

Influence of Cattle Rustling on School Staffing Levels in Laikipia West Sub-County in Laikipia County, Kenya

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Abstract: Education is universally recognized as one of the basic human necessities and rights and an empowering factor. In Kenya, the introduction of free primary school education in 2003 was received with mixed reactions across the country. The government's taskforce reported that the implementation of the program was faced with a number of glaring challenges that required to be addressed. Cattle rustling remain a major issue in Laikipia, mostly in the form of small-scale theft from multiple households, intermittently with the transport of the livestock by lorry to a market abattoir or butcher, the latter is an outlet which has been used by stock thieves since colonial times. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of cattle rustling on school staffing levels in Laikipia West Sub-County, Laikipia County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 2790 respondents comprising of 2,128 standard eight pupils, 73 head teachers, 584 teachers, 1 DEO and 4 inspectors from Laikipia West Sub-County. The sample size was 279 comprising of 213 standard eight pupils, 7 head teachers, 58 teachers and 1 DEO and Inspectors. Simple random sampling method was used to select respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Pre-testing was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used to analyse the data. The study established that cattle rustling affect school staffing levels in Laikipia County. The study concluded that teacher resisted being posted in Laikipia due to insecurity and thus for fear for their lives teachers become reluctant to take up employment in these areas. The study recommended that schools should employ qualified teachers so as to increase the pupils- teacher ratio in the region.

Keywords: Cattle Rustling, School Staffing Levels

I. INTRODUCTION

A cattle rustling is the act of stealing or planning, organizing, attempting, aid or a betting the stealing of livestock by any person from any community where the theft is accompanied by dangerous weapons and/or violence (Harbum & Wallenstein, 2009). Cattle raiding traditionally denoted the war-like practice of large-scale cattle theft common to many pastoral cultures for the purposes of redistributing wealth within society, paying the bride price or warrior initiation which was sanctioned by the elders (Knighton, 2010). Mulken (2007) cited in United Nations report on Impact of Armed Conflict on Children observed that two million children died in Mozambique during armed conflicts between 1986 and 1996. Consequently, six million

children were seriously injured or permanently disabled, and millions more were separated from their families, physically abused, abducted into military groups and, particularly in the case of girls, traumatized by sexual violence and rape.

Globally, in Middle East countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan continued to face insurgent groups who had repeatedly attacked education institutions resulting into security fears that led to the closure of over 70% of schools in Helmand province of Afghanistan. In Gaza, the occupied Palestinian territory, Israeli military attacks in 2008 and 2009 had left 350 children dead and 1,815 injured, and damaged 280 schools. The types of attack included the burning, shelling and bombing of schools, the occupation of schools by armed forces, the murder, torture, abduction and rape of teachers, students, education aid workers and school staff by armed groups or military forces, and the forced recruitment of child soldiers (Mooneyet, 2005).

In Africa, violent conflicts such as cattle rustling severely affected the quality and functioning of educational institutions and the expansion of technology (Otach, 2008). According to O'Malley (2007), African countries ravaged by civil wars are characterized by physical destruction and as a result interrupted the education of children through the damage to schools, absence of teachers, fears of insecurity and changes in family structures and household income. Blattman and Miguel (2010) observed that around 28 million children of primary school age in conflict-affected countries in Africa are out of school and that African countries totally devastated by civil wars such as Somalia have witnessed classrooms, teachers and pupils as legitimate targets.

In Kenya, the introduction of free primary school education in 2003 was received with mixed reactions across the country (UNESCO, 2005). The government's taskforce reported that the implementation of the program was faced with a number of glaring challenges that required to be addressed. Cattle's rustling was and still is one of the major challenges the government faced in its effort to implement free primary school education in the marginalized parts of the country. With the rise in cases of cattle rustling in Baringo district in the past one decade, most people feared for their lives hence disruption of normal daily routines. As a result most areas that experienced cattle rustling recorded low pupil enrolment since

most parents feared for the lives of their children (UNESCO, 2005). Most schools in marginalized areas also registered high dropout rates due to insecurity. Teachers on the other hand had been forced to desert duty and relocate to other places. All these happenings caused serious problems towards accessing primary school education (Katam, 2012).

Cattle rustling remains a major issue in Laikipia, mostly in the form of small-scale theft from multiple households, intermittently with the transport of the livestock by lorry to a market abattoir or butcher, the latter an outlet which had been used by stock thieves since colonial times (GoK, 2009); the report further indicated that the struggle between the pastoralist and farmers over resources had led to increase in cattle rustling activities that are no longer taken to be retributive as were meant to be initially.

According to Mkutu (2008), cattle raiding had been a traditional cultural rite sanctioned by community elders in the area; however, the current system of cattle rustling is perceived as a criminal activity, because it is often perpetrated by non-pastoralists for commercial purposes rather than cultural motives. For instance, fighting in September 2006 led to 25 fatalities although broader estimates put the number at 150 and this was mainly perpetuated by cattle raids owing to the drought of 2005/2006, which was commonly experienced in Samburu District in the periods of 2006 and 2009. While in Laikipia District, the conflict led to the 'Kanampiu massacre' where over 32 people were killed in one cattle raiding incident at a village called Kanampiu in what was then Laikipia West (now Laikipia North).

The Kanampiu massacre stimulated the Laikipia Professionals Peace Caravan (LPPC), a private sector initiative of professionals from pastoral communities to build peace within their respective home areas through facilitating dialogue and social interaction. The Peace Caravan was then upgraded to a national programme through USAID funding, where communities beyond Laikipia were targeted. The conflict between the Pokot and Samburu tribes in Laikipia had lessened since the climax in 2009 although incidents of small-scale clashes have persisted (GoK, 2007).

Laikipia County is part of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) of Kenya, situated in the Rift Valley Province, and has a prevalence of conflict between farmers, pastoralists, large scale ranchers, and wildlife which is another source of violence. The human-wildlife conflict has been a major disruption to human lives through crop raiding, predation of and competition with livestock, destruction of infrastructure and compromising physical safety (GOK, 2009). Fiki and Lee (2005) however, observed that pastoralists and ranchers in Laikipia are generally tolerant to large carnivores and that agro-pastoral conflicts in which farmers and pastoralists compete for access to resources, namely water and pasture are common as is livestock theft

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education is recognized as one of the basic human necessities and rights globally and an empowering factor. This aspect makes education a key area of public policy in all countries. The Kenya government policy to achieve Universal Primary education (UPE) has faced serious challenges in its implementation despite the Kenya's government efforts towards the realization of Education for All (EFA) through Free Primary school education (FPE) Policy (UNICEF & World Bank, 2009). Stock theft is prevalent in Laikipia and led to intense clashes during the period 2006-2009 between the Pokot and Samburu tribes (Collins, 2011). The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP, 2012) established that the contributory root causes of the conflict was an imbalance of power between the Pokot and Samburu tribes supposedly brought about by the lack of impartiality of government and police in their disarmament activities whereby the Samburu were disarmed but the Pokot were not. These attacks lead to the death of teachers and students, the destruction of infrastructure, and also resulted in severe psychological trauma to those exposed to them. In the face of repeated incidences of cattle rustling and threats of attack, children are afraid to go to school and parents are scared of sending them to school whereas teachers are afraid to go to work. The existing studies have been done in other areas with different setting from that of Laikipia west Sub-County. This study therefore aimed at assessing the effect of cattle rustling on school staffing levels in Laikipia West Sub-County, thereby availing relevant information for effective policy formulation on education and security with reference to cattle rustling.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

This study was guided by peace building theory. Redekop (2010) identified five interrelated categories of human identity needs, namely, meaning, connectedness, security, action and recognition. The theory stipulates that deep rooted conflict is about identity; the beliefs, values, culture, religion, meaning systems, history, and imagination that form the core of an individual and by extension, their group. This identity can be described as human identity needs. Individuals are, therefore, prompted to react against social environments that threaten their identity. Such threats include cattle rustling, ethnic violence, insecurity, displacement of populations, among others (Blench, 2005).

This theory was applicable in this study because as indicated above, cattle rustling which is the subject in this study is fueled by: culture, values and history which lead to disruption of children's education in Laikipia West Sub-County (Katam, 2012). The practice of cattle rustling creates insecurity which dehumanizes the affected communities. They no longer find meaningful value in their livelihoods. When values linked to specific identity needs of a group are violated, the immediate reaction is communal conflict. Conflict often subjects the affected people to look for a serene environment conducive

for continuing with their normal activities like farming, cattle keeping and learning, among others. To resolve this conflict, there is need for recognition, appreciation, significance, dignity of self-worth, and regaining face (Katam, 2012).

Empirical Review

According to Opiyo (2004), human resource is the most important resource in a school organization. He adds that teachers comprise the most important staff in the school. However, the contribution made by other staff members such as secretaries, bursars, accounts clerk, matrons, nurses, messengers and watchmen is also important. Okwach and Omondi (2007) observed that the most important purpose of a school is to provide children with equal and enhanced opportunities for learning, and the most important resource a school has for achieving that purpose is the knowledge, skills and dedication of its teachers. Teachers therefore need to be well managed. The head teachers' responsibility in human resource management involves: Leading and motivating staff; delegating responsibilities effectively; and conflict management. With increased number of pupils as a result of free primary school education, teacher student's ratio is likely to be high; leading to increased workload for teachers and this is likely to pose a challenge to head teachers, who are expected to ensure that the quality of education is not compromised (Opiyo, 2004).

The increased incidents of cattle rustling have continued to cause distortions and disturb security and provoke a situation of insecurity. Cattle rustling among pastoral communities are one of the factors contributing to insecurity causing low access to schools (Katam, 2012). Teachers are not spared either and following the conflict of cattle rustling there is mass displacement of teachers. This distorts normal life and learning and teaching is adversely affected as teachers seek transfers to other areas that have not been affected by conflict. Teachers become reluctant to take an employment in areas where the first language is different from their own. Due to their endangered life, they are not able to perform their duties effectively. As violence increases, professional teachers leave the area for fear of insecurity. If the insecurity is heightened

they opt to take transfers or quit jobs and so learning is paralyzed (UNICEF, 2010)

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 2790 respondents comprising of 2,128 standard eight pupils, 73 head teachers, 584 teachers, 1 DEO and 4 inspectors from Laikipia West Sub-County. The sample size was 279 comprising of 213 standard eight pupils, 7 head teachers, 58 teachers and 1 DEO and Inspectors. Simple random sampling method was used to select respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Pre-testing was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used to analyse the data.

V. FINDINGS

The respondents were asked how cattle rustling affected staffing of teachers in Laikipia West Sub-County. Majority of the respondents (71%) indicated that teachers resisted being posted in Laikipia due to insecurity. They explained that this was due to recent attacks and fear for their lives. Teachers become reluctant to take up employment in these areas (Katam, 2012). Majority of those interviewed (56%) indicated that the region was understaffed since teachers were afraid to work in areas prone to cattle rustling. According to Katam (2012) teachers were not spared either following the conflict of cattle rustling since there were mass displacement of teachers and even occurrence deaths. Majority of the respondents (49%) also indicated that schools lost teachers from killings during the attacks while other fled to safer areas. Of the respondents interviewed, 63% indicated that lack of peace affected investments and thus teachers lacked the basic needs required. UNICEF (2010) established that as violence erupted more and more investors shied away and thus due to lack of the necessities the teachers were not able to perform their duties effectively.

The respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statements relating to staffing level in Laikipia West Sub County. The responses are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Staffing Level

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)
Human resource is the most important resource in a school organization	18(11.9)	20(13.2)	18(11.9)	20(13.2)	75(49.6)
Teachers comprise the most important staff in the school	12(7.9)	12(7.9)	17(13.3)	15(9.9)	95(62.9)
The head teachers' responsibility in human resource management involves: Leading and motivating staff; delegating responsibilities effectively; and conflict management	19(12.6)	27(17.2)	2(1.3)	4(2.7)	99(65.6)
With increased number of students as a result of free primary school education, teacher student's ratio is likely to be high, leading to increased workload for teachers.	31(20.5)	15(9.9)	11(7.3)	7(4.6)	87(57.6)
Most teachers prefer teaching in one school for long in the sub-county	34(22.5)	20(13.2)	59(39.1)	21(13.9)	17(11.3)
The greater the number of untrained teachers, the poorer is the performance and subsequent order of merit ranking	13(8.6)	64(42.4)	17(11.3)	21(13.9)	36(23.8)

Key: SD – Strongly Disagree; D – Disagree; N – Neutral; A – Agree; SA – Strongly Agree; f - Frequency

Majority of the respondents (49.6%) strongly agreed that human resource was the most important resource in a school organization. According to Opiyo (2004), human resource was the most important resource in a school organization. On whether teachers comprised the most important staff in the school, 62.9% of the respondents strongly agreed with the said statement. Opiyo (2004) further highlighted that teachers comprised the most important staff in the school. 65.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the head teachers' responsibility in human resource management involved: Leading and motivating staff; delegating responsibilities effectively; and conflict management. Okwach and Omondi (2007) cited that teachers needed to be managed and further said that head teachers responsibility in human resource management involved: Leading and motivating staff; delegating responsibilities effectively; and conflict management. On whether with increased number of pupils as a result of free primary school education, teacher student's ratio was likely to be high, leading to increased workload for teachers, majority of the respondents (57.6%) strongly agreed with the said statement. These findings were consistent with those of Opiyo (2004) who concluded that with increased number of pupils as a result of free primary school education, teacher student's ratio was likely to be high; leading to increased workload for teachers and this was likely to pose a challenge to head teachers. Some respondents (39.1%) were neutral on whether most teachers preferred teaching in one school for long in the sub-county. Katam (2012) pointed out that attacks distorted normal life and learning and teaching was adversely affected as teachers sought transfers to other areas that had not been affected by conflict. 42.4% of the respondents disagreed that the greater the number of untrained teachers, the poorer is the performance and subsequent order of merit ranking. This negated the UNICEF (2010) report which stated that frequent attacks caused the professional teachers to leave the area for fear of insecurity. If the insecurity is heightened they opted to take transfers or quit jobs leaving jobs open to untrained and unqualified teachers.

The respondents were asked to state the impact of cattle rustling on pupils' performance in Laikipia West Sub-County. Some of the respondents (41%) indicated that there was lack of interest in education since most communities valued the rearing of cattle more than education. According to Katam (2012) cultural values led to disruption of children's education in Laikipia West Sub-County. 34% of the respondents further indicated that some pupils became hostile to other pupils; however 47% of the pupils indicated that there were many cases of general indiscipline among pupils. The respondents also indicated that the frequent disruptions contributed to the syllabus not being completed. Conflict often led to disruptions and hostility in the community. This resulted in community members finding no meaningful value in their livelihoods (Katam, 2012)

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that teachers resisted being posted to Laikipia County due to insecurity in the region. Moreover, frequent attacks resulted in mass displacement of teachers as most of them flee to safer regions leaving the schools understaffed. The study recommended that schools should employ qualified teachers so as to increase the pupils- teacher ratio in the region. The study further recommended that in future schools should have boarding facilities so as to ensure that pupils are retained in school throughout the term.

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