

**THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GIRL CHILD IN PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN MATUNGU DIVISION, MATUNGU
DISTRICT, KENYA**

BY

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 *Overview*

The study intended to analyze the effects of factors influencing girl child performance in education. The study was done in Matungu Division, Matungu District, Kenya.

1.1 **Background to the Study**

Although there is a general perception that men do better than women in math and science, researchers have found that the differences between women's and men's math- and science-related abilities and choices are much more subtle and complex than a simple "men are better than women in math and science." (Hyde, 2005; Spelke, 2005 & Halpern, 2000).

In fact, experts disagree among themselves on the degree to which women and men differ in their math- and science-related abilities (Gallagher & Kaufman, 2005)

A quick review of the postsecondary paths pursued by women and men highlight the areas in math and science where women are not attaining degrees at the same rate as men. There were direct and opportunity costs of schooling which may have been prohibitive to some families, and the priority given to girls' future roles as mothers and wives, which may have a strong negative bearing on their formal educational opportunities. In essence, the study assessed the performance of girl child education in relation the factors affecting the female participation in education.

According to World Bank (1996) the central problems of female education have been clearly identified as access to school, attainment in years of schooling, academic

achievement and accompanying after school. All these problems were interrelated and influenced by in-and out-of-school factors.

Hartnett and Henefeld (1993) argued that the evidence of significant return to female education includes reduced fertility, reduced infant and maternal mortality, enhanced family health and welfare, improved children's education and increased agricultural productivity for women and the larger economy.

despite the significance of female education, few significant programs and projects had been implemented to reduce the gender gap in education, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, and those implemented have had limited impact (World bank 1,996).

Significant gains had been made by African governments over the past thirty years in increasing access to education. However, greater challenge lied ahead if the goal of education for all was to be achieved. Factors like: Fiscal crisis, civil strife, political instability, drought, endemic, poverty and persistently high demographic pressures on education systems have resulted in stagnating enrollments and declining quality (Odaga & Heneveld, 1996). They continued to argue that other pressing educational concerns included poor student participation, high drop-out and repetition rates low academic achievement, and low teacher morale and attendance. Perhaps the most daunting challenge of all was that of promoting female education.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although the government of Kenya had strategies to enhance equality in access and participation of secondary education for both boys and girls, performance in terms of enrollment and completion rates for girls seemed to remain relatively lower than that of the boys. There were direct and opportunity costs of education which had strong negative

effects on female educational opportunities. The proposed study intended to assess the factors which still affected the performance and persistence of those girls who remained in school. An understanding of how the factors govern household decisions leading to low investment in female education was the key to addressing the low societal demand for female education.

1.3.0 General Objective

The purpose of this study was to assess the performance of girl child education in primary schools in Matungu Division, Matungu District.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- (i) To determine the influence of socio-economic factors such as poverty, direct and opportunity costs of schooling on girl child education performance.
- (ii) To analyze the effect of geographical location of a school to girl child performance in education.
- (iii) To analyze the effect of influence of socio-cultural factors such as early marriages and priority given to girls' future roles as mothers on girl child education performance.

1.4.1 Research Questions

- (i) To what extent do the socio-economic factors influence the performance of girl child education?
- (ii) What effect does geographical location of a school have on girl child performance in education?
- (iii) To what extent do the socio-cultural factors such as early marriages and future female roles influence the performance of girl child education?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study confined itself to middle primary students and teachers in Matungu Division, Matungu District. For more conclusive results all students could have been studied in all divisions in the district, but this was not possible because of financial constraints and time. However middle primary students were mature and had no final examination tension so they were suitable representatives of the rest of the students.

Preliminary information from the division seemed to show girls performance in education in terms of enrollment, access, participation and completion rates as being relatively lower than that of boys, hence the justification of its choice as the location of study. The residents were poor and had difficulties in sending their children to schools. It was on the basis of this backdrop that the researcher chose this location for the study.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study were important in many ways. The study sought to bring out the current state of knowledge on the socio-economic, socio-cultural, school and political factors influencing female participation in education in Matungu Division, Matungu District and Kenya as a whole.

It also sought to suggest some policies, programs and projects that could be tried to promote girls participation in education.

In addition the study may provide knowledge that may be used to design interventions targeted at reducing the gender gap in education.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter consists of the knowledge and ideas that have been established by accredited scholars and experts in the field of study. Main areas of concern were on factors influencing girl child performance in education. It was guided by the specific objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research was that of Ruth Pearson's (1992) framework of thinking on gender relations. According to Pearson's theory, society views all activities that are carried out to be based on social roles and interactions of men and women. Based on this theory, the society seems to have ultimate authority on the precise nature of what women and men actually do and their real contribution to production in the economy which turns out to be biased against women (Pearson's, 1992). In fact, this theory argues that because of biases, the performance of women and men is affected in nearly all spheres of life such as business, education and development projects. Pearson's gender relations framework was found appropriate for this study because gender roles in various cultures were identified as influencing girl's performance in education. This study therefore acknowledges the fact that men and women have different roles in society but if girls are encouraged they can access and participate in education at almost equal level with boys.

2.2 Socio-economic Factors

The socioeconomic factors that influence girl child performance in education included direct and opportunity costs of schooling, which may be prohibitive to some families (World Bank, 1996). Several studies revealed that there was a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and educational outcomes (Amato, 1987; William, et al., 1991; Mukherjee, 1995; Ainley et al., 1995). The studies showed that children from low socioeconomic status families were more likely to exhibit lower levels of literacy, numeracy and comprehension. They had lower retention and participation rates (children from low SES families were less likely to attend university) as compared to their counterparts in high SES (Amato, 1987 social background remains one of the major sources of educational inequality (Graets, 1995). In other words, educational success depended very strongly on the socioeconomic status of one's parents (Edgar, 1976).

2.3 Geographical Location of Schools

In most communities in rural areas, schools were too far from them and never get involved in the school activities (Kavuma, 2002). She argued that having schools closer to the households' ensured safety for the girls and increased their participation in school activities. Girls were less likely to be able to make a long journey from home to school, not least because of concern about their safety enroute (UNICEF.Kenya, 2003). According to UNICEF Jordan (2003) the community empowerment led to the village community meetings. They were concerned with the reason why daughters were forced to stop school due to the absence of secondary schools for girls in the area. Following the meeting within 6 months 3 secondary classes were fully established which increased the enrollment of girls at secondary schools.

2.4 Socio-cultural Factors

The priorities given to girls future roles as mothers and wives, which may have a strong negative bearing on their formal educational opportunities reduced their performance in education (World bank, 1996). The effects of such on girls' education were far reaching, and affected the performance and persistence of those girls who remained in school.

According to (Kavuma, 2002) In some communities, the parents would rather let the girl stay at home to help with household work or even marry them off to get fees for the boys. She argued that some communities had very low marriage age due to the fact that they wanted to get money out of girls (in terms of dowry) early. For example in Ghana and among the Maasai's in Kenya girls were married off for cattle. UNICEF Malawi, (2003) publication asserts that many girls were kept at home to help with domestic tasks.

2.5 *Review*

The cited literature indicated that socio-economic factors such as poverty hindered girl child performance in education. Geographical location of schools and socio-cultural factors such as the roles for famine in families were also cited as affecting girl child performance in education. School and political factors including no proper safe latrines for girls and boys separate and policies enhancing girls' education had also been reviewed as factors affecting girls' education. Several intervention measures had been cited.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter constituted the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. It provided answers to such questions as, what techniques were used to gather data. What population was studied? What kind of sampling was used? And how the data was collected and analyzed?

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted survey design. Survey research deals with incidence, distribution and interrelations of educational variables and emphasizes on answers to one question given by all respondents (Orodho, 2003). It also allows the researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. By involving teachers and students the study fitted within the survey study Design.

3.2 Target Population

This study targeted teachers to represent informed specialists and form three students to represent the users of the information (table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Target Population by Category

Category of Population	Number
Students	1487
Teachers	246
Total	1733

3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Five schools were selected for the study. Purposive sampling was used to select two schools one for girls and the other for boys. Three other schools were selected at random using simple random sampling out of the mixed schools. Simple random sampling was used to select 30 boys from the boys' school and 30 girls from the girls' school. In addition simple random sampling was used to select 15 boys and 15 girls per school out of the three randomly selected mixed schools so that the total student sample selected was 150. 25 headteachers were selected randomly to be included in the sample in which the 5 from the selected schools must be included. The total sample size was 175 giving a minimum of between (10%-30%) of the target population as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999).

3.4 Research Instruments

The researcher structured closed and open-ended questions to solicit for information on girls' performance in education. These questionnaires were administered to form three students in the selected schools by the researcher.

The researcher structured closed and open-ended questions to solicit for views from headteachers on girls' participation in education. These questionnaires were administered to selected teachers from the division by the researcher.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from Kampala International University Institute of Continuing and Distance Education to carry out the study. Formal ethical issues were observed during data collection process. Questionnaires were administered to both randomly selected headteachers and form three students out of the five selected

schools in the division. The researcher had made prior arrangements with the heads of the selected schools so that the questionnaires were administered, filled as she waited for them.

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data was collected. The answered questionnaires were scored manually. The researcher coded the data by giving same code to respondents who gave similar answers to a question and later counted. This was done through direct counting from the questionnaires. Both qualitative analysis involving thematic analysis using categorization of related themes (cut and paste method) and descriptive statistics involving tabulations, graphs and percentages was used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Overview

In this chapter research findings depended on the specific objectives discussed.

4.2 Socio-Economic Factors

The analyzed data showed that a majority of the students 66.7% said that many of the family in Matungu Division, Matungu District had more than 5 children. This showed that there were huge families which were somehow unmanageable because of the low-economic status of families in the district.

Table 4. 1 Number of Children per Family

No of children per family	No of students	%
1 – 3	15	10%
4 – 6	13	8.67
6 – 8	22	14.67
Over 8	100	66.66
Total	150	100

Over 14% of students had more than 6 children in their homes and above 8% of the families had between 4 – 6 children only 10% of the families in central division had between 1-3 children. A greater percentage over 94% of the students indicated that they had more than 4 sisters in their families while about 87% had more than 4 brothers in their families. Hence indicating education for girl child very difficulty due to big number of children.

Table 4. 2 Number of Siblings in Student's Families

No of Siblings	Sisters	%	Brothers	%
1	4	2.7	6	4
2	2	1.3	4	2.7
3	2	1.3	10	6.7
4	85	56.7	73	48.6
5	57	38	57	38
Total	150	100	150	100

This indicated that there were more girls than boys in most of the families in central division.

When asked to say whether there were some of their sisters who had joined secondary schools a majority over 55% said they had no sister who had joined secondary schools.

Table 4. 3 Number of Girls who had joined Secondary School

Response	No	%
Yes	67	44.7
No	83	55.3
Total	150	100

This was an indication that many of the girls never joined secondary schools over 44.7% of them had only one (1) sister joining secondary schools and above 40.3% had only 2 sisters joining secondary schools. Only a small percentage 15% had more than 3 sisters joining secondary schools.

Table 4.4 Number of Sisters Joining Secondary Schools

Sisters	No	%
1	30	44.7
2	27	40.3
Over 3	10	15
Total	67	100

This indicated that a greater percentage over 85% had 2 or less sisters joining secondary schools which seemed to indicate the low opinion of secondary girl child secondary education.

When students were asked why many sisters were not joining secondary schools majority of them 51.8% said that it was because of poverty, 32.5 % said that the cost of education was high and 15.5% said the girls worked at home. This indicates that it is poverty which makes a girl child's education difficulty.

Table 4.5 Reasons for Girls not attending School

Reason	No	%
Poverty	43	51.8
Cost of schooling	27	32.5
Work at home	13	15.7
Total	83	100

This indicated most of the girls were not attending school because of economic reasons as poverty, cost of schooling and working at home respectively in that order.

4.3 Geographical location of a school

When students were asked to say the mode of transport girls were using to go to school if the girls were in day schools most of them 52% said that they used public transport. 32.7% said they walked to school while 15.3% said they used bicycles.

Table 4.6 Mode of Transport to School used by Girls

Mode of transport	No	%
Public transport	78	52
Bicycle	23	32.7
Foot	49	15.3
Total	150	100

With a majority of girls over 67.3% using either public transport or bicycle to go to school indicated that the schools were far away from their homes. Only about 32.7% of girls walked to school meaning that the schools were near their homes.

According to the analyzed data many girls would have attended school if the schools were built near their homes because this could have reduced the cost of transport and most of them would walk to school. Also a greater percentage 28% said they would also go to school if the school were near their homes because this would ensure the safety of the girls.

Table 4.7 Schools Were Near Home Girls would attend.

Reason to attend	No	%
Low cost of transport	58	38.7
Safety for girls	42	28
They can walk to school	50	33.3
Total	150	100

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

In this chapter a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the findings were explained. Further research areas based on the study were also suggested.

5.1 DISCUSSION

According to the analyzed data socio-economic factors such as, poverty and alternative work at homes contributed to a large extent to low participation of girl child in education in Matungu Division, Matungu District. Over 67% of the reasons for failure to go to school were the aforementioned ones. Geographical location of a school was very important as many of them over 84% could not afford public transport and bicycles.

They required that if schools were building near their homes they would have gone to school in total Socio-cultural factors such as early marriage, pregnancy and priority, given to boy's education over the girl's education were also limiting the girl child in participation in education.

Girl schools were fewer compared to boy's schools 12%, 28% respectively. Others over 60% was mixed schools and boys were the majority in those mixed schools. About 84% of the head teachers rated the girl child performance in education as generally low. Meaning that girls had very low access, participation retention and completion rates at secondary schools level in the division. Schools never provided sanitary pads because it was expensive and there was no policy for such in the ministry. Some schools 40% did not provide separate latrines for girls and boys which was also an inhibiting problem to girl child education.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The analyzed data showed that a majority of the students over 66% said that many of the families in the district had more than 8 children. This showed that there were huge families which were somehow unmanageable because of the low-economic status of families in the division.

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Geographical location of a school was very important as many of them over 84% could not afford public transport and bicycles. They required that if schools were built near their homes they would have gone to school in total.

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APPENDIX (A) STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of your school _____

Tick the appropriate choice.

2. How many children are there in your family?

a) 1 – 3 ()

b) 4 – 6 ()

c) 6 – 8 ()

d) Over 8 ()

3. How many sisters / brothers?

a) Sisters 1 ()

2 ()

3 ()

4 ()

5 ()

Others specify ()

b) Brothers 1 ()

2 ()

3 ()

4 ()

5 ()

Others specify ()

4 Are there your sisters who have joined secondary schools?

Yes () No ()

5 If yes, how many are they?

a) 1 ()

b) 2 ()

c) 3 ()

d) Over 4 ()

6. If No why?

- a) Poverty ()
- b) Cost of schooling ()
- c) They work at home ()

6. If day schools how do girls go to school?

- a) Public transport ()
- b) Bicycle ()
- c) By foot ()
- d) Others specify ()

7. If the school was near, girls would attend why?

- a) Low cost of transport ()
- b) Safety of the girls ()
- c) They can walk to school ()

8. Are there any of the girls who have not gone to secondary school because of?

- a) Early marriage ()
- b) Pregnancy ()
- c) Boys priority to learn ()
- d) Unclear policy ()

9. What do you think could be done to make all girls attend school?

APPENDIX (B) Head Teacher's Questionnaire

1. Name of your school _____

Tick appropriate choice

2. Type your school

a) Mixed ()

b) Boys ()

c) Girls ()

3. If mixed how do you rate girls performance in your

a) Very high ()

b) High ()

c) Low ()

d) Very Low ()

4. Do you provide girls and boys latrines separately?

Yes () No ()

5. Are there Programmes to provide sanitary pads to the girls?

Yes () No ()

6. If No why?

a) Low policy ()

b) Low opinion of girl education ()

c) Very expensive ()

7. In your own opinion what do you think should be done to increase girl child performance in education?

DECLARATION

I Wakhungu Juma John declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other University.

Signature-----

Date-----

Candidate's Name

WAKHUNGU JUMA JOHN

BED/20167/81/DF

APPROVAL

This report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the candidates' University Supervisor.

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Name: MR. MUNDU MUSTAFA

DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to my beloved Mother Wilfred Ndonji Wakhungu.

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I wish to express my most sincere thanks and gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Mustafa Mundu for his tireless effort he invested in this research to advice, suggests, monitor and direct me on how to go about it, without which this piece of work would not have been completed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	i
DECLARATION	ii
APPROVAL	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
ABSTRACT	xi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 <i>Overview</i>	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	2
1.3.0 General Objective	3
1.4 Specific Objectives	3
1.4.1 Research Questions	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	4

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview-----	5
2.1 Theoretical Framework-----	5
2.2 Socio-Economic Factors-----	6
2.3 Geographical Location of Schools-----	6
2.4 Socio-Cultural Factors-----	7
2.5 review-----	7

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction-----	8
3.1 Research Design-----	8
3.2 Target Population-----	8
3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size-----	9
3.4 Research Instruments-----	9
3.5 Data Collection Procedures-----	9
3.6 Data Analysis-----	10

CHAPTER FOUR

DAT PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1	Overview-----	11
4.2	Socio-economic factors-----	11
4.3	Geographical location of a school-----	13
4.4	Policy and socio-cultural issues-----	14

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0	0 Overview-----	16
5.1	Discussion-----	16
5.2	Conclusion-----	17
5.3	Recommendations-----	18
REFERENCES-----		19
APPENDICES-----		21
Appendix (A)	: students questionnaire-----	21
Appendix (B)	Headteachers' Questionnaires-----	23
Appendix (C)	: Introduction Letter from Kampala International University-----	24

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEO	Area Education Officer
B.ED	Bachelor of Education
DEO	District Education Officer
EFA	Education for All
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Education Fund

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Target Population by Category-----	8
Table 4.1 Number of children per family -----	11
Table 4.2 Number of siblings in student's families-----	12
Table 4.3 Number of Girls who had joined Secondary School-----	12
Table 4.4 Number of Sisters Joining Secondary Schools-----	13
Table 4.5 Reasons for girls not attending school-----	13
Table 4.6 Mode of Transport to School used by Girls-----	14
Table 4.7 Schools Were Near Home Girls Would Attend-----	14
Table 4.8 Policy and Socio-Cultural Issues on Girl Child Secondary Education-----	15

ABSTRACT

The study looked at assessing the performance of girl child education in selected primary schools in Matungu Division, Matungu District, Kenya.

There are direct and opportunity costs of education which has strong negative effects on female educational opportunities. The purpose of this study was to assess the factors influencing performance of girl child education in relation to access, participation and completion rates in Matungu Division, Matungu District.

The study sought to bring out the current state of knowledge on the socio-economic, socio-cultural, school and political factors influencing female participation in education.

The study adopted a survey research method. The sample included a 25 head teachers and 150 students. The researcher used questionnaires to collect data. Both qualitative analyses descriptive statistics involving tabulations, graphs and percentages was used to analyze the data. The findings were presented in terms of tables and charts and discussions of the findings after every pictorial presentation. A summary, conclusion and recommendations with suggestion for further diagnostic research were made.