

Teachers' Perceptions on School Based Factors Influencing Boy-Child Drop-Out Rates and Intervention Strategies in Secondary Schools in Kenya

Evaline Chelangat Koech¹, Dr. John M. Momanyi^{2*}, and Dr. Shikuku M. Mulambula¹

¹Moi University, Kenya

²Bomet University College, Bomet, Rift Valley, Kenya

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2023.101024>

Received: 17 September 2023; Accepted: 27 September 2023; Published: 17 November 2023

ABSTRACT

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 in the whole world over. Although many studies have been carried out in other parts of Kenya, none has investigated the school based 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 perception on the influence of school-based factors on boy child dropouts, The objectives of the study were; to examine teachers' perceptions on the influence of school-based factors on boy child dropout and to find out the intervention strategies put in place to curb the increasing boy child drop-out in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County. The study used the descriptive survey research design.. The study was guided by the Bronfenbrenner's Biosystems Theory. The target population comprised 176 principals of public mixed day secondary schools and 210 form four class teachers totaling to 386. Multistage sampling was used during sampling whereby 121 schools were sampled to participate in the study. A sample of 121 principals and 136 form four class teachers were selected purposively. Data was collected using teacher questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and reported in narrations. 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 school-based factors such as poor performance, teachers' hostility, inadequate teaching and learning resources ($F = 5.105, p < .05$) influenced boy-child drop-out and the perceived interventions were confirmed. A regression analysis revealed that School based factors contributed 35.0% ($R^2 = .350$) of the boys drop-out rates. The findings of the study can be used to provide useful information to the ministry of education policy makers on the implementation of workable strategies that can promote boys' education. The results are significant to the teachers, parents and other stakeholders in addressing the factors that influence education retention among boys and ways of curbing the drop-out problem.

Key words: Perceptions, Drop-out, Intervention Strategies, Perceptions, School based Factors

INTRODUCTION

Development in any country is reliant to the education of its children. This is the main goal why countries worldwide devote much of their financial muscle in education. In spite of this commitment, Injendi and Jephthar (2020) found out that there had been a growing decline in the number of boys who complete secondary education in Kenya which stand out as a hindrance in achieving an ideal equality and universality in education. According to UNESCO (2000) people who are educated are more productive than those who are not. This is because education enhances their skills making them better informed. Such people live healthily, plan their families, are law abiding and take good care of their children by providing basic requirements like food, shelter and clothing (Pandey, Hale, Das, Goddings, Blakemore & Viner (2018).

Investing in education is therefore justified as the best tool for creating and accelerating social and all other kinds of developments in a country.

The dropout rate of the boy-child is a stressing issue globally and remedies are being conducted to control it. In spite of accomplishment in school participation enhancement since 1990 after the worldwide gathering on Education For All (EFA) that took place in Jomtein in Thailand, dropout still stay tall generally for boys coming about from possible socio-economic components in most of the African Nations (UNESCO, 2012).

Regionally, most African countries have incorporated and made Free Primary Education (FPE) policy a reality. Although generally, schooling in most parts of Africa is not free and many children never get the opportunity to attend school and if they get it, then chances of dropping out of school remain at an all-time high (Min-Kyung, 2016). Dropping out from school after children have previously achieved access to school is a major problem in many developing countries. In Africa, countries such as Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali and Mozambique, the statistics shows that at least 60% of drop-outs case are old in terms of age, more than 90% of children from the poor backgrounds in terms of their economic status and more than 70% of children with mothers who did not attend school drop-out of education (Mishra & Azeez, 2014).

According to the Kenyan Vision 2030 (National Economic and Social Council of Kenya NESC, 2007), Kenya declared Education as basic to all children. It has passed as law that each child should attend school and any person who fails to take his/her child to school will have committed an offence and can be taken to court. Manzuoli, Pineda-Báez & Sánchez (2019) observe that causes of boy-child wastage vary from one place to another. World Bank (2007) called for various studies on drop-out to be carried out in various regions and come up with ways of minimizing the drop-out rates and improving efficiency in education. Kenya has not been left out in this research of drop-out of boys from public day secondary schools. The media carefully pointed out that due to the emphasis on girl education and rerouting girls back to school, the drop-out rate of girls has declined while that of boys had gone up (Karabo & Natal, 2013). According to Mwihi and Ongek (2019), the drop-out rate of girls in Kenya is 2% while that of boys is 2.1%. Although this has been observed, not many studies have been done to establish the cause of boy-child drop-outs from public day secondary schools, hence creating the need for more study in the area of why many boys than girls drop-out of secondary schools. The higher drop-out rate of boys means that the resources used for providing education for that particular child are wasted because they have not acquired the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to effectively participate in the total development of the nation (Parr, 2013). This wastage due to the dropping out of boys from school has caused concern to the government, educators and all other education stakeholders and hence the need for this study.

Kericho County has registered increasing high drop-out rates since 2012 as indicated in Table 1. According to the statistics from the County Director of Education, boys' drop-out cases in Kericho County are at 3.2% on average, which is much higher than the national index of 2.1% as reported by Mwihi and Ongek (2019).

Table 1: Enrolment and Completion of Male Students in Kericho County Public Day Secondary Schools

Form 1 Year	Enrolment	Form 4 Year	Completion	Drop-out Frequency	% Drop-out
2012	1902	2015	1889	13	0.7
2013	1916	2016	1892	24	1.2
2014	1930	2017	1876	54	2.8
2015	1936	2018	1869	67	3.5
2016	1985	2019	1898	87	4.4
2017	1987	2020	1893	94	4.7

2018	1885	2021	1786	99	5.3
Total	13541		13103	438	3.2

Source: Ministry of Education, Kericho County (2020)

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 principals and class teachers on social, economic and school factors influencing boy child dropout rates and the intervention strategies taken to curb the same in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County.

Statement of the Problem

Since the introduction of Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) as a measure of providing education to its citizens, many learners joined school. Data from Kericho County shows that the boy child dropout rates over the last five years have continued to rise raising a lot of concern. This trend 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. In order to achieve maximum gains from FDSE, the exact problem hindering retention has to be identified. Boy child dropout is a serious problem because it denies the individual students their fundamental human right to education. This, therefore, necessitated the study to investigate teachers' perceptions on school-based factors influencing boy-child dropout in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County and find a solution to mitigate the current situation. School and government intervention strategies sum up the solutions to be taken in order to mitigate the boy-child drop out issue.

Objectives of the Study

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

- To find out teachers' perceptions on the influence of the school-based factors on boy-child drop-out in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County,
- To establish the intervention strategies put in place to curb the increasing boy-child drop-out in Public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho

Research Hypothesis

In order to achieve the purpose of the study the following hypothesis was tested:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between class teachers' perceptions of school- based factors and boy-child's drop-out.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bio-Ecological Systems Theory of Bronfenbrenner

There is need for intervention programs to curb boys' secondary school dropout. The theory relevant to this study was Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci., 1994) which posits that a child's development as a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding

environment, from family and school to broad cultural values, laws and customs. Bronfenbrenner divided the people's environment into six different systems: the microsystems, the mesosystems, the exosystems, the macrosystems, the chronosystems and the biosystems. The microsystem comprises of the things that have direct contact with the child in their immediate environment such as parents, siblings, teachers and school peers. The interactions within microsystems are often very personal and are crucial for fostering and supporting the child's development. If a child has strong nurturing relationships with their parents, it will have a positive effect on the child. This can explain why children who come from functional families tend to succeed in education and other life issues. Whereas, distant and unaffectionate parents will have a negative effect on the child, such children easily drop out of school and in most cases become criminals.

The mesosystem encompasses the interaction between the child's microsystem elements such as interactions between the child's parents and teachers, or between school peers and siblings. If the child's parents and teachers have good relationship, it will have positive effect on the child's development compared with negative effect when teachers and parents do not get along. This in other words can be said to be interaction between two microsystems. The exosystem refers to settings that do not involve the child as an active participant but still affects them and include the neighborhood, parent's workplaces, parent's friends and mass media. These are environment in which the child is not involved, and are external to their experience, but nonetheless affect them anyway.

The macrosystem focuses on how cultural elements affect a child's development, such as socio-economic status, wealth, poverty, and ethnicity. Thus, culture that individuals are immersed within may influence their beliefs and perceptions about events that transpire in life. This may explain why children from dysfunctional families drop out of school and engage in criminal activities becoming a threat to society. For example, a child living in a third world country would experience a different development than a child living in a wealthier country.

Chronosystem consist of all the environmental changes that occur over the lifetime which influences development, including major life transitions, and historical events for example starting a school, parents getting a divorce or having moved to a new house. This affects the children's development and their perception of life issues like education. Biosystem comprises of a living organism, genetic potential or a system of living organisms that can directly or indirectly interact with others. The inherited potential of the child has bearing on dropout in that there are children who can stand whatever challenges they face due to their strong inherited character where as there are others with weak character and cannot stand any challenge, they easily give up and drop out of school.

LOCALE OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in Kericho County, Kenya. Kericho County. Kericho County is endowed with well-equipped secondary schools. The region is cosmopolitan with vast tea estates, sugarcane plantations and coffee growing that accommodate people from different parts of the country with different cultures and religion. Majority of the residents are peasant farmers who barely produce enough to feed themselves. There are both rural and urban dwellers and this is a source of varied views on the subject under study. Despite the implementation of free day secondary education, boy-child drop-out had been rising and that elicited the concern for the study in this area.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Influence of School Factors on Boy-Child Drop-Out

The objective of the study was to find out the influence of school factors on boy-child drop-out rate in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County, Kenya.

The null hypothesis HO_1 was to establish whether there is a significant relationship between school-based factor and boy child drop-out was test.

To test whether the scores were related, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 2: ANOVA Descriptive Summary on Class Teachers' Perceptions of School-Based Factors and Boy-Child Dropout

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F _{obs}	Sig.
1	Regression	30.855	10	3.085	5.105	.000 _b
	Residual	57.419	95	.604		
	Total	88.274	105			

1. Dependent Variable: Boys dropping out of school is on the increase.
2. Predictors: (Constant), Long distance to school from home contributes to school dropout, Harsh school policies affect students' turnover directly and result to involuntary leaving of learners from schools, Students attitude towards school influence dropout, Poor performance in school contributes to school drop dropout, Poor or lack of proper sanitary and toilet facilities impact negatively on the retention rates of boy-students in schools, Expulsion or suspension of students makes them drop out of school, Hostile teachers anger boys to drop out of school, School practices that inform the students on the need of education encourage boys to complete the school course, Inadequate teaching and learning facilities catalyzed boy child drop out of school.

Analysis of Variance was used to test the significance of the regression model as pertains to significance in the differences in means of the dependent and independent variables. The ANOVA test produced an F-value of 5.105. The critical $F_{(crit\ 10,95, .05)}$ value is 1.91, HO_1 was rejected.

Table 3: Model Summary of Class Teachers' Perceptions of School-Based Factors and Boy-Child Dropout

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
1	.591 _a	0.35	0.281	0.777	0.35	5.105

1. Predictors: (Constant), Long distance to school from home contributes to school dropout, Harsh school policies affect students' turnover directly and result to involuntary leaving of learners from schools, Students attitude towards school influence dropout, Poor performance in school contributes to school drop dropout, Poor or lack of proper sanitary and toilet facilities impact negatively on the retention rates of boy-students in schools, Expulsion or suspension of students makes them drop out of school, Hostile teachers anger boys to drop out of school, School practices that inform the students on the need of education encourage boys to complete the school course, Inadequate teaching and learning facilities catalyses boy child drop out of school.
2. Dependent Variable: Boys dropping out of school is on the increase.

From the regression model in table 3, a correlation coefficient value of 0.591^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 0.350 was established. This underscores the fact that boy-child drop-out accounted for 35% changes in the teachers' perception.

Therefore, from the model summary and ANOVA, analysis of variance showed significant difference. The null hypothesis which states that is no significant relationship between class teachers' perceptions of school-based factors and boy-child's drop-out) was rejected at p level set at .05. Although the relationship is weak, but it is significant. The school-based factors have a statistical impact on dropout of the boy-child, although the teacher's perception is ambivalent.

School Strategies to Curb Boy-Child Dropout

Dropout prevention programs provide at risk students with specific supports such as mentoring, counseling, vocational or social-emotional skills training, college preparation, supplemental academic services, or case management.

The second objective of the study was to find out the school strategies put in place to curb boy-child drop-out rate in public mixed day secondary schools in Kericho County, Kenya.

The respondents reported these specific strategies as means of curbing boy child drop out rates:

- Schools had flexible programming and scheduling to create positive attitude towards learning. Schools
- guided and counselled the students more frequently.
- Schools responded to students' individual needs.
- School sponsors made meaningful contributions towards student retention in school. School rules and regulations were set to help reduce school drop-out.
- Staff members related with students such that they can open up to them and share their individual problems.
- Schools provided lunch programs for day scholars reduces boy-child drop-out.
- Schools increased parental involvement in the school activities in order to reduce drop-out. Schools
- conducted mentorship services with the aim of reducing boy-child drop-out.

CONCLUSION

The first objective of the study was to find out how school factors influence boy-child drop-out in Kericho County, Kenya. The research findings revealed that that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that poor performance in school contributes to school drop dropout. Further majority of them agreed that expulsion or suspension of students makes them drop out of school. Also, majority of them agreed that students' attitudes towards school and distance to school from home influence dropout.

However, majority of the participants disagreed that poor or lack of proper sanitary and toilet facilities impact negatively on the retention rates of boy-students in schools. On the other hand, inadequate teaching and learning facilities was found to catalyze boy child drop out of school as majority of the participants agreed. However, most participants disagreed when asked whether harsh school policies affected students' turnover directly and result to involuntary leaving of learners from schools.

On whether school practices that inform the students on the need of education encourage boys to complete the school course, majority of the participants disagreed. Finally, the study found out that principals that involve students in the leadership and decisions do not reduce the chances of drop-outs as majority of the participants disagreed. Further, the findings show that majority of class teachers and principals who participated in the study indicated that affected parents visit schools at least once per term.

The second objective of the study was to find out school intervention strategies set to curb the boy-child drop-out rate in Kericho County, Kenya. The study found out that majority of respondents strongly agreed that schools conduct mentorship services which reduce boy-child drop-out. Also, majority of the respondents

agreed that schools respond to students' individual needs and schools' guides and counsels' students frequently. Majority of the respondents agreed that staffs relate well with students such that they can open up to them and share their problems.

Majority of the respondents also agreed that school rules and regulations set by schools help to reduce school drop-out. Furthermore, majority of the respondents agreed strongly that school provision of lunch programs for day scholars reduced boy-child drop-out. On whether school sponsors make meaningful contributions towards student retention in school, majority strongly agreed. It was agreed by the majority of the respondents that, school increases parental involvement with school activities in order to reduce drop-out and strongly disagreed by the majority that school motivates the learners by awarding the top performing students.

Finally, majority of the respondents agreed that flexible programming and scheduling create positive attitudes towards learning. Further information from the interviews showed that strategies employed by the school to curb boy-child drop-out rate are as follows: Guidance and counselling, involvement of local administration such as chiefs, contacting their parents, allowing the needy students to learn for free and organizing mentorship programs for the boys. The intervening impact of the teachers working experience clearly indicate their ambivalent position on the issue.

REFERENCES

1. Bronfenbrenner, U., & Ceci, S. J. (1994). Nature-nuture reconceptualized in developmental perspective: A bioecological Psychological review, 101(4), 568.
2. Injendi, J., & Jephthar, M. (2020). Secondary School Students' Drop-outs and Crime Escalation in Vihiga County, Kenya. *European journal of education studies*, 7(11), 42.
3. Karabo, M., & Natal, A. (2013). Factors influencing high drop-out rates of girl child from education: A case study of black women in North West Province, *South Journal of social development in Africa*, 28(1), 111-138.
4. Kericho County Education Office (2020). *Population of schools in Kericho Nairobi: Government Printers*.
5. Manzuoli, C. H., Pineda-Báez, C., & Sánchez, A. D. V. (2019). School Engagement for Avoiding Drop-out in Middle School *International Education Studies*, 12(5), 35-48.
6. Min-Kyung, L. E. E. (2016). In Defiance of School Education: Retrospective Narratives of the New Generation of Drop-out Youths in Korea *Journal*, 56(3), 33-62.
7. Mishra, P. J., & Azeez, A. (2014). Family etiology of school drop-outs: A psychosocial *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Approach and Studies*, 1(5), 136- 146.
8. Mwihiya, C., & Ongek, M. (2019). Factors Influencing Boy Child Drop-out from Public Secondary Schools in Kinangop Sub County, Nyandarua County, Kenya. *European Journal of Education Studies*.
9. National Planning Commission (2013). *National development plan: Vision Nairobi: Government Printers*.
10. Pandey, A., Hale, D., Das, S., Goddings, A. L., Blakemore, S. J., & Viner, R. M. (2018). Effectiveness of universal self-regulation-based interventions in children and adolescents: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA pediatrics*, 172(6), 566-
11. Parr, A. (2013). *Academic achievement motivation and high school drop-out: an integrative Doctoral dissertation, Ph. D. Thesis, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, IL.*
12. UNESCO (2000). *Review of education for all goals. Dakar, UNESCO.*
13. UNESCO (2012). *International standard classification of education: ISCED Int. Stand. Classif. Educ. (ISCED). UNESCO.*
14. World Bank (2007). *Kenya Free Education Support Project. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/529421468752372875/KenyaFreePrimary-Education-Support-Project>.*