

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE GIRL CHILD DROP OUT FROM PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Ensuring formal education to all children has been an area of lively debate throughout the world and with varying viewpoints on the issue. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) speak of achieving universal Basic Education and Promoting Gender Equality in Education. In Kenya there is an alarming difference between the numbers of girls attending secondary school. In many rural counties including Teso South Sub-County, the vast majority of school-aged girls are not enrolled in secondary school. The purpose of this study therefore was to analyze the socio-economic factors that influence girl child dropout in secondary schools in Kenya. Specifically, the study was to find out the socio-economic factors behind drop out of the girl child from secondary school in Teso South Sub-county. A descriptive survey design was used in this study. The study had a population of 921 respondents consisting of 1 Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (QASO), 120 secondary school teachers, 300 parents and 500 students. 93 respondents were sampled entailing 1 QASO using purposive sampling while 12 teachers, 30 parents and 50 students were selected by simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews schedule. Face validity of the instruments were established by experts in research methods in the Department of Educational Management and Foundations of Mount Kenya University, whose views were used in redrafting the instruments. Reliability of the questionnaire was determined by a test-retest method. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed by use of descriptive statistics in form of percentages and frequencies. Qualitative data from interviews were organized into themes and sub-themes as they emerged. The study found that socio-economic factors like poverty, parent education level, early marriage; cultural environment and social environment influenced girl child drop out from secondary school. It was recommended that to curb the girl child drop out, there was need for: improving life opportunities for girls, community sensitization on the importance of girl child education, promotion of clean water supply and sanitation facilities, tackling girl child abuse and provision of guidance and counseling to prevent HIV and AIDS spread and sexual harassment and finally, monitoring gender inequality in education system.

Key words: Girl child, Drop out, socio-cultural factors

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, ensuring formal education to all children has been an area of lively debate for more than a decade with many different viewpoints on the issue. The World Declaration of Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990), the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, the E9 Declaration of Education for All (2000) and the 12-year old Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) were aimed at giving prominence to basic education (Mukherjee,

2011). The Jomtien Conference of 1990 established the goal of achieving basic Education for All (EFA) by the year 2000 and provided an expanded vision for basic education to include early childhood care and education, programmes for out-of-school children and literacy programmes for adults. In spite of all the rhetoric, universal access to basic education still remains an unfulfilled pledge in many parts of the world despite pronouncements at various International Fora. Sadly, Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) is still a distant prospect in substantial parts of the globe. Education is a fundamental human right as well as a catalyst for economic growth and human development (World Bank, 1993 and Okidi, 2004). In September 2000, 188 heads of state from around the world signed the Millennium Declaration and established the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While most goals aim to achieve significant progress in development by 2015, one goal was to be achieved by 2005 – gender parity in primary and secondary education. But, more than 75 countries are likely to miss this goal.

In 2004, the national Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) was 31.7% for boys and 27.3% for girls (MOE, 2007). Countless students have endured schooling which is traditionally designed to fit them for domestic roles but countless others have demanded more as observed by FAWE (2004) that female students from deceased parents mainly dropout of school to take care of their young siblings. Gathigah (2010) notes that learners drop out of schools due to factors that entails: poverty, insecurity, lack of basic needs and catastrophes like drought and famine. Reports by the Ministry of Education revealed that despite enormous gains on access to education; there are dropouts of female students in secondary school and a decline in completion rates (MOEST, 2005). In all secondary school levels, the proportionate loss between each successive year of schooling is greater for girls than for boys (MOEST, 2005). Table 1.1 clearly indicates the loss for example in the year 1998, 92,000 girls enrolled in Form 1 and in Form 2 in the year 1999 they had dropped to 83,000. However in the year 2000 enrolment for girls was 97,000 and in Form 2 in the year 2001 they had dropped to 95,000. Overall, only slightly more than half the female secondary school entrants proceed to form four. Drop out rate by gender is still a key area of concern at secondary school level. Enrolment in Busia District, which aggregates 462,357 for all five years ranking it among the lower enrolment, is attributed to high levels of poverty (in 1999, absolute poverty stood at 66%). Teso and Mt. Elgon Sub-Counties register the lowest number of students enrolled in all five years with 289,398 and 203,192 respectively. Key issues affecting enrolment in these sub-counties are early marriages, cultural beliefs and poverty.

Low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is recorded for female enrolment in Teso (102% for boys against 94% for girls) with cultural practices having an impact on female enrolment in this Sub-County. Enrolment for both boys and girls improved in 2003 after the implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE), with only a difference of 5862 between male and female enrolment. While girls in some parts of the country are being accorded equal opportunity as the male child to access education, the girl child in Teso-South Sub-County is undergoing segregation based on the outdated taboo that denies her opportunity compared to the male counterpart (Papai, 2013). Teso region situated in Busia County has two Sub-Counties; Teso North and South respectively.

Statement of the Problem: Secondary education is critical given that it prepares both boys and girls for tertiary education, career choice, and for overall effective community roles, survival and development. The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education has developed a gender policy through collaborative effort to underscore its commitment to advancing the status of women. However, gender disparities in secondary school enrolment in Teso South Sub-County still remain

high. These disparities need to be addressed in order to achieve social equality and empower women, as there are benefits that accrue from investing in educating women. Girls with poor backgrounds and those with special educational needs remained disadvantaged. In addition, drop out for girls was higher than for boys in most areas. The attention of the commission was drawn to gender stereotypes in the attitudes, behaviour and teaching practices that have a direct bearing on girls' performance, persistence and achievement in education. Considerable evidence has shown that nationally, there are more girls than boys at the on-set of schooling yet as they move up the academic ladder, the number keeps declining creating a notable gender disparity with regard to access, retention, and completion of the secondary school cycle as reported by World Bank (1995). In Teso South Sub-County, the GER of the girl child in secondary schools has been declining despite the government and non-governmental organizations' efforts to support the girl child education. The reasons for the declining GER of the girl child in public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County cannot be discerned without a focused study. Hence, the study analyzed the socio-economic dynamics that contribute to girl child drop out from public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County.

Purpose and Specific Objectives: The purpose of this study was to analyze the socio-economic factors that influence girl child dropout in secondary schools in Kenya. Specifically, the study was to find out the socio-economic factors behind drop out of the girl child from secondary school in Teso South Sub-county

Significance of the study: The findings of the study may be significant in various ways: It may enable various stakeholders in the education sectors to discern the problem of girl child dropout, in terms of its causes and extent, as well as strategies that can be applied to address it in public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. The Ministry of Education may also use the results to enlighten the principals on best practices that will encourage retention of the girl child in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. Lastly, scholars may find the literature in this study useful for future research.

Scope of the Study: The study focused on Teso South Sub-County. The study analyzed the socio-economic factors that influence girl child drop out from public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. The respondents in this study were QASO, parents, teachers and students.

Theoretical Framework: This study utilized feminist theory whose first proponent was radical agitator Alice Paul (1885–1977) in the first wave of feminist in the United State of America. Alice advocated for natural equality of women. Some feminists most notably Alice Echols and Ellen Willis in 1975 also advocated for women equality. In feminist theory, the theory will use both liberal feminism and radical feminism theories. Liberal feminism theory is based on human right, democracy and natural justice. This theory emphasizes on equal educational opportunities for both male and female thus stresses on affirmative action for women and girls in families, employment and schools (Fatuma & Sifuna, 2006). While radical feminism tries to dismantle sexual and material powers of men over women thus ensuring that women are given equal educational opportunities (Fatuma & Sifuna, 2006; Wrigley, 1995).

However in this context, according to liberal feminism boys and girls should be given equal opportunities in education both at home and in school/classroom. Girls should not be discriminated and forced into early marriages, household chores and allowed to choose the subjects of their study depending on their capability (Wrigley, 1995). This will reduce the dropout rates of girl-child from

secondary schools. These actions include sexual harassment, unwanted pregnancies, deprivation of material and financial support. There are incidences of fathers who prefer to educate boys than girls as girls are seen as being educated for somebody else's benefit. Boys are viewed as pillars of the patriarchal society (FAWE, 2004).

It is therefore important to adopt the liberal feminism and the radical feminism theories because both theories advocate for fair treatment of both girls and boys. Girls should not drop out of school due to pregnancy leaving the male counterparts unpunished. Moreover the girls' education should not be sacrificed in favour of boys. They should be given equal opportunities in access and participation in education. Thus the need to utilize the theories as the study established the factors leading to drop out among female students in secondary schools in Teso-South Sub-County.

Conceptual Framework: The study conceptualizes the liberal feminism and the radical feminism theories because both theories advocate for fair treatment of both girls and boys by advocating for equal opportunities in access and participation in education.

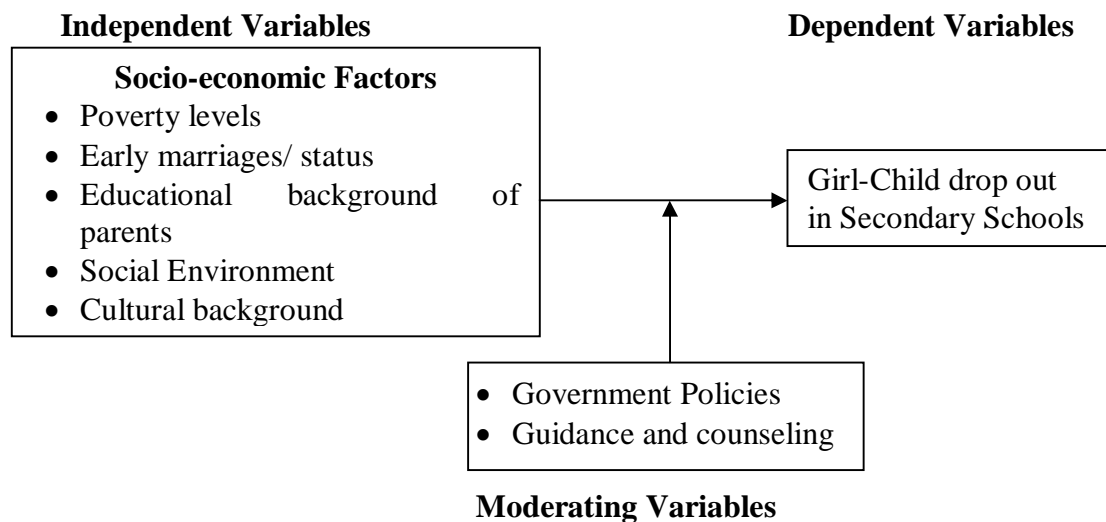


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Researcher (2014)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: A descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. Surveys are useful in establishing the existing conditions of a phenomenon on a wide scale (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). For the purpose of this study, a descriptive survey was employed to enable the researcher to analyze the socio-economic factors that influence girl child dropout in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. The study adopted descriptive survey design because most of the respondents were in disperse population within Teso South Sub-county and their respondents were collected using questionnaires, document analysis and interview schedule then describe qualitatively to give meaning to the research objective.

Area of Study: The study was conducted in Teso South Sub-County in Busia County. This area of study was selected because the researcher observed that dropout rate in Teso South Sub-county was alarming and no immediate action had been taken before to arrest the situation thus there was a need

to fill this gap. Teso South Sub-county lies between latitudes 0° 03" North and 0° 02" North of Equator and Longitudes 34°3" and 34°47" East of the prime meridian. The Sub-County covers a total area of 410.3 Km² (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

Study Population: The study population consisted of seven public secondary schools in Teso-South Sub-county, 921 respondents. The study targeted 1 Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (QASO), 120 secondary school teachers, 300 parents and 500 students. Targeted students included those students that have dropped out of school and parents whose students have dropped out of school.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: One QASO was selected by saturated sampling technique while 6 secondary schools, 12 teachers, 30 parents and 50 students were selected by simple random sampling technique. Sample students included those students that have dropped out of school and parents whose students have dropped out of school.

Table 2.1: Study Population and Sample size

Category of Respondents	Target Population (N)	Sample Size (n)	Percentage (%)
QASO	1	1	100%
Teachers	120	12	10%
Parents	300	30	10%
Students	500	50	10%
Total	921	93	10.1%

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

Gay (1992) suggests that at least 10% of the population is a good representation where the population is large and 20% where the population is small. The study sample involved 93 respondents which included 1 QASO because only one was available thus no need for sampling, 12 teachers, 30 parents and 50 students which were 10% from the study population as suggested by Gay (1992) that 10% of population is good were the sample size is large.

Instruments for Data Collection: The data was collected using questionnaire and interview. The questionnaires were prepared for teachers and students. One QASO and 30 Parents were interviewed with a view of obtaining information on socio-economic factors that influence girl child dropout in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County.

Teachers' Questionnaire (TQ) and Students' Questionnaires (SQ): This has two sections. Section A comprised of background information of teachers from public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. Section B comprised of closed ended statements related to the socio-economic factors that influence girl child dropout in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County. Section B of the TQ was based on the five level Likert-type scale (SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, UD = Undecided, D = Disagree and SD = Strongly Disagree).

Interview Schedule for QASO (ISQ): Face-to-face interview was conducted with the QASO at the Sub-County headquarters. A few guiding questions were used to conduct in-depth interviews. The QASO was better placed to give detailed information on the study; especially the factors contributing to girl-child drop out from secondary schools.

Interview Schedule for Parents (ISP): Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 30 parents in Teso South Sub-County. Structured questions were used to conduct interviews.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments: Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data represents the phenomenon under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields constant results after repeated trials (Arg et al., 2006).

Validity: Face validity of the instruments for data collected was established by experts in research methods in the Department of Educational Management and Foundations, Mount Kenya University, whose views were used in redrafting the instruments for data collection.

Reliability: Reliability is the extent that a given test is capable of consistently yielding the same results or nearly the same score each time the test is administered to the same individuals in spite of any opportunity for variations to occur, (Bernstein, 2001). To test instrument reliability, test-retest of the instruments was carried out. Questions were designed and put across explicitly and a guide will be provided to give direction on how to respond. Responses will be recorded accurately and coded accordingly to avoid errors.

Piloting: A pilot study was carried out in three secondary schools in Teso Sub-County. This formed 10% of the study population.

Data Collection Procedures: The researcher obtained permission from the National council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) through the School of Graduate Studies, Mount Kenya University, and then informed the SCDE, Teso South Sub-County, of the intention to conduct the research in public secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County and the period the research took. Permission was also sought from head teachers of the selected schools through written letters three weeks before the study was undertaken. The researcher personally visited all the sampled schools and administered the questionnaires to respective respondents and was present to clarify the points of difficulty. An appointment was made for interviews with the individual parents and the QASO. Note taking, audio recording and later classified into sub-themes collected interview responses.

Methods of Data Analysis: Quantitative data based on the research objectives from questionnaires were analyzed by use of descriptive statistics in form of percentages, frequencies and means. The five levels of the Likert-type scale in the questionnaire was assigned numerical values ranging from 1-5 as follows: SA=5, A=4, UD=3, D=2 and SD=1. These were used to calculate the Mean Rating (MR). To determine the frequencies of each response, the number of respondents giving similar answers was converted to percentages to illustrate related levels of opinion. Qualitative data from interviews was organized into themes and sub-themes as they emerged. This information was used to interpret the respondents' views and to make judgment.

Ethical Considerations: Saunders (2007) asserts that research ethics is important when relating to questions about a research topic, research design, research access, data collection and analysis. In this study, an introduction letter to do research was obtained from the Department of Education in

Mount Kenya University. Further permission was sought from the Sub-County Education Officer in-charge of the Teso-South sub-county and the school administration. The researcher assured the selected respondents about the confidentiality of the collected information. Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2005) emphasize that consent to participate in research is not a straightforward matter; hence in this study informed consent was applied. Informed consent, according to Saunders et al. (2007), presupposes the participant is given full information about participation rights and use of data. The researcher also recognized objectivity as vital during data analysis to ensure that the collected data was interpreted correctly

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background Information of the Respondents: As such, the study found it paramount to find out the background information of the students, teachers, parents and QASO since they form the basis under which the interpretations of the data collected would be justified.

Type and Category of the Schools: Students respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire to indicate their school type and school category. Their responses were as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Type and Category of the School

Types	Categories	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
County	Mixed Day	3	7.5
	Girls Boarding	2	5.0
	Sub-total	5	12.5
Sub-County	Mixed Day	25	62.5
	Girls Day	10	25.0
	Sub-total	35	87.5%
Grand Total		40	100%

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

Table 3.1 shows that the bulk of the schools in Teso South Sub-County are Sub-County schools 35(87%) while County Schools are few 5(12.5%), and on the other hand, it is also evident that most schools in Teso South Sub-County are Sub-County Mixed Day 25(62.5%), followed by Sub-County Girls Day 10(25.0%) while few are County Girls Boarding 2(5.0%) and County Mixed Day 3(7.5%) which is shown by the students response. As a government policy, sub-county schools recruit local students for entry into form one after the National and County schools would have picked the top performers.

It is also worth noting that there has been very little effort by the government to provide adequate facilities in the Sub-County schools unlike their counterpart County schools due to the concept of cost-sharing policy which is indirectly still in operational amidst inception of Free Day Secondary Education (Achoka, 2003). The disparity in entry behavior and inadequate school facilities mostly in the Day Sub-County schools largely impacts negatively on the academic performance of students especially girls which may result in their drop out from schools due to their deteriorating academic performance. Also most schools being day schools, girls from poor background may drop out of schools due to inability of their parents to cater for their basic needs like sanitary towels and some opt for early marriages as a solution. All these explain why there is rampant drop out of girls in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County.

Academic Qualification of Surveyed Teachers: Data on the teachers' qualification were obtained by asking the teachers to fill in their academic qualification in the questionnaires. The results by the respondents were as shown in Figure 3.1 below.

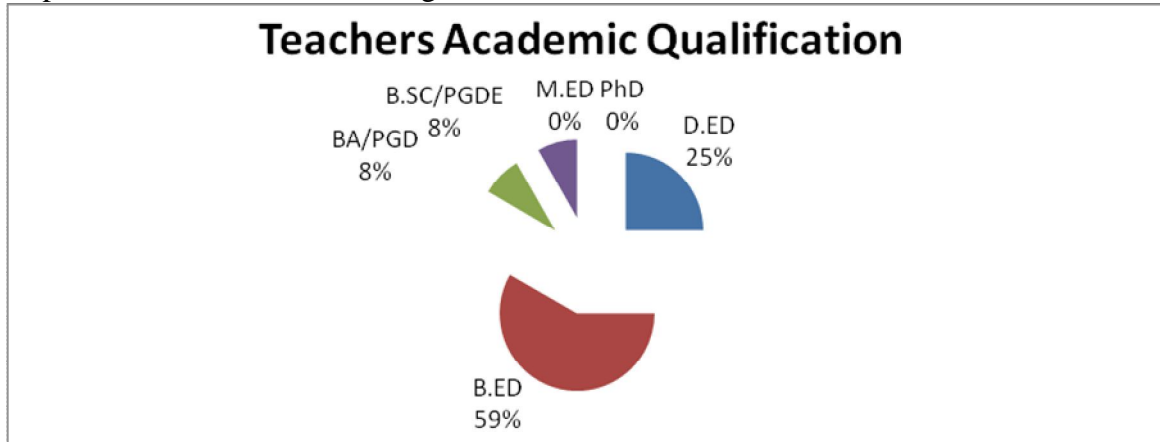


Figure 3.1 Academic Qualifications of Surveyed Teachers

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

With reference to the results in Figure 3.1, it is evident that most of the teachers surveyed in Teso South Sub-County had a B.ED degree 7(59%) followed by a D.ED degree 3(25) while a lesser number had a BA/PGD AND B.SC/PGD certificate both at 1(8%). It is interesting to note that none of the teachers had a masters and a PhD degree. Education of teachers is an important factor in the study because it determines the accuracy of the answers to researcher questionnaire and also knowledge of the socio-economic factors influencing girl child drop out from school. It is true that researcher questionnaires did not require any interpretation and no wonder all questionnaires from teachers' respondents were returned because most of them were knowledgeable and required less time to respond to the researcher questions.

Teachers' Period of Stay in the Surveyed Secondary Schools: The period the teacher has stayed in a given secondary school or in a given system determines to a greater extent the effectiveness of the teachers' response in relation to research questions. The longer the period one has taken, the more reliable the response given. Figure 3.2 shows the length teachers had stayed in their respective secondary schools.

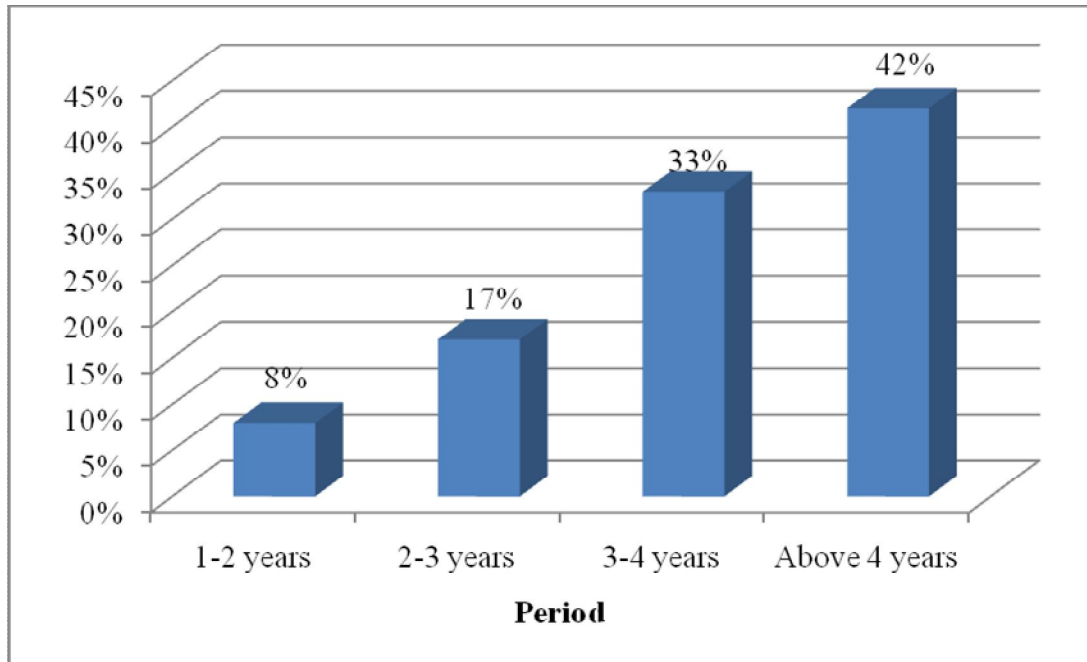


Figure 3.2: Teachers Period of Stay in the Surveyed Secondary Schools

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

According to Figure 3.2 results, 1(8%) of teachers has stayed in the surveyed secondary school for 1-2 years, 2(17%) for 2-3 years, 4(33%) for 3-4 years and 5(42%) for above 4 years. The result shows that 4(33%) and 5(42%) of the teachers had stayed in their respective secondary schools long enough to be able to identify socio-economic factors behind girl child drop out from school from Teso South Sub-County. Consequently, they were in a better position to give suggestions on the probable measures that may be taken to reduce the girl child dropout rate.

Gender of Respondents: Gender of the respondents was analyzed and tabulated. This was necessitated by the seriousness with which the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission have tried to cater for girls' issues in education thus preventing them from school dropout. Table 3.3 and 4.4, Figure 3.3 and 3.4 show the gender of the respondents.

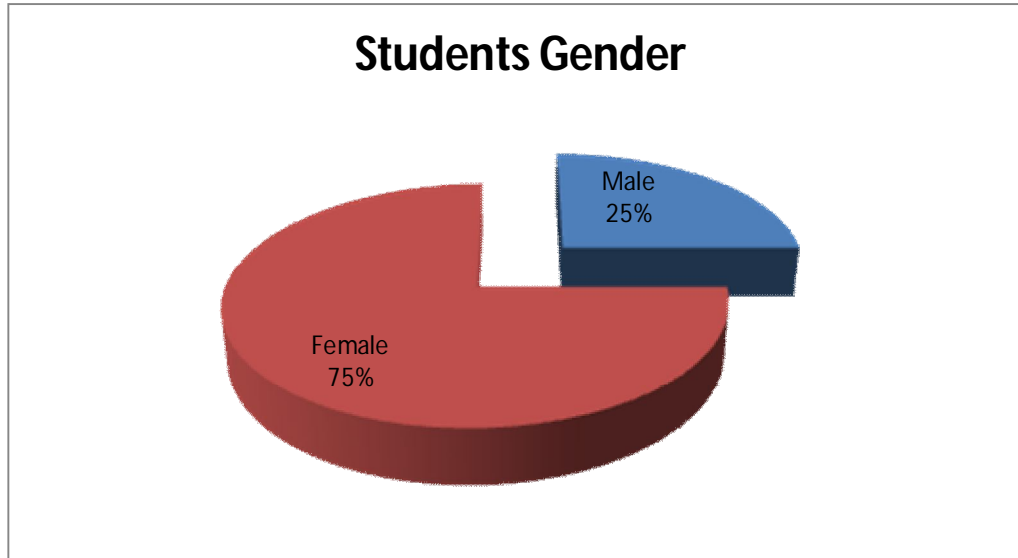


Figure 3.3 Students Gender

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

In relation to Figure 3.3, it is observed that 30 (75%) of the respondents were female students while only 10 (25%) of the respondents were male students. The results show that most of the respondents were female and this enabled the researcher to achieve the research objective of analyzing the socio-economic factors in respect to girl child drop out from school because most of these factors are best known to girls who undergo/go through them compared to their male counterparts. The researcher also sampled those girls that have dropped out from school together with those that are in school.

Table 3.3 Teachers' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	5	42%
Female	7	58%
Total	12	100%

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

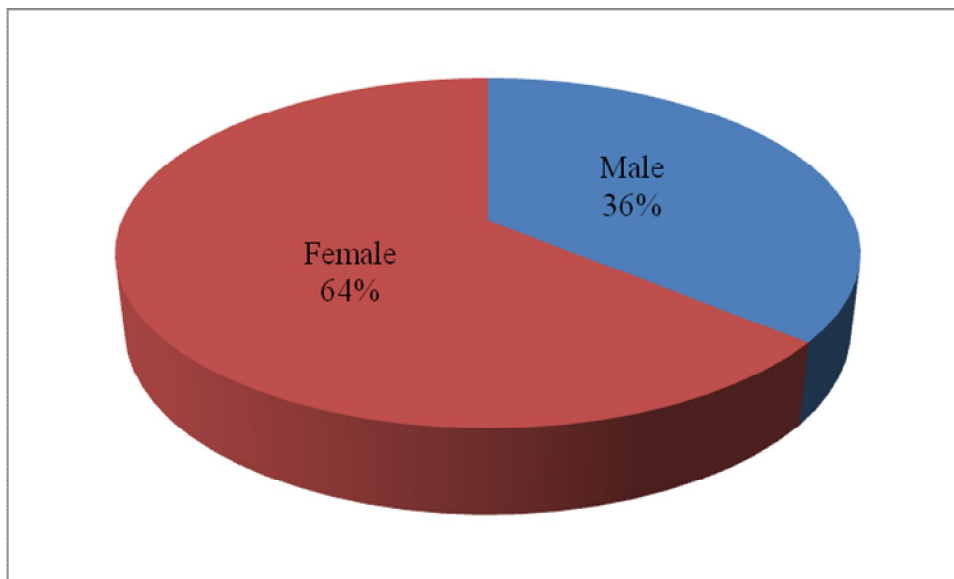
Data from Table 3.3 shows that out of 12 (100%) teachers, 7 (58%) were female teachers while only 5 (42%) were male teachers. The high number of female teachers in Teso South Sub-County schools meant that girls had role models with whom they could identify. However students' respondents indicated that the very female teachers who were supposed to act as role models and mentors, had instead frequently harassed them verbally. The negative attitude of students towards the female teachers was a sure way of girl child drop out of school since once a student hates a teacher, that teacher's subject is also hated. This observation is supported by Mondoh (2001)'s findings. The researcher established that students who have a negative attitude towards a subject tend to perform poorly in that subject thus this constant poor performance can lead to their drop out of school. This is the case with some students in Teso South Sub-County. However, the gender results at the Teso South Sub-County level contradict the gender situation at the school level as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 QASOs' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	1	100
Female	0	0.0
Total	1	100

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

From Table 3.4, it is observed that the Teso South Sub-County QASO was male. When asked to comment on the gender disparity, the QASO submitted that the gender issue was a characteristic of the entire education ministry's hierarchy. For instance, the Cabinet Secretary of Education is male, Education Secretaries are male, Director Quality Assurance and standards were all male. Looking at the prism of gender, one can easily conclude that there is gender inequality in the Ministry of Education docket. This gender disparity in the ministry's ranks reflects the weakness in the national policy frameworks that advocates for gender equality but do not reinforce its institutionalization (UNDP, 2005). Consequently, education matters with respect to girls have been dealt with from male perspective resulting into major girls' issues being overlooked and this have facilitated the rampant drop out of girls especially from Teso South Sub-County.

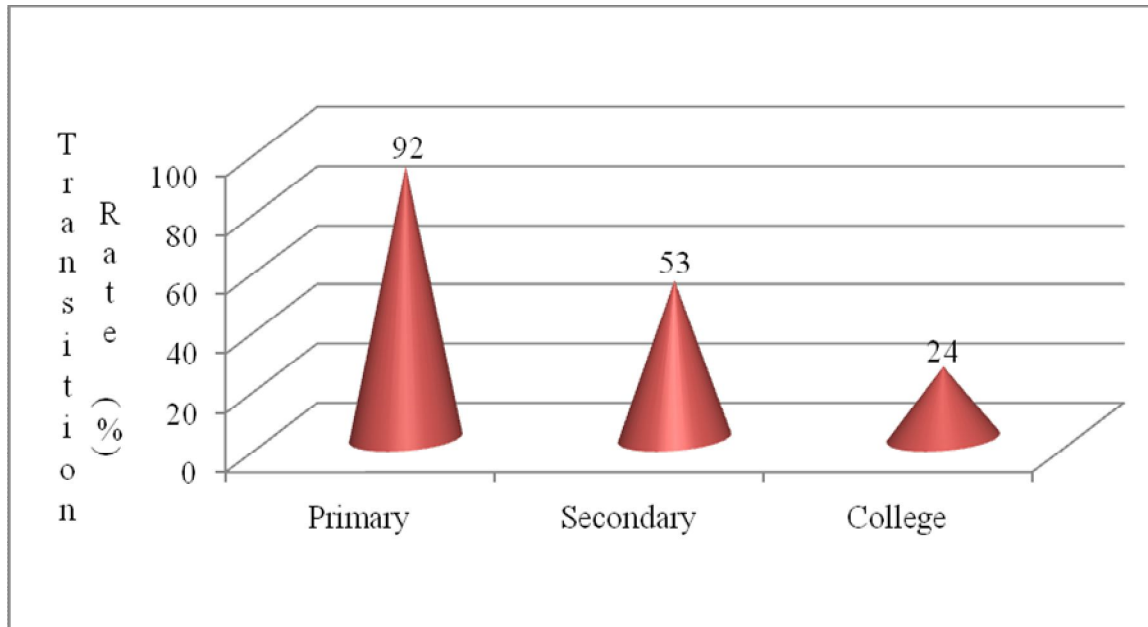
**Figure 3.4 Parents' Gender**

Field Data by Researcher (2014)

Figure 3.4 shows that majority of the researcher parents respondents were female 16(64%) while a few were male 9(36%). The composition of the parents respondents was very important for the researcher in that to achieve the research objective, female respondents were necessary in that they are the mothers who are always with their daughters and are aware of the problems that their daughters face and which make them drop out of school while fathers are less concerned and have no time to be with their daughters at home because they are busy providing for the family. When parents were interviewed, they said that most of their daughters feared their fathers hence did not

tell them their basic needs like sanitary pads hence lack of these basics make them drop out of school. This is the case in Teso South sub-County.

Socio-Economic Factors that influence Girl Child Drop Out: To ensure that the research objective is achieved, the researcher framed the questionnaire to get information on the following: Number of girls in the family that have completed primary, secondary and college education, reasons for school absence and finally general social-economic factors that influence girl child drop out from secondary schools. Table 3.5, Figures 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7 shows the results obtained from the students respondents.



Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

Results from Figure 3.5 clearly shows that the number of girls completing each successive level of education is decreasing with the primary school registering the highest number of girls at 92(54%), secondary school registered 53(32%) and the college the lowest number at 24(14%). The difference in level of completion is brought about by the increase number of girl child drop out from school for instance number of girls completing secondary education stands at 53 while those that enrolled in secondary education were 92 from those that completed primary education showing that 39 girls drop out of school. The results confirmed Carren (2013)' assertion that the completion rate of girls in Teso South Sub-County is alarming as girls moves up the academic ladder.

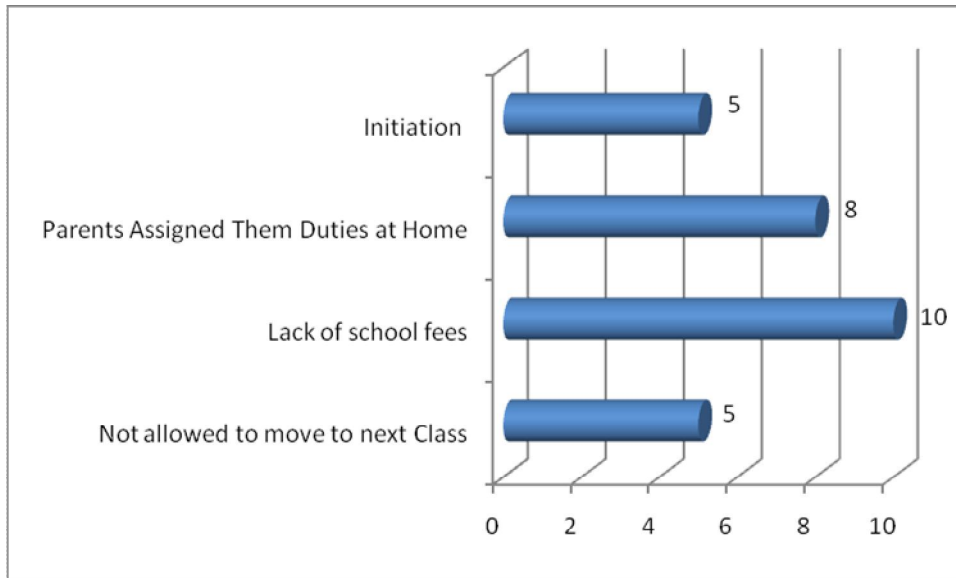


Figure 3.6 Reasons for School Absence in Teso South Sub-county

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

The findings from Figure 3.6 indicates that 10(25%) of the students cited lack of school fee as a second major factor why most student drop out of school while 8(20%) of parents assign their children home duties which make them not go to school. It is also evident that some of the students’ respondents cited initiation 5(12.5%) as factors, which make them absent from school thus continuous absence will make these students drop out of school. This concurs with Badan (1997) who noted that increased levels of poverty in Kenya and reduced returns on education have made parents unable to pay school fees.

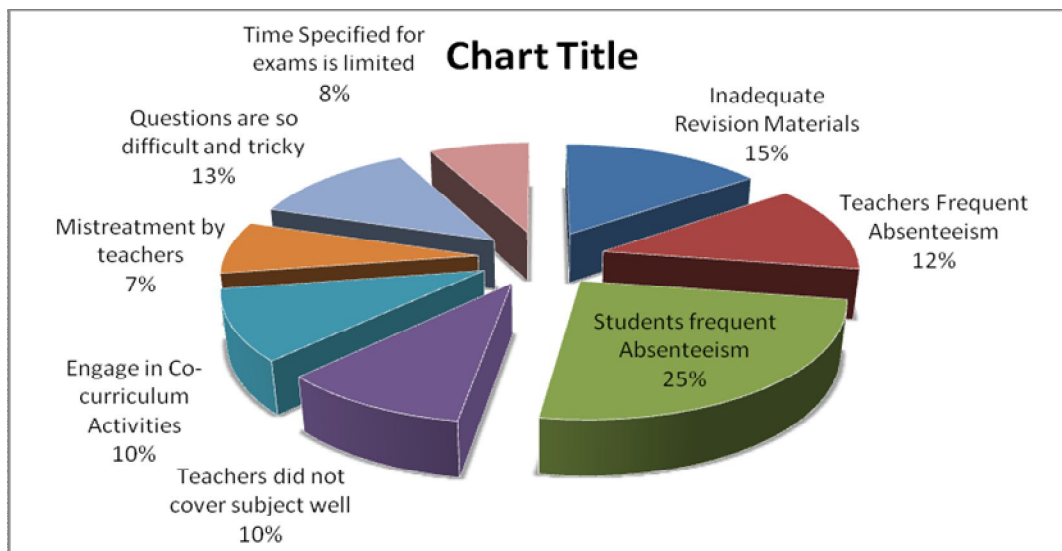


Figure 3.7 Reasons for Students Poor Performance in Class

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

The study findings indicate that majority 10(24%) of the students respondents agreed that students' frequent absenteeism was to blame as one of the major reasons why students did not perform as per the set standards. The researcher pegged this to the fact that most of the students' parents were from a poor background and thus had problems raising the required school fees as well as maintaining the students in school in form of clothing and food, which are the basic necessities. Other factors that are also likely to affect students' performance are: inadequate revision materials at 6(14%) because only few students will have access to these revision materials making them to perform well in class while those that cannot access the revision materials will have poor performance thus drop out of school in the long run, teacher frequent absenteeism and questions too difficult and tricky both at 5(13%) will also cause drop of because most students will be idle in school making them prone to peer pressure and discouragement from difficult questions in class make them feel out of place thus resulting in drop out.

Other factors entails engagement in co-curriculum activities and teacher failure to cover syllabus both at 4(10%) and a small number of students also agreed that time specified for exams is limited and mistreatment by teachers both at 3(8%) affects their performance which is mostly due to poor school administration stricture. The researcher conducted this study because poor performance is positively correlated to students' drop out from school. This is a true reflection of the situation on the ground of Teso South Sub-County.

Table 3.5 General Social-Economic Factors That Influence Girl Child Drop Out From Secondary Schools

The following socio-economic factors lead to girl child drop out from school	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total
Poverty	5%	15%	20%	20%	40%	52(100%)
Early Marriages	16%	20%	14%	15%	35%	52(100%)
Educational Background of Parent	20%	20%	10%	30%	20%	52(100%)
Social Environment	10%	25%	15%	20%	30%	52(100%)
Cultural Environment	20%	15%	10%	25%	30%	52(100%)

Source: Field Data by Researcher (2014)

The study findings indicate that majority of the students and teachers respondents strongly agreed that poverty was a major factor towards the girl child education because it is the leading socio-economic factor towards girl child drop out from school with 21(40%) of respondents strongly agreeing while 10(20%) agreeing bringing the percentage to 31(60%). This is because poverty will affect the other socio-economic factors for instance girls from poor background are married off at an early stage making them drop out of school as noted by Abagi (1996) that teachers asked for sexual favours from female students and promise them grades and tuition fee waivers due to their

poor background and some of them end up marrying them at an early stage. Poverty also affects parents' educational background in that parents from poor families are not likely to be educated past primary schools hence not enlightened on the importance of education thus do not have much premium on education of their daughters as reported by Leclercq (2001) that educated parents are more aware of the possible returns of their children education.

Poverty also has an impact on social environment because family foundation depends on the parents' economic status, which affects the behavior and attitude patterns laid down by boys and girls. Girls from poor background have a negative attitude towards education thus prefer their brothers to be educated instead of them as asserted by Wanyoike (2003) as compared to girls from rich families who have all basic necessities thus value education. Poverty also has a bearing on cultural environment because girls from poor background are likely to stay in rural setups where there is a cultural environment rooted in cultures like initiations that act as a barrier thus rob females of their human dignity and social rights as compared to girls from rich families who are in urban areas hence protected from traditional cultures as noted by Begum, Khan and Iqbal (2007).

The findings of the study also reveals that early marriage, parents educational background, social environment and cultural environment also had a bearing on the girl child drop out from school as follows: In early marriage, 18(35%) of students and teachers respondents strongly agreed and 8(15%) agreed that it affects girl child drop out in Teso South Sub-County as supported by Fatuma (2006) that high drop out among girls is due to pre-marital pregnancies; Under parents' educational background, 10(20%) of the students and the teachers respondents strongly agreed and 16(30%) agreed that level of parent education affects drop out of girls from secondary school in Teso South Sub-County which agrees with Ashraf's assertion that dropout rates are low among the graduate parents compared to parents with primary education as their highest academic qualification because they do not put much premium on their daughters being educated or due to lack of exposure in the academic competitive world.

With regard to social environment, 16(30%) of the teachers and the students respondents strongly agreed while 10(20%) agreed that social environment greatly affects girl child drop out from schools and they cited issues such as peer groups which make them engage in drugs, early sex, girls socialization to value their brother education as compared to theirs as girls are withdrawn by parents from schools to help in household chores like caring for sick relatives, digging, collecting firewood and fetching water hence these factors make girls eventually drop out of school.

These findings agree with earlier research conducted by Wanyoike (2003) concerning peer groups, Wanjiru (2007) concerning girls socialization and Brown (1930) on girls withdrawal from school by parents and how they relate to drop out of girls from school. Finally, on cultural environment, 16(30%) of the teachers and students respondents strongly agree while 13(25%) agreed that cultural environment are contributing to girl child dropout of school which included the following factors: cultural belief that it is unacceptable for girls to express their opinion, negative attitude towards women dowry system which places women under rigid control of their husbands and girls taught that female genital mutilation is a rite of passage. These findings are supported by previous researches which were conducted by Chege (2007) on cultural practices and their hindrance to education, Tanye (2003) who asserted that marriage puts girls in bondage and Kapakasa (1992) on impact of initiation ceremonies and girl child drop out from school. In conclusion, it is evident that

poverty, education background of parents, cultural environment and social environment affects girl child stay in secondary schools in Teso South Sub-County thus leading to their drop out.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, this study concludes that socio-economic factors such as poverty, education background of parents, early marriage, social environment and cultural environment affect girl child education in Teso South Sub-County. It was recommended that to curb the girl child drop out, there was need for: improving life opportunities for girls, community sensitization on the importance of girl child education, promotion of clean water supply and sanitation facilities, tackling girl child abuse and provision of guidance and counseling to prevent HIV and AIDS spread and sexual harassment and finally, monitoring gender inequality in education system. The study recommends the following to be researched further: An independent study to establish the relationship between poverty and girl child drop out from secondary school.

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