Teachers' Perceptions of Social Factors Influencing Boy- Child Drop-Out Rates in Day Mixed Secondary Schools in Kenya

Evaline Chelang'at Koech[1], John M. Momanyi[2] and Shikuku Mulambula[3]
[1,3]Moi University, P.O. Box 3900-30100, Eldoret, Kenya
[2]Bomet University College, P.O. Box 710-20400, Bomet, Kenya

ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that the government of Kenya has introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE), many school going age boys have been dropping out of school. School drop-out for boys is a very serious issue not only in Kenya but also in the whole world. Although many studies have been carried out in other parts of Kenya, none has investigated the factors behind the increased dropout of the boy child in secondary education particularly in Kericho County. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' perceptions on social factors influencing the boy-child's drop-out in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County. The objective of the study was to examine teachers' perceptions on the influence of social factors on boy child drop-out. The study used the descriptive survey research design. The study was guided by Gibson's Theory of Direct Perception theory. The target population comprised of 210 form 4 class teachers. Multistage sampling was used during sampling whereby 136 Form four class teachers were sampled to participate in the study. Quantitative data was collected using a teachers' questionnaires. Piloting of the teachers' questionnaire was carried out to ensure reliability which was estimated using split-half reliability formula. Validity of the instruments was ascertained in relation to the set objectives. Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. The results of the study indicated that the selected social factors such as peer influence, family disputes, indiscipline and love relationships (F= 6.354, p< .05) influenced boy-child drop-out. A regression analysis revealed that social factors contributed 41.1% (R^2 = .411) of the boys drop-out. Boys who dropped out of school are a threat to the society for lack of proper engagement. The results are significant to teachers, parents and students in addressing the factors that influence education retention among boys and they may come up with ways of curbing this drop-out problem.

Keywords: Social factors, secondary school, school drop-out, boy-child.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes that "begins" at birth and ends at death (Mutwol, 2013). According to Lelei and Weidman (2012)'s report on Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET) in Kenya, education involves deliberate, systematic and sustained efforts to acquire knowledge, attitudes, values, skills as well as any other outcome of that effort that shapes the development of an individual.

In accordance with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1949) cited by Supaat and Denson (2019) everyone has a right to education. In 1990, Jomtien in Thailand hosted the world conference on Education for All (EFA). This conference launched the goal of achieving Basic Education for All by the year 2000. Many countries including Kenya, implemented free basic education programs for this reason as they recognized its significant role in economic growth of nations both developed and developing (Dickson, Hughes & Irfan. 2016).

A study by UNESCO (1998) revealed that while children in more developed countries like United Kingdom

(UK), United States of America (USA) and Arab States move from one grade to another without marked decrease in the number in the cohorts, the problem in the number of loss of students in the cohort was worse in the less developed countries like Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Another study by UNESCO (2008) revealed that dropout rates are highest in regions with lowest average incomes and lowest enrolment rates. The study established n South Asia, for example 40 percent of students drop out before completing secondary school, in Africa 26 percent (26%) drop out, while in South Asia up to 22 percent (22%) of students drop out; In the Middle East 7 percent (7%), in East Asia 6 percent (6%) and in the developed countries up to 2 percent (2%) of the students drop out of secondary education. Although there has been progress in improving school participation since 1990 after the World conference on EFA in Jomtien, and other fora like the World Education Forum (UNESCO, 2015a) held in Incheon in the Republic of Korea, there are still high rates of drop-out especially for boys which may be as a result of socio-economic factors in many countries of the world (McKeever, 2017).

In Kenya, The Children's Act which became operational in the year 2001, states that it is the right of each child to receive education irrespective of his or her background (Mutambo, 2016). When FPE was introduced in Kenya in 2003, a total of 1.5 million children joined school and by the year 2008 schools witnessed increased enrolments in primary school to about 9 million from 7.5 million. When the government brought about FDSE, transition rate rose to over 70% from 40% according to the Ministry of Education. Even though enrolment has increased steadily in secondary schools since introduction of FDSE, the rates of drop-out are still relatively high compared to other developing countries (Orodho, 2014). A school report card in 2013 indicated that out of 23 counties, the dropout rate was 3.3 % among boys in comparison to 2.5% among girls. Orwasa and Orodho (2018) reported that more boys than girls drop out of school before they complete form four contributing to educational wastage.

According to Wagachira (2015) many children who enter school in Kenya are unable to complete secondary education due to poverty, weak family structure, domestic problems, school factors such as absenteeism, attitude and behavior of the teachers, repetition in the same class, high cost of secondary education, child labor and large families among others. When students experience failure, they become frustrated and end up alienated and experience exclusion leading to eventual dropout. It is therefore important to develop preventive measures and intervention strategies that could be adopted in order to help the boy child.

The difference between the number graduating in form four and the number enrolled in form one is considered as the drop-out cases which in this case is 3.2%. The emergence of drugs and substance abuse as well as motor bike riding and casual jobs may divert the attention of boys from school by offering them instant gratification. Therefore, Kericho County is not an exception to the pertinent issues facing the boy child yet there is no clear effort towards boy child's retention in secondary education in mixed day secondary education. This worrying trend motivated me to study and find out the perception of class teachers on school factors influencing boy child dropout rates in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite this huge expenditure in providing free education, a substantial amount of this expenditure is spent on those who drop out of school. School dropout for both boys and girls is a very serious issue not only in Kenya but also in the whole world and the boy child has become vulnerable and is missing out in education as a result of dropping out. The boy –child is engaged in other social activities like cattle herding, transport business among others thus missing on education. Boy child dropout is a serious problem because it denies the individual students their fundamental human right to education. Boy-child drop out is an indication that the number of boys in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County is consistently declining, which is evidence of a gap that need bridging. This study sought to investigate the class teachers' perceptions on social factors influencing boy-child's dropout in public mixed day secondary schools in

Kericho County.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following objectives guided the study:

1. To find out teachers' perceptions of the influence of social factors on boy-child drop-out in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County,
2. To identify the social factors that affect the boy child to drop out of school.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There is need for intervention programs to curb boys' secondary school dropout. Various psychological theories may be applied in addressing the root causes of boy-child dropout.

Gibson's Theory of Direct perception highlight how students are affected directly through interaction with their teachers. This theory, therefore, has an ecologically based principles to justify their complementarity hence justifies their use.

Gibson's Theory of Direct Perception

According to Gibson's theory of direct perception (1979), the information in the sensory receptors, including the sensory context, is all that is needed to perceive anything. As the environment supplies with all the information needed for perception, this view is sometimes also called ecological perception. In other words, people do not need higher cognitive processes or anything else to mediate between their sensory experiences and their perceptions. Existing beliefs or higher-level inferential thought processes are not necessary for perception. Gibson (1979) who introduced the concept affordances to describe the relationship that exist between organisms and their environment states that affordances of the environment offer the animal what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. The main idea of Gibson's central claim of visual perception was about the compilation of the various environmental factors and the relationships or interaction between the person and the environment leading to a change in the mind of the person.

Gibson believed that, in the real world, sufficient contextual information usually exists to make perceptual judgments. The theory claims that people need not appeal to higher level intelligent processes to explain perception. The theory explains that people use this contextual information directly in essence people are biologically tuned to respond to it. According to Gibson, people use texture gradients as cues for depth and distance. Those cues aid them to perceive directly the relative proximity or distance of objects and of parts of objects.

In this study, there is strong evidence to show that the brain and long-term memory can influence perception. In this case, it could be said that Gibson's theory is far more plausible in this study because it will bring the teachers' and students' perception on the matter clearly. In this study, teachers will have their perceptions on the factors influencing boy child drop-out rate in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County. The invariants in this study were the factors contributing to boy child dropout as they could not change and the affordances were the perceptions of class teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Location of the Study

This study was carried out in Kericho County, Kenya. Kericho County is one of the 47 counties in the

Republic of Kenya. It is located in the South Rift of the Great Rift Valley, about 256 km from Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. The County borders the Uasin Gishu County to the North West, Baringo County to the North, Nandi County to the North-West, Nakuru County to the East and Bomet County to the South. It is bordered to the South West by Nyamira and Homa Bay Counties and to the West by Kisumu County.

Sample of Study

Class teachers were chosen because they dealt with students' directly on daily basis and kept their attendance registers and have the information on the dropouts. Information which was obtained from these participants regarding principals' and class teachers' perception on social factors influencing boy-child dropout was deemed reliable as they were the key players in the school.

The study used multistage sampling whereby out of 256 secondary schools in Kericho County, 176 public mixed day secondary schools were considered as the population to be studied and out of these 176 schools, 121 schools were sampled randomly for study. A sample of 121 form four class teachers were purposively selected. A questionnaire was given to class teachers and had two sections, namely; background information which comprised of demographic details of the respondents and specific information of how the independent variables (Social factors) influence boy-child drop-out from school (dependent variable).

DATA ANALYSIS

The study adopted a quantitative methodology to document and analyze the teachers' perceptions on the social factors influencing boy- child dropout. Data analysis was carried using Statistical packages for social science (SPSS) computer program version 24. This was appropriate as it was comprehensive, integrated collection of computer programs for managing, analyzing and displaying data.

Descriptive and inferential statistics was computed from the quantitative data. The quantitative data was subjected to regression where the various factors of dropout was analyzed. The data analysis results were presented in form of tables.

FINDINGS

Influence of Social Factors on Boy-Child Drop-Out Rate

One of the most benefits of obtaining education is that it moves forward prospects for employment. The socio-economic status of the client of the education framework can affect the request for education (Lumapenet, 2017). Lack of financial development in Kenya has led to destitution among Kenyan families as 50% of Kenyans live below poverty lines and are hence incapable of getting essential needs such food nourishment, protection, wellbeing and education. Due to destitution, guardians or parents are at times incapable of meeting both the coordinate and circuitous costs of tutoring which makes them withdraw their children from school. The objective of the study was to find out the influence of social factors on boy-child drop-out rate in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County, Kenya.

A majority (52.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that peer influence leads to boy -child dropout. The findings of this study are concurrent with the findings of Omollo and Yambo (2017) who asserted that peer pressure is the principle cause of drop outs not only for boys but also for girls. 45.3% of the respondents agreed that love relationship increased school drop-out for boys. The findings of this study support thefindings of the study done by Rumberge and Rotermund (2012) who insisted that boys who impregnate teenage girls end up dropping out of school and this is was a result of love relationships.

A large proportion (56.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that indiscipline leads to school dropout. The

findings of this study corroborate with the findings of the study done by Snilstveit, Gallagher, Phillips, Vojtkova, Eyers, Skaldiou and Davies (2017).

Moreover, 46.2% reported that family disputes contribute to boy-child school drop-out. The findings of this study are in agreement with findings of the study done by Symeou, Martínez-González and Álvarez-Blanco (2012) who insisted that family is the pillar and therefore when there are disputes, it affects the education of the child negatively.

An analysis of variances between the two variables was carried out. The following hypothesis was tested:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between class teachers' perceptions of social factors and boy-child's drop-out rate.

Table 1: One way analysis of variance for class teachers' perceptions of social factors and boy-child's drop-out rate.

Source of Variation		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F_{obs}	Sig.
1	Regression	33.782	10	3.378	6.354	.000 b
	Residual	48.385	91	0.532		
	Total	82.167	101			

a. Dependent Variable: Boys dropping out of school is on the increase.
b. Predictors: (Constant), Peer influence leads to boy-child drop out from school, Love relationship increases school drop-out for boys, Family disputes contribute to boy-child school drop-out, High level ofindiscipline leads to boy-child drop-out.

The ANOVA test produced F_{obs} = 6.354. Since Fob = 6.354 > Fcrit (10, 91, .05) = 3.92, HO_1 is rejected. Showing that there was a significant relationship between class teachers' perceptions of social factors and boy-child's drop-out rate.

Therefore, from the model summary and ANOVA, analysis of variance showed significant difference. Although the relationship between perceived influence of the social factors and boy-child dropout is weak, it is significant, the difference is not due to chance or errors.

Table 2: Model Summary of Class Teachers' Perceptions of Social Factors and Boy-Child Dropout

Model Summary[b]						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
1	.641[a]	0.411	0.346	0.729	0.411	6.354

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peer influence leads to boy-child drop out from school, Love relationship increases school drop-out for boys, Family disputes contribute to boy-child school drop-out, High level of indiscipline leads to boy-child drop-out.
b. Dependent Variable: Boys dropping out of school is on the increase.

From the regression model, a correlation coefficient value of .641[a] was established. This shows a weak

linear relationship of boy-child drop-out and the independent variables. A coefficient of determination (R-square) value of .411 was established. This underscores the fact that social factors accounted for 41.1% of the boy child drop-out.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study was carried out to establish the class teachers' perceptions on selected factors influencing boy-child dropout in public mixed day secondary schools. . The study found out that majority of the respondents (class teachers) strongly agreed when asked whether peer influence leads to boy-child drop out from school. Moreover, the study realized that love relationships increase school drop-out for boys. On the other hand, high level of indiscipline leads to boy-child drop-out, as majority of the respondents strongly agreed giving an indication that discipline should be upheld in every school in order to reduce boy-child drop-out from school (UNESCO, 2015b).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that social factors such as peer influence, family disputes, indiscipline and love relationships lead to boy-child drop out from school. A high level of indiscipline of boys contribute to boy child drop-out from school. Schools in Kenya should embrace the strategies to curb boy-child dropout which include; proper and effective guidance and counselling, sensitization of parents, making schools friendly to students and coming up with policies that can assist in handling indiscipline cases.

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education enforces policy guide lines in curbing drop-outs in schools. Teachers' should establish appropriate motivation methods such as rewarding academic achievements for students to maintain their interest in school.

REFERENCES

1. Dickson, R., Hughes, B. B., & Irfan, M. T. (2016). *Advancing global education*. New York: Routledge. https:// doi.org/10.4324/9781315636153.
2. J. J. (1979). *The Ecological Approach to visual Perception.* Boston: Houghton-Miffin.
3. Lelei, M. C., & Weidman, J. C. (2012). Education development in Kenya: Enhancing access and In *Quality and Qualities* (pp. 143-162). Brill.
4. Lumapenet, (2017). Influence of the Family on the Pupils' Reading Performance. Sage Publishers pg. 21-22.
5. McKeever, (2017). Educational inequality in apartheid South Africa. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *61*(1), 114-131.
6. Mutambo, C. (2016). School-Based Factors Influencing Integration of Child's Rights in Public Primary Schools in Kakamega South Sub-County, Kakamega County, Kenya Cecilia Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi.
7. Mutwol, L. C. (2013). Socio- Economic Factors Influencing Participation and Drop-out of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Marakwet District. Kenyatta University. Master of Education Thesis.
8. Omollo, A. E., & Yambo, J. M. (2017). Influence of peer pressure on secondary school students drop-out in Rongo Sub-County, Migori County, Master of Education Thesis.
9. Orodho, J. A. (2014). Policies on free primary and secondary education in East Africa: Are Kenya and Tanzania on course to attain Education for All (EFA) Goals by *International Organization of Scientific Research (IOSR) Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOSR-JHSS)*, *19*, 11-20.
10. Orwasa, B., & Orodho, J. A. (2018). Wastage in Public Secondary Schools: Strategies to Reduce Effects of Home -Based Variables in Kericho County, Kenya. Greener *Journal of Educational Research, 8*(4): 076-084, http://doi.org/10.15580/GJER.2018.4.060718078.

11. Rumberger, R. W., & Rotermund, S. (2012). The relationship between engagement and high school drop-out. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 491-513). Springer, Boston, MA.

12. Snilstveit, , Gallagher, E., Phillips, D., Vojtkova, M., Eyers, J., Skaldiou, D., & Davies, P. (2017). Protocol: Interventions for improving learning outcomes and access to education in low-and middle-income countries: a systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, *13*(1), 1-82.

13. Supaat, D. I., & Denson, R. (2019). Linking women empowerment and children's right to education and the quest to reduce *Al-Shajarah*.V8 pg. 66-70.

14. Symeou, L., Martínez-González, R. A., & Álvarez-Blanco, L. (2012). Dropping out of high school in Cyprus: do parents and the family matter? *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 19(1), 113–131. doi:10.1080/ 02673843.2012.717899.

15. UNESCO (1998). *Wasted Opportunities*: When Schools Fail. Yaris: UNESCO.

16. UNESCO (2008). *Education for All by 2015:* Will we make it? Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

17. UNESCO (2015a). World Education Forum (WEF) 2015. Incheon, Korea: UNESCO

18. UNESCO (2015b). *School Drop-out: Patterns, Causes, Changes and policies*. Dakar, Senegal: UNESCO.

19. Wagachira, M. N. (2015). *Factors influencing girl student drop-out rate in mixed public secondary schools in Murang'a County, Kenya*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi.