

# **FACTORS INFLUENCING GIRLS DROP OUT IN PUBLIC BOARDING AND DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MASABA NORTH DISTRICT- KENYA**

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing girls' drop out in public boarding and day secondary schools in Masaba North District. The study was guided by four objectives which were to examine the extent to which socio-economic factors influence girls' drop out, to establish the influence of individual factors on girls' dropout rate, to establish the influence of school factors on girls' dropout rate and to determine the influence of gender policy implementation on girls' dropout rate. In literature review the study reviewed the gap under the following sub themes: overview of girls' dropout, influence of socio-economic factors, family background and girls dropout, economic status of the family, cultural status, individual factors, gender and girls' dropout, aspiration and girls' dropout, age and girls' dropout, school based factors, sanitation, school levies, teaching learning resources, peer influence and gender policy implementation. The study employed descriptive design method using focus group discussion and questionnaires. The study targeted all the 20 public secondary schools in the district with a total population of 600 teachers, 7,213 students and the head teachers were sampled in the study. One teacher from every school was also selected (in charge of guidance and counseling). The form fours were the most respondents because they had been in school for long. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages and presented in tables and conclusions drawn. Therefore the study found out that the factors in questions have high*

*influence in girls school drop-out. The gender policy implementation is the key to minimize the drop out. The study therefore called for collaborative efforts by government and other players in providing civic education on behavior change.*

*Keywords; Socio-Economic Factors, Individual Related Factors, School Related Factors, Gender Policy Implementation, Education Management*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the last decade, the cumulative dropout rate in secondary schools in Kenya has been as high as 37 percent and repetition rate has been 14 percent between form two and form three, the survival rate at these levels has also been low at 40 percent (KESSP, 2005).

According to the latest Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS), 40 percent of adolescent girls without any education are either pregnant or have already become mothers. This is in spite of the fact that there is a return to work program, a policy introduced by the government to allow girls who have already fallen pregnant to return to school. According to the latest survey in Masaba North District, the rate of drop out in public day secondary schools for girls is more alarming than public boarding secondary schools, (Education Report, 2009). The percentage for day secondary schools ranges between 40 percent and 45 percent in the last five years while in boarding is between 35 percent and 40 percent , (MNSR, 2011).

According to UNICEP (2003), none discriminating education benefits both girls and boys and thus ultimately contributes to more equal relationship between women and men. Equality of access to and attainment of qualifications is necessary if more women are to become agents of change. Literacy of women is an important key to improve health, nutrition and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic returns, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic returns, (UNICEP, 2004 and World Bank, 2005).

To equip girls with education leads to more equitable development, stronger families, better services, child health and effective participation in governance.

In Pakistan, a girl in the age group 5 to 9 is 14 percent less likely to attend school than boys, (Aslam and Kingdom 2008). In both India and Pakistan, while wealthier boys and girls participate in school at similar rates there is a gender gap of almost 5 years between them at the bottom of quintile of income distribution. Similar patterns can be observed in Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Gambia and Togo. In spite of benefits of education the problem of gender disparity in education remains unresolved in many developing countries.

EFA (2010) indicates that there were 72 million children out of school in 2007. By 2015, it is estimated that 56 million children will be out of school unless corrective measures are taken. About 54 percent of children out of school are girls. In Sub-Saharan Africa, almost 12 million girls may never enroll. In Yemen, nearly 80 percent of girls out of school are unlikely even to enroll, compared with 36 percent of boys. Literacy remains among the most neglected of all education goals with about 759 million adults lacking literacy skills today out of whom two thirds are women.

Alika and Egbochuku (2009) asserts that drop out from school among girls is a global phenomenon. According to the World Bank report (2007) the dropout rate amongst secondary schools girls in the US Latin Americans aged 16 to 24 is 30 percent compared with 12.9 percent for blacks and 8.2 percent for whites. There are reasons as to why Latina girls leave high school before graduation and they include pregnancy, marriage, gender roles, stereotyping, family demands and economic status. Others includes: - attitudes of teachers, proficiency in English, peer pressure and lack of role models are also contributing factors to this disturbing trend.

The EFA Monitoring report (2006) shows that 70 percent of children enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa do not reach the last grade level of education. In Africa only a third of children who enter school actually complete primary education and half of these complete secondary education, (UNFPA, 2003). Moreover, small percentage of children who graduate from primary level: the majorities do not have the skills associated with their level of education, (Destefano, 2007). The (EPD) Education policy and data center (2007) notes that there are large differentials between primary school entry and primary school completion; there is also differentials between secondary school entry and secondary school completion. For instance, in Uganda, Malawi and Cambodia the high dropout suggests that there may be structural, factors in some countries that cause children who start school to dropout, (UNESCO, 2002). UNESCO observes that, male, female attendance gaps are lower than were a few decades possibly reflecting the international efforts to get girls to school.

A study by Oxfam (2004) carried out in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania revealed the cultural practices of withholding girls from enrolling or discouraging these enrolled from continuing with further studies due to beliefs. In Kenya, enrollment in secondary school education level has grown by 18.3 percent from 882,390 students in 2003 to 1,043, 467 in 2006. However, disparities in gender have persisted. In 2004, the national completion rate was 91.5 percent for boys and 87.5 percent for girls registering a gap of between 4 percent in favour of boys Oxfam (2004).

In Masaba North district, Masaba district development plan (2002 – 2008) reveals that the provision of education facilities and opportunities exhibits gender bias. According to this

document, there were low enrolment levels and high dropout rates among girls. Efforts are therefore required to enhance enrolment and discourage dropouts in both day and boarding secondary schools. At primary level, the boys and girls are given equal opportunities. However, in cases of limited financial resources, boys are given preference (Masaba District Development Plan, 2002 – 2008).

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to the republic of Kenya (2007), the national educational system has been characterized by gender disparities at the national level and between the various regions in favour of males. In spite of the government's efforts of providing free primary education, subsidized secondary education, the girls dropping out of school in Masaba North District is still an issue of concern in the recent past. The stakeholders' efforts of providing education to the girl child in the district have not been very successful because a large percentage drops before completing the full circle of four years in secondary education (MNSSER, 2011).

The power of a successful nation lies behind the intellectualism of its people both men and women. This determines the economic development of the nation a great deal. Considering the fact that education is one great business of life, a great percentage of Kenya's budget is allocated to the education sector. Despite this enormous financial contribution by the government, Masaba North experiences high school girl drop out. This is a clear indication that a number of fundamental issues are yet to be addressed in order to effectively handle the problem at hand (M.E.R, 2009).

In Masaba North District, Educational support (2004) claims that between 2008 and 2013 there were dropout rates of 10% for girls and 7% for boys. High wastage rates associated with dropping out, repetition in schools and low transition renders the education system inefficient (MOE, 2008). The study sought to investigate the extent of girls' drop out from secondary schools in Masaba North District and establish the factors influencing secondary school drop out in public boarding and day secondary schools, (MOE, 2007). This study was guided by the general and specific objectives. The general objective of the study was to determine the factors influencing girls drop out in public boarding and day secondary schools in Masaba North District.

### **Specific Research Objectives**

- i. To examine the extent to which socio-economic factors influence girls drop out in public boarding and day secondary schools in Masaba North District.

- ii. To determine the influence of individual related factors on girls' school dropout in Masaba North District.
- iii. To establish the influence of school related factors on girls' dropout in Masaba North District.
- iv. To determine the influence of gender policy implementation on girls' drops out rate (re-entry policy) in public boarding and day secondary schools in Masaba North District.

## **OVERVIEW OF GIRLS' DROPOUT IN BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

According to the republic of Kenya (2007), the national education system has been characterized by gender disparities at the national level, and between 1999 and 2004 North Eastern and coast province had gender disparities of over 10 percent while Central Province has a gender disparity of 2 percent.

### **Influence of Socio-Economic Factors on the Girl's Dropout in Public Boarding and Day Secondary Schools**

A lot of research has consistently found that there is a strong correlation between education and socio-economic status of the household (Bhgwati and Kamat, 1973). Household socio-economic status is very powerful prediction of school achievement and dropout behaviour (Rumberger, 1995). In most cases histories of dropouts, it was clearly observed that their dropout was due to poverty or poor economic conditions of the households. Parents could not bear to afford the school expenses of their children. Similarly, due to poor economic conditions of households girls' dropout before completing the last grade in order to earn and financially support the households

The incidence of poverty was estimated at 56 percent of the Kenya population, where 82 percent of the poor live in rural areas and 18 percent in urban areas. Nyanza province had a poverty incidence of 46.5; about half of the province population is currently living in poverty (NADA 4. and EDI, 2005/2006). Masaba North District has a poverty incidence of 46 percent as at 2006; this shows extreme poverty in the areas which is a factor to girls' dropout in the district. Child labour was another result of poverty that hurts education. According to UNESCO (2010) there were estimated 166 million child laborers in the world, the report indicate that child labor ranged in scope from young to girls collecting water and firewood with their mothers to young boys tending cattle and engaging in paid work and to more extreme and dangerous forms of work. The report indicated that with labour activities taking up an average of thirty-seven hours a week. Young girls from the poorest households were less likely than boys to combine school and work forcing them to drop out of school.

Cultural and traditional values stood between girls and their prospects for education can address some of societies deeply rooted inequalities, which condemn millions of girls to a life without quality education, therefore also too often to life of missed opportunities improving opportunities for girls and women help them to develop skills that allow them make decisions and influence community change in key areas. In Uganda, Nammuddu (1999) argues that poor performance of girls has relations with greater demand on their time to perform house chores including fetching water and wood, cooking and the care of younger siblings. One reason for denying girls and women their right to education is rarely articulated by those in charge: that is their fear of the power that girls will have through education. There is still some resistance to the idea that girls and women can be trusted with education.

### **Individual Related Factors and Girls' dropout from Boarding and Day Secondary schools**

The World Bank (2007) points out that far from being safe havens for learning, schools are often sites intolerance, discrimination and violence. Girls are disproportionately the victims. Many girls who surmount the barriers preventing from attending school face harassment and sexual abuse from their peers or from teachers once they are enrolled. Aggressive and intimidating behaviour and unsolicited physical contacts such as touching and groping assault, conceive sex and rape, or constitutes forms of sexual abuse that force girls out of school. This view is supported by MOE (2007) which point that such incidences occur in school.

Gender differentiation and its oppressive tendencies especially on the girl child and woman started right from birth. From the time babies are born treat boys and girls differently (Kibera and Kimokoti, 2007). There is documented evidence that female education is one of the most important forces of development (King, 1999). While it is important to educate both boys and girls FAWE enumerates a number of reasons in favor of educating the girl child because it has the highest return in the developed countries; it has multiliter effects and empowers women to bring about other necessary changes like family size increased income and market productivity. Although it is agreed that educating female brings more benefits to society than educating males, more males especially in less industrializes economies of Africa continue to go to school and work their way up the ladder (Muller,1990). Most societies worldwide prefer to educate boys to girls. The society does not put a lot of emphasis on the education of girls. It is argued that a woman does not need to be educated because unlike the man who is the head of the family and bread earner is expected to be a wife, home maker and a mother (Kibera, Wairimu and Kimokoti, (2006). This –practice ignores the practice that over 30 percent of families worldwide, Kenya included are now headed by women (McKenzie, 1993). According to the study conducted by (Tumti, 1985) girls aspiration is energized by guidance and counseling

in schools. Girls who are focused in education may end up dropping if the environment in which they are learning is not conducive and friendly. He argues that such students need to be guided in order to build or add up to their aspiration. The importance of guidance and counseling in schools is presented by (Ndichu,2005) Who stated that modern society has changed so much, the society safety nets that existed in traditional societies and ensured a somewhat stable environment for children to grow up. In the school setting there are many difficulties which students may express through withdrawal, unhappiness, annoyance, anger and inability to meet needs which may lead to turning their aspiration into a nightmare than a success. Mentoring also helps students at this age to support them in program completion, confidence building and transitioning to further education or work force (Cindy, 2004).

### **School Based Factors and Girls Dropout in Boarding and Day Schools**

Alika and Egbochuku (2009) points out that the school administration plays a crucial role in determining whether or not students will stay in school to complete the education cycle or dropout before completion. The policies in place will either promote school attendance or discourage it. This includes setting goals and standards that keep everybody focused, initiating and managing change and monitoring students and staff discipline.

In agreement to this, Achoka (2009) points out that to minimize school dropout amongst girls, school administration is the key in advising parents, teachers and students against regressive cultural practices that threaten retention, ensuring that the school is free from violence, sexual harassment, threats and individual hatred. She further points that, ensuring that the school is responsive to the needs of the girl child and that there is a guidance and counseling department to address problems faced by girls in school will significantly encourage girls to stay in school.

Tsujita, (2009) as cited by UNESCO (2010), notes that poor infrastructure in schools is a turn off from school especially to girls who find it more difficult to cope forcing them to dropout. This view is shared by UNICEF (2003) which indicates that 10 percent of girls skip school during menstruation or dropout entirely because of lack of decent sanitation. The report adds that lack of water; privacy and sanitation disposal systems may simply force girls to drop from school. The MOE (2010) contends with this view when they observe that limited or poor quality toilet facilities may have different implications for girls in terms of enrolment and attendance because of their special needs during their menstruation periods as well as their vulnerability to sexual harassment on their way to or from the toilet.

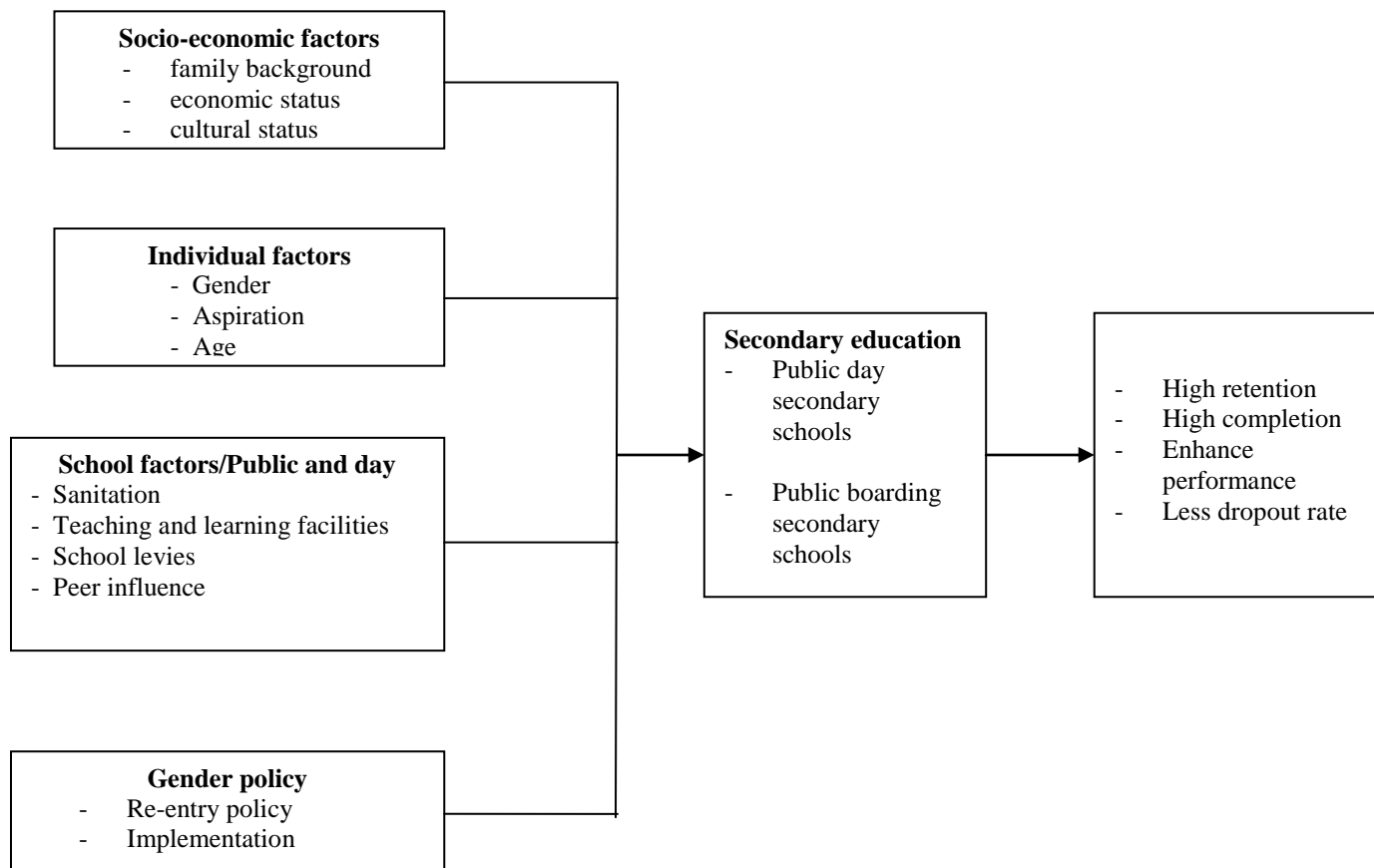
Increased parental interest and involvement in school would have a positive impact on effects to decrease corruption in school, (Rihani 2006.) Existing research reveals that; school

levies that are imposed on students result to drop out especially to students who come from poor families. When parents are fully involved in schooling is an important indicator of child success of schooling (Rush and Vitale 1995.) students perform better in school if their parents are more involved with their schooling. The more parents participate in schooling in a sustained way at every level in advocacy, finance decision making and over sight roles, as fund raisers and booster, as volunteers and para - professionals and as home teachers, the better for students and less drop out (Williams DL and Charkin N 1989).

According to the MOE (2007) argues that girls in their teens are easily lured by their peers to engage in their teens are easily lured by their peers to engage in premarital sex which may lead to dropping out of school. Even where relations exist between students themselves it is mostly the girls who drop out of school. Sometimes students have dropped due to their own reasons many influence their friends to drop, and look for greener pastures when the school environment is not friendly. The school may be a haven of harassment and sexual violence from both boys and teachers. The paper further indicates that addressing drop outs among girls means putting in place policies confronting sexual violence and harassment of girls in school.

## Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Factors Influencing Girls' Dropout in Secondary schools





The conceptual frame works shows the four factors, socio-economic factors, school factors, individual related factors, school related and gender policy shows the input or the influence to drop out of girls in secondary day and boarding schools. The factors influence high retention, high completion, enhances performance and fewer dropouts. When there is high input of the factors, the secondary education for girls is well maintained resulting to high retention of girls in school, but when there is low input more girls drop out of school.

### **Summary of Review of Related Literature**

In the context of this study boarding and day schools dropout among girls is perceived to be a result of complex interaction of factors such as socio-economic , cultural, school based factors, family economic background, individual factors, teaching learning resources, school levies, peer influence earlier pregnancy and gender based on the key objectives of the research. An approach to addressing girls' economic challenges is to provide additional guidance to girls out of school on specific academic topics to ensure their success and to motivate their stay in schools (Rihani, Kay and Psaki, 2006). A powerful prediction of schools achievement and dropout behavior is said to be household socio-economic status (Rumberger, 1995). In most cases research on dropout has indicated that it is due to poor economic conditions of households, girl dropout of school before completing the last grade (form four) in order to earn and financially support their households. (UNICEF, 2004) notes that as family members become sick or die girls often will drop out of schools to care for them or for other family members. Research has indicated that parents' involvement in schooling is one of the most important indicators of child success in schooling (Rush and Vitale, 1995).

The Principals should encourage enrolment and retention of both girls and boys and sensitize the staff and the community on gender issues affecting performance of both boys and girls and implement education policy hence have collaborative efforts with the ministry of education and other ministries. However the primary responsibility and accountability over its success rests with the ministry of education in which the head teacher plays the major role, (MOEST, 2003). Therefore Literature review hold that there is a relationship between the various factors and dropout rates for girls in boarding and day public secondary schools. It holds that various factors contribute to the high dropout rates for girls, the socio-economic factors, school supplies based factors, such as sanitation, teaching learning resources, physical facilities and peer influence to address the situation implementation of the gender policy should be in place hence re-entry programme in boarding and day secondary schools.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research problem was studied through the use of a descriptive survey design. The target population for this study comprised of 20 public secondary schools out of which two were purely girls' schools and the remaining three were mixed boarding secondary schools. The target population comprised form four students, head teachers, teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. The form four students were considered most appropriate respondents for the study because they had been in school for a longer period of time and were more familiar with the issues to be investigated. Teachers were important because they are the ones who facilitate the learning process through organizing and conducting instructional activities in the classroom and they interact with the learners. There were 20 public secondary schools legible for the study in Masaba North District. All the principals of these secondary schools were sampled in the study. The numbers of form four students were about 2,060 in the district therefore, there were about 240 students' respondents. The number was equally divided in all the schools. There were also 20 principals, 20 guidance and counseling teachers and 10 other teachers who were either deputy principal or class teachers of those legible schools. The total respondents translated to 290. The study used interview schedule and questionnaires. Structured questionnaires were used to capture both qualitative and quantitative data.

There was an interview scheduled to study the objectives and focus discussions with the head teachers. Piloting was done in Metamaywa secondary school in Masaba North District to determine whether the respondents could present similar characteristics. A sample of 15 students and 3 teachers participated in the study. The pre-testing of the research instruments to the respondents with same characteristics helped in eliminating errors made during the administration and scoring. The instruments were given to two experts to evaluate the validity of each item in relation to study objectives. Reliability of the study was determined through the test re-test method.

The response in the questionnaires was tabulated, coded and processed by computer. The results from the data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the responses. Analysis of data was accompanied with tabulations and percentages. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages was used to summarize the data. For ethical consideration the researcher ensured the informed consent of the respondents and the interviewers. The researcher had personal identification before the respondents and informed them the intention of the research was only for academic purposes, the researcher explained the expected duration of participation and procedure to be followed, the extent of privacy and confidentiality.

## ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A total of 290 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. In public boarding there was 100 percent return rate but in public day 141 students returned giving a response return rate of 94 percent. All the principals and teachers had 100 percent return rate. Hartman (1979) notes that 50 percent return rate is adequate, 60 percent is good and 70 percent and above is very good. A result a return rate of 94% seemed to be very good and sufficient for data analysis. The return rate was seen to be sufficient because a large number of students and teachers who were administered with the questionnaires responded and returned.

### Socio-Economic Influences on Girls Dropout Rate

#### *Cultural Influence in Education and Dropout*

The study focused on culture and its influence on girls' education, the students were asked who made decision for them to be in school? Their responses were presented as in Table 1.

Table 1: Students' Responses on Cultural Influence in Education

Decision maker	Public boarding secondary schools		Public day secondary schools	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mother	70	70	97	68.8
Father	15	15	26	18.4
Both	8	8	10	7.1
Others	7	7	8	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100</b>

According to table 1, students from public boarding reported that mothers played a major role with 70 percent while those in public day secondary schools also reported that their mothers too took the key role. 15 percent in public boarding reported that their fathers made the decision, while in public day 18.4 percent reported that their fathers played a key role. Students from both categories reported that 8 percent both parents played a key role and 7.1 percent respectively. In both categories students are assisted by other people in decision making where they reported 7 percent and 5.7 percent. 70 percent and 68.8 percent report was due to the partial orphan with mothers only as the majority of the students were partial orphan giving their mothers only. It can therefore be interpreted that mothers seemed to be more involved in girls' education and some gender awareness was being seen where both parents decided together. The other 7 percent and 5.7 percent were total orphans who stayed with guardians such as uncles, aunts, grandparents and other relatives who made decision for them to attend school. However, the 15 percent and 18.4 percent in public day secondary schools means that fathers still held the key to decision making in most families. On a further analysis when the teachers were asked who

the family will favor especially when there are little resources, 100 percent reported boys were more favored. Although it is agreed that educating females bring more benefits to the society than educating males, more males especially in less industrialized economies of Africa continue to go to school and work their way up the educational ladder (Muller, 1990). Most societies, worldwide prefer to educate boys to girls. The society does not put a lot of emphasis on the education of girls. It is argued that a woman does not need to be educated because unlike the man who is the head of a family and bread earner is expected to be a wife, home maker and mother (Kibera and Kimonoti, 2006). This practice ignores the fact that over 30 percent of families worldwide, Kenya included are now headed by women (Mackenzie, 1993).

### Number of Girls who had Dropped out of School

The study wanted to find out the number of girls who had dropped out and the following question was asked, how many girls you know in your class who have dropped out of school this year? Their responses were represented in Table 2.

Table 2: Students' Responses on Number of Girls who had dropped out this year (2013)

NO. of Dropouts	Public boarding secondary schools		Public day secondary schools	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Did not respond	12	12	14	9.7
1	55	55	90	63.8
2	5	5	5	3.5
3	4	4	2	1.4
4	2	2	2	1.4
5	1	1	2	1.4
Don't know	21	21	26	18.4
Total	100	100	141	100

At least 12 percent of the students in public boarding secondary schools and 9.9 percent of the students in public day secondary schools said that none of the girls had dropped school while 5 percent and 3.5 percent respectively in public boarding and day secondary schools had dropped. In both categories of boarding and day schools reported 2 percent dropout. 21 percent in public boarding and 18.4 percent in public day said that they are not certain of the exact number of their colleagues who had dropped out. On a closer analysis when table 4.11 and 4.12 were compared, it was noted that in both boarding secondary schools and day secondary schools, more girls than boys had dropped out of school yet even the school still had three months to go. This however notes the gender disparity between girls and boys as girls are vulnerable to socio-economic and socio-cultural issues within the larger society as stated by

(Kibera and Kimokoti, 2006), that a woman does not need to be educated because unlike the man who is the head of the family and bread earner is expected to be a wife, home maker and a mother.

### Influences of Basic Schools Supplies and Dropout

Table 3: Teachers' Responses on School Supplies and Drop out

Item	Public boarding secondary schools		Public day secondary schools	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Stationery	2	20	4	13.4
School uniform/levies	3	30	16	53.3
Sanitary towels	5	50	10	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the table 3, out of the 40 teachers who responded in both public boarding and day secondary schools 15 percent of the teachers noted stationery including exercise books and text books, pens were also needed, 30 percent of the teachers in boarding, 53.3 percent of the teachers in public day and 50 percent noted the need for school uniforms and school levies while the remaining teachers indicated sanitary towels. From the analysis we can see the equal emphasis on school uniforms, levies and sanitary towels, which are part of the parental responsibility and not covered by the government strategy on free secondary education. Since the government subsidizes the cost of exercise and textbooks, parents are still expected to meet the cost of uniform, extra levies and examination fee. Girls especially feel embarrassed when they do not have proper uniforms and they opt to drop out of school. Sanitary towels play a key role in keeping girls in school, without this many girls fear the embarrassment and often absent from school for at least 4 days in a month. As Kinyanjui (1993) and Namuddu (1994), link the severity of direct costs with shift of educational cost to parents in the name of cost sharing.

On a further analysis the study sort to know if the students had these resources, a question was therefore asked to the students, do you have all the basic requirements you need to be in school? 80 percent of the students in both categories of schools reported that they did not have and 20 percent of the students reported that they had the basic requirements. This may translate into many girls dropping out of school if they are not able to get the supplies especially the school levies, uniforms and sanitary towels. The findings contradict the government policy on free primary education as stated in FPE handbook (2002), that parents need to ensure children have all the basic needs in school.

## Influence of Parental Involvement in Girls Education on Drop out

### *Parents' Support in Education*

In this section the study wanted to find out the level of parental support and to what extent the students were satisfied with the support. The responses were represented in the Table 4.

Table 4: Students Responses on Parental support in Education and Drop out

Rank	Public Boarding sec. schools		Public Day sec. schools	
	Frequency	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage%
Not satisfied	6	6	15	10.6
Less satisfied	56	56	70	49.6
Satisfied	22	22	25	17.7
Very satisfied	12	12	20	14.2
Extremely satisfied	4	4	11	7.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the table 4, 6 percent and 10.6 percent respectively in boarding and day secondary schools reported that they were not satisfied with the level of support, 56 percent in boarding secondary schools and 49.6 percent in public day reported that they were less satisfied, 22 percent in boarding and 17.7 percent student that said they were satisfied, 12 percent of the boarding students in public reported that they were very satisfied. Those who reported that were extremely satisfied were 4 percent of the students from boarding schools and public day secondary schools representing 7.8 percent. Despite the students agreeing that parents support them almost half of the students representing about 62 percent were either not satisfied or less satisfied in the public boarding and 80 percent in public day school. These students did not have requirements and were vulnerable to dropping out. The others who were satisfied at least had most of the basic items and could only miss certain things occasionally whereas the remaining percentage 16 percent in public boarding and 15.6 percent in public day were able to get all the requirements to be able to remain in school. As the Ministry of Education (2002), states that it is the duty of parents and guardians to take their children to school and encourage them to be in school and stay until they complete their studies without discrimination. It is still being noticed that quite a majority of parents do not take this seriously.

## Influence of Mentoring Programme on Student

### *Awareness among Students and Dropout*

The study wanted to find out the level of awareness of guidance and counseling services amongst students. The responses were gathered from both public boarding and day secondary schools in Masaba North district where the question was asked to the student; do you know if

there is guidance and counseling sessions in your school? The responses were collected, compared, analyzed and presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Students' Responses on the Awareness of Guidance and Counseling services in their Schools

Awareness	Public Boarding sec. schools		Public Day sec. schools	
	Frequency	Percentage%	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	81	81	105	74.46
No	19	19	36	25.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table 5 it could be noted that 81 % students in public boarding and 74.6 percent students in public day were aware, whereas 19 percent of the students in public boarding and 25.5 percent students in public day secondary schools were not aware. It could be therefore be concluded that in as much as there is high level of awareness amongst students on the availability of this services at the school, still quite an high percentage of students in both boarding and day secondary schools were not aware and need to be made aware, some still have not been made aware and some schools have not embraced guidance counseling in school. This finding proved (Toomuti, 1985) who noted that consequently guidance and counseling has not received the emphasis it deserves and further very little research has been in Kenya to guide its development.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study established that the dropout rate of girls was escalating in Masaba North District. The most common reasons for girls dropping out of school were lack of fees, early pregnancies, early marriages, repetition, cultural influence, lack of guidance and counseling in schools, lack of support by guidance and counseling teachers and parents, poor performance in school, inadequate schools' physical effects. This suggested that poverty levels in the region affected delivery of educational curriculum in the district. Most of these reasons were a clear sign of poverty.

The study established that parents were committed to the education of girls with majority of the head teachers confirming that parents valued their daughters' education though there existed a perception in the community that the girls' education was less important and as a result there were incidences when girls were advised to attend to domestic chores at the expense of attending school.

The physical and learning resource affect dropout among girls in secondary schools in Masaba North district. The study confirmed that indeed there was challenge on availability of desks, library books, laboratory equipment, toilet, sanitary disposal systems and water. The girl child was sensitive to the availability of most of these physical facilities for requisite daily personal hygiene at school suggesting that their inadequacy could be a hindrance to the education of the girl child in the district.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommends that there is need for collaborative measures by government and other players in providing civil education on behaviour change to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS and initiate poverty reduction measures as these have real negative impact on the girl child education.

That parent still need to be sensitized on the elimination of retrogressive and oppressive beliefs, cultures and practices that still act as barrier towards girl's educational success. There is need to change the attitude of teachers, parents and students on the cultural issues which hinder the gender friendly practices in schools and at home. This therefore calls for a clear guideline/sensitization to ensure equity in access and completion rates.

That there in need for creation of awareness through parents' representatives in school management committees on the need to increase and or maintain contact hours between students and teachers in terms of curriculum coverage by providing school supplies on time to avoid sending children home.

The school management committees need to initiate income generating and learning activities within the school to help needy girls in terms of school supplies provision in order to stimulate their interest in school.

That there is need for ministry of education to identify and train active teachers who are role models for the students to be as mentors and streamlined into the system the teachers should only perform the guidance role not coupled with the regular classroom work. This is because students need a caring understanding adult who is able to guide them towards achieving their educational goals. Besides the introduction of life skills in school, school timetables should allow time for these sessions because it seems that as at now it is not provided for in the school timetable and programs. A policy statement or guideline should be drawn by the ministry to ensure students utilize these services.

Ultimately, the study recommends that in terms of gender policy implementation, the ministry should ensure proper dissemination plan covering the head teachers, teachers,



students and parents. This couple with close monitoring at the grass root level would ensure a high level at success in the implementation process.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH**

Masaba North district was not well networked by tarmac road; distance from one school to the other was far making accessibility difficult especially during the rainy season in which the data collection was carried out. Walking from one school to the other was tedious and tiresome. The study only included students, teachers and head teachers in the selected schools. Although parents could provide crucial information, there were not respondents in the study because of the logistics in involving them. There was poor dissemination of the policy and inadequate materials for more information, parents not sensitized on the policies hence not aware of cultural influence, lack of follow ups especially at the grass root level of awareness on the existence of the policy and how it should be implemented, stigmatization of the girls who have come back after delivery (re-entry policy), teachers having negative attitude towards girls who join school hence set back to the implementation process. There was also Low self esteem among girls hence girls shy away and cannot contain the ridicule by other students when they are either pregnant or after delivery.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

1. A study should be carried out to assess the boys' perception and roles towards promoting girls' education.
2. Effects of socio-economic activities on retention and completion both primary and secondary schools in Masaba North district.
3. A replication of this study can also be done in other areas of Kenya.

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## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE: Socio-Economic Influence on Girls Drop Out Rate

Who pays for you school fees including examination fee? Mother [ ] Father [ ] Both [ ]  
Other.....

#### Number of Girls who had dropped out of School

What happened to the girls who did not complete form four in your school?

Transferred [ ] Dropped out [ ] don't know [ ]

Other (Please specify): .....

.....

For those who dropped out, what was the reason?

Pregnancy [ ] lacked fees [ ] got married [ ] failed exams [ ] fail sick [ ]

Parents / guardian uncooperative [ ] family responsibility [ ] got a job [ ]

Others specify:

#### Influences of Basic Schools Supplies and Dropout

What type of school supplies are needed by students in order to remain in school (Tick only one)  
Stationary [ ] School uniform [ ] Levies [ ] Sanitary towels [ ]

In your own opinion, how do you rate most parents' commitment to their daughters' education in the district?

Very committed [ ] committed [ ] Not committed [ ]

#### Parents' Support in Education

Why do you think girls leave school (tick one reason you consider major) poor families [ ] pregnancies [ ] less motivated parents [ ] Don't like school [ ] Early marriage [ ] Death of parents [ ] Lack of sanitary towels [ ] failed many times [ ] lack of school supplies  
others.....

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