASALs, the impact of the same, according to Ngugi (2016) in increasing educational access has not yet been realised. A synthesis of statistics from the World Inequality in Education has revealed both gender and regional disparities in terms of mean years of schooling, youth literacy levels and proportions of out-of-school children and youth in Kenya.

Indicator	Disaggregated by sex	Disaggregated by region
Mean years of schooling (20-24 year category)	Female (9.44) Male (9.94)	North Eastern (6.43) Western (8.97) Eastern (9.02) Nyanza (9.49) Central (10.62) Nairobi (11.42)
Less than 4 years of schooling	Female (6%) Male (5%)	North Eastern (40%) Coast (9%) Eastern (8) Western (4%) Central (2%) Nairobi (0%)
Youth literacy (15-24)	Female (88%) Male (89%)	North Eastern (73%) Western (81%) Coast (86%) Eastern (86%) Central (95%) Nairobi (95%)
Out of school children (primary age)	Female (3%) Male (3%)	North Eastern (37%) Rift Valley (5%) Central (1%)
Out of school youth (upper secondary)	Female (19%) Male (16%)	Nairobi (28%) Coast (23%) Rift Valley (20%) Nyanza (16%) Central (14%)

Table 1: Data of selected indicators disaggregated by gender and region

Source: World Inequality in Education www.education-inequalities.org

In the assessment of EFA goal 5 and MDG goal 3, the ratio of girls to boys in education has been used as a key indicator of progress of reaching parity in education in Kenya. According to the Republic of Kenya (2014), the Gender Parity Index (GPI) based on enrolment at primary level has progressively improved over time. The GPI based on enrolment in primary schools was 0.98 in 2013, while the GPI based on NER and GER was 1.01 and 0.99 respectively in 2013. The GPI based on enrolment at secondary level was 0.87 in 2013. According to the Republic of Kenya (2013), the ratio of girls to boys in primary education was 0.98 in 2011, and in 2013 it remained the same while in secondary education was 0.86 in 2011 and 0.89 in 2013. These significant improvements are attributable to, according to Republic of Kenya (2013), enabling policy frameworks and responsive interventions.

1.2. Theoretical Approach

In Kenya, the government has utilised the Women in Development (WID) framework in promoting boys' and girls' access and participation in education, specifically through financial support and subsidies. For example, the provision of free primary education, subsidizing secondary education and providing mobile schools has increased educational access among the girls and boys from poor backgrounds (Ngware, Onsomu, Muthaka, & Manda, 2006). However, from a Gender and Development (GAD) perspective, those initiatives do not address/remove the deeply entrenched gender/social, economic and political barriers or inequalities that hinder boys and girls from being educationally empowered.

While the WID approach focuses on making women's productive work more visible by enhancing their participation in development work and process, the GAD approach examines how social roles, reproductive roles and economic roles are linked to gender inequalities of masculinity and femininity (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2005). GAD, which emerged as a critique of the WID, holds that the unequal relationship between men and women hinders development and advocates for change of power structures into a long-term goal whereby all decision-making and benefits of development are distributed on equal basis of gender equality.

Although the Gender Policy in Education (2007) is anchored on Gender and Development (GAD) approach as it integrates the principle of gender mainstreaming to address the long-term and strategic needs of women through empowerment (Wango, Musomi and Akinyi, 2012); the implementation has largely focused on increasing the number of women and girls access and participation in education and other social platforms - a principle of the Women in Development (WID) approach. For example, the policy highlights how gender stereotypes should be overcome by encouraging girls to take up STEM subjects and venture into the male dominated field of engineering and technology; integrate sexual and reproductive education in schools in order to address teenage pregnancies; empowering poor households, especially in the ASALs, in order to ensure they send their boys and girls to school. However, these features of GAD are not effectively deployed in terms of implementation.

Based on this rationale, the analysis comparatively utilizes the GAD and the WID approaches; examining how the gender policy has addressed the issues of a) poverty, economic and labour related inequalities, b) culture, social norms and stereotyping and, c) school re-entry of teenage mothers in Kenya, and how effective they have been in addressing gender inequality.

2. Findings

2.1. Poverty, Economic and Labour-related Inequalities

According to Aikman and Unterhalter (2007), gender equality initiatives have been hampered by policy makers underestimating the full range of economic costs to families and communities (especially non-fee and opportunity costs) as well as by ignoring relations and practices in the household and the community that are conditioned by the ways in which women and men interact. According to Karimi (2015), economic status of the families plays a role in hindering girls from participating successfully in education in Kenya. According to Marco (2016) in his study 'Disadvantaged Girls in Kenyan Schools' which explored aspects of school and schooling that affect the participation and learning of marginalised girls in the ASALs of Turkana and informal settlements in Nairobi established that though data for enrolment, completion, attendance and learning at national level are encouraging, poorer girls in the ASAL have lower enrolment and completion rates, as well as lower learning outcomes.

Although the Kenyan government launched the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 and the subsidized free day secondary education (SFDSE) in 2008 which subsequently increased enrolment and transition rates and reduced dropout rates of the learners at secondary level education level (Muganda, Mukasa and Riechi, 2016), some scholars (for example, Omwami & Omwami, 2009) think contrary that the widespread poverty and the government's limited resource capacity have resulted in Kenya's failure to realise and sustain universal access to primary education. The government's effort to enrol more children in school, which is the focus of the WID approach, negates and/or overlooks other important factors such as women's unpaid domestic work, cultural preference of boys' education over girls' among others; which subordinates women and girls. In Kenya, lack of integration of unpaid work as women's greater care leads to reinforcement of social roles and power imbalance that overburden women within the households and by extension, the society at large. As Lanz (2013) puts it, the unpaid work burden and ensuing time poverty largely affects the achievement of gender equality. It is therefore clear that although the Gender Policy document talks about gender mainstreaming (GAD), the implementation focuses on increasing the number of women and girls accessing and participating in education and other social services (WID).

As Aikman and Unterhalter (2007) suggest, there is need for a wide range of development and government institutions to allocate the thinking, time and financial resources required to promote girls education including in poverty reduction strategy papers and budgetary allocations. For example, policies and practices aimed at generating economic growth should be evaluated according to their impact on men and women and inequality reduction and consequently aligned in order to create a coherent policy environment, in which the main focus of all policies is poverty reduction, reduction of inequalities and human and environmental well-being within the context of sustainable development.

While education is expected to transform the social roles by equipping women with the requisite skills to enter the labour market, the compounded impact of economic difficulties, gender preference and stereotyping deprives them of a chance to enjoy equal opportunities with their male counterparts. Although the Kenyan government acknowledges the prevailing difficult situations facing girls in their quest for education, there are no conversations around women's unpaid work, which might prevent them from accessing decent work, limit their career chances and exacerbate their time poverty. Typically, this is what Aikman and Unterhalter (2007) refer to developing 'islands of excellence' that do not take into account conditions elsewhere in the community (such as financial constraints) and expecting single strategies to resolve complex problems along with poor planning and implementation, and the lack of a clear relationship between strategies and objectives have also impeded attempts to ensure that girls and boys have equal opportunities (cf Wango, Musomi and Akinyi, 2012). For example, lack of financial capacity or support from families may possibly lead to girls engaging in commercial sexual activities in order to fend, consequently lowering the chances of girls completing their education. Lanz (2013) links hunger to women's unpaid work as it tends to be women who are in charge of household food security and therefore most affected by environmental changes in food prices. Arguably, the implementation of the gender policy does not consider these complex socio-economic environments that bring different forces into play; making gender equality harder to achieve in Kenya.

Although Kenyan women have joined the labour force in large and increasing numbers over the last two decades due to increased access to education, the majority of them are still concentrated in traditional 'female occupations' and the informal sector (Suda, 2002; UNESCO, 2012; Danish Trade Union Council, 2014). In fact, most women in Kenya are concentrated in low paying, low status occupations with poor fringe benefits and carried out under poor working conditions and therefore hold very little prospect for poverty reduction and upward mobility. This has been attributed to low literacy levels among women as compared to men (Danish Trade Union Council, 2014).

Empirical studies show gender variations in terms of employment and literacy levels. For example, about 50 per cent of men and 80 per cent of women aged 15 to 24 in the slums have no income generating activities (UNESCO, 2012). Among those who are employed, about 60 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women are in casual employment earning only around the poverty line. In 2012 female literacy rates were below 10 per cent in Northern Eastern- Mandera, Turkana and Wajir Counties but as high as 90 per cent in Nairobi and Uasin Gishu Counties (UNESCO, 2012) which influences their access to meaningful employment.

At the national level, an analysis of the labour market in Kenya by the Danish Trade Union Council for International Development Cooperation (2014) showed that male (15 years and above) employment rate stood at 66 per cent while for female under the same age group stood at 56 per cent. Drawing statistics from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the analysis reported gender inequality score at 0.608 which ranked Kenya at 130 out of 148 countries. According to the analysis, the index shows a loss to potential achievement in a country due to gender inequality across reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation. The analysis showed that women were employed in agriculture, trade, restaurants and hotels sectors with the men dominating in the other sectors such as manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, construction, finance, real estate and business services, public administration and services. Further, women employment in the agricultural sector is usually informal; running family agricultural business with no wage thus lowering their chances of breaking the poverty cycle (Danish Trade Union Council, 2014).

The reasons for gender disparities in employment opportunities include segregation in the labour market, social attitudes towards women, inadequate capacity on the part of women in terms of their knowledge and skills and lack of gender-responsive policies and programmes. Low educational levels including high levels of illiteracy undermine women's capacity and their ability to participate in the formal labour market on an equal basis with men (Danish Trade Union Council, 2014). These differences hinders women's individual development and their collective contribution to the national economy since more educated women, according to Ombati & Ombati (2015) work for more hours in the market labour force, earning higher pay and ultimately broadening the tax base of a country. Therefore, there is need for the policy to go beyond improving access to education (WID) into addressing the intersecting structural inequalities around poverty, economy and the labour market which disproportionately affect women and girls (GAD).

While studies show impressive progress in promoting girls' education, Lanz (2013) assert that the number of girls enrolled and participating in education does not tell us whether they actually complete education or use their education to secure meaningful employment. According to the Republic of Kenya (2013), the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector was 31.9% in 2011 and 35.9% in 2013 while the proportion of seats held by women in National Assembly was 9.9% in 2011 and 19.7% in 2013. In this case, Lanz (2013) argue that the "share of women in waged employment does not tell us anything about the quality of employment, whether women choose to be employed or do so out of necessity, whether they are able to keep their wages or whether their time burden has increased due to their engagement in paid employment, the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament does not tell us anything about their actual decision-making power." It is imperative, therefore, from a GAD perspective to interrogate whether girls' access and participation in education or women's entry into leadership positions, for example, would expand their power and control over their own lives.

2.2. Culture, Social Norms and Stereotyping

Numerous studies (for example, Suda, 2002; Wasanga, Ogle & Wambua, 2011; Wango, Musomi & Akinyi, 2012; Migosi, Nanok, Ombuki, Evasa, & Metet, 2012; Ombati & Ombati, 2015; Ngugi, 2016) on culture and education indicate that there are competing priorities between children's time in studies and family work; either looking after livestock (especially for boys) and household chores such as fetching water and firewood and looking after the young children (for girls). In fact, Migosi et al. (2012) assert that the choice between having a girl child in school and acquiring more wealth in form of livestock in exchange for their marriage puts the schooling for girls at stake particularly among nomadic communities.

Aggravated by the high levels of poverty, negative attitudes, retrogressive cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early/teenage marriages, insecurity and conflicts, unfriendly school environments and lack of role models in the community; Ngugi (2016) asserts that girls from the ASALs and nomadic communities have lagged behind in education hence greatly hampering their socio-economic development. This necessitated the review of the 2009 Policy Framework for Nomadic Education which was aimed at aligning it to the Gender Policy in Education 2007, and the new legal and policy documents such as the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Sessional Paper No.14, 2012, the Basic Education Act 2013 and the National Education Sector Plan 2014-2018 (Republic of Kenya, 2015).

The revised Policy Framework, using a WID approach, highlights the need for more female teachers in Mathematics and Sciences in order to create education role models for girls and conduct public awareness campaigns to sensitize the nomadic communities on the value of educating the girl-child. This would play the role of mentorship to the young school girls with the aim of changing their attitudes towards the Mathematics and Sciences- disciplines that are majorly male-dominated in Kenya. Further the framework provides for scholarships to the girls so as to increase enrolments and transition to other levels. In the case of physical facilities, the document indicate that infrastructural interventions will have to be gender sensitive in relation to health and hygiene (Republic of Kenya, 2015), though it does not clearly show how that would be achieved.

A study conducted by Kisaka (2015) in the Northern Kenya, specifically in Ijara and Garissa Constituencies established that due to nomadic lifestyles and the cultural beliefs, girls participation in primary education is bedevilled by the societal culture and beliefs, general parental attitude towards female education, societal biases towards duties of females at home as well as some factors that operate within the school. Girls tend to be socialised to be passive in society and even those who enrol in schools do not put much effort in their studies as the society rates their capacity as mothers to be more important than any other capacity that they may possess. This socialisation, according to Aikman and Unterhalter (2005), is what causes power imbalances between men and women, reproduced within households and sustained by women's lack of empowerment. According to Njiru (2013) the social roles of women as caregivers greatly affect their career progression. In his study which surveyed women employees in Standard Chartered Bank in Kenya, established that women faced difficulties in balancing work and family life especially with their role in taking care of their husbands and children in their households. Although the study recommends adoption of work/life policies such as day-care centres for new mothers and work adjustments hours for new mothers, the power relation imbalance within their households (between a wife and husband) may not be addressed in the long run and this might trickle down to their children influencing future generations.

Available literature (for example, Unterhalter, et al., 2014; Makewa, Role, & Ngila, 2014) indicates that the socialisation of girls as future mothers and caregivers can be addressed through role modelling by female teachers. According to Unterhalter et al. (2014), female teachers can play a role model to the school girls as they can help to make schools transformative places by helping girls and boys challenge gender stereotypes and inequalities both within and out of school. A study conducted by Mweru (2012) established that Kenyan teachers spent more time influencing boys than girls (gender preference) thus demonstrating a bias for boys. Consequently, girls would feel insignificant; assume a passive role in the learning process hence their voices remain unheard.

While girls' low expectations of themselves can also contribute to the problem, the lack of female teachers in high status subjects such as Maths and Sciences also does (Unterhalter et al., 2014). Although the teacher recruitment policy in Kenya ensures that gender balance is achieved (Republic of Kenya, 2015), there are other important attributes of teachers which determine the 'worthiness' as role models. According to Yara & Wanjohi (2011), teachers' experience, teachers' qualification, teacher/student attitude and school category have a positive relationship with students' academic performance and therefore these aspects cannot be ignored when thinking of female teachers as role models to the school girls. Teachers' contribution as role models can be enhanced, according to Ongaga & Ombonga (2012) through training on gender responsive practices, including personalized and caring relationships should begin at the pre-service education programs and continue to in-service professional development programs in order to enable girls and boys to participate in learning as equals. It is not merely getting more women teachers (WID) in school that will create role models for

the girl child, but the ability of the female teacher to identify how best they can empower the girl child and address gender inequality through teaching; a GAD approach that calls for gender-responsive and mentorship both in pre- and in-service stages.

2.3. Re-entry of Teenage Mothers

Empirical studies (for example, Omwancha, 2012; Republic of Kenya, 2014; Macharia & Kessio, 2015) show that despite provision for re-admission of teenage mothers back to school, significant population of teenage mothers are not attending school. A study conducted by Macharia and Kessio (2015) showed that each student surveyed knew of four girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy and only one returned to school after giving birth. The study established that head teachers were not talking about re-admission in schools because they felt that if they openly talked about it, they would be encouraging and condoning premature sexual activity and so they quietly admitted the adolescent mothers.

The implementation of the school re-admission policy has been problematic due to socio-cultural and economic factors. According to Onyango, Kioli, & Nyambedha, (n.d), once girls give birth, they are culturally regarded as adults who can get married and therefore most of them are given out in marriage especially when there is a chance for the family being bailed out of poverty. Specifically, some of the socio-cultural factors influencing the re-entry of school girl mothers in Kenya, according to Onyango, Kioli and Nyambedha, include gendered customary practices such as patriarchy, gender preference [boys are preferred more than girls], early marriages as well as widespread poverty. The study concluded that the existence of predominantly negative attitudes and perceptions among pupils, teachers and parents regarding teenage motherhood greatly undermined the re-entry of teenage mothers.

A study conducted by Kiage, Simatwa, & Ayodo (2014) established that due to high poverty levels, teenage mothers from poor backgrounds cannot afford to employ caretakers of their babies as they attend school. This is consistent with the assertions by Kiptanui, Kindiki, & Lelan (2015) citing that school-family balance by teenage mothers affected them psychologically and this to a large extent affected their concentration in school. Even when they succeed to re-enter school, most adolescent mothers are psychologically disturbed that they are unable to effectively participate in the learning process. A study by Wekesa (2014) established that teenage mothers who re-entered school feared participating in class discussions which consequently affected their performance in end of term examinations or the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

The focus of Gender Policy in Education on girls' participation in education has failed to address other significant challenges that propagate gender inequality. According to Omwancha (2012), although teenage pregnancy is one of the causes of girls dropping out of school, it appears that teenage pregnancy is just a symptom of underlying socio-cultural disadvantage that affect girls' education; a GAD thinking would seek to address the root causes. One of the underlying socio-cultural factors is gender-based violence [sexual abuse being one of the component] which, according to Munyao (2013), has kept significant number of girls out of school and this has detrimental effect on their participation. Even after exiting school, Kimuna & Djamba (2008) found out that women's education level had significant effect on gender-based violence [specifically physical and sexual abuse], although the relationships were not linear.

3. Conclusion

Kenya adopted a gender policy in education in 2007 and thereafter other policy and legal frameworks such as the Sessional Paper No.14, 2012, the Basic Education Act 2013 and the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2014-2018 intended to inform the design and implementation of various gender-responsive education sector policies and programmes geared towards addressing gender concerns and guide monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process. Although the government, employing the WID approach, has made strides in improving girls' enrolment and participation in education, some persistent challenges [examined through GADeyes] such as gender-based violence, lack of role models for girls, high poverty levels that disproportionately affect girls, and other deeply entrenched cultural beliefs and practices have kept girls at a disadvantaged position. The GAD framework can greatly strengthen the government's policy approach by ensuring that there is a focus on the deeply entrenched cultural beliefs and practices, stereotypes and other forms of causes that breed inequalities; the aim is to transform the power relations between men and women, and remove all social economic and political barriers through effective gender mainstreaming (Rouf, 2016).

Although the Kenyan government has made remarkable efforts in promoting girls' access and participation in education thus meeting their immediate needs, challenges posed by high levels of poverty, economic and labour-related inequalities, culture and gender stereotyping and teenage pregnancies have greatly affected girls' long-term socio-economic prospects. As illustrated in the analysis, the Kenyan government has focused more on the WID than addressing strategic gender concerns despite putting in place a good policy framework on gender equality in education. There is need, therefore, to put women and girls' interests at the centre of the policy frameworks, and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) believes that this can be achieved by "confronting and transforming the social norms and institutions that discriminate against women and girls, such as the acceptability of domestic violence; gathering and using high quality data to monitor progress and build evidence about what works; tracking governments' expenditure and the proportion of all development co-operation focused on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment needs to use a gender-sensitive approach" (p3). Further, there is need for concerted efforts among government, development partners and other stakeholders backed by sufficient research studies and data.

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