

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PRIMARY SCHOOL
GIRL DROP OUTS PHENOMENON IN PASTORAL
COMMUNITIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAASAI
COMMUNITY OF MAGADI DIVISION, KAJIADO
DISTRICT.**

BY

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**A thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial fulfilment
for the requirements of the degree of Master of Education in
Curriculum and Instruction of Egerton University.**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in part or as a whole for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Lizzah Milgo and Elijah Milgo

To my wife Joyce and my daughter Faith .

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ABSTRACT

While enrollment is steadily declining in Kenya, dropout rate continues to be high, with over 50% of the children, both boys and girls dropping out before completing the primary cycle. Boys are marginally better than girls, with 46.3% completing compared to 45.8% of girls. Statistics indicate that the enrollment and retention of girls have consistently lagged behind that of boys in all districts in Kenya. The purpose of this study therefore, was to identify factors causing girls to drop out of school in Magadi Division. The study focused on the entire primary school cycle. This was a survey study which analysed the occurrence of dropping pattern of primary school girls within Magadi Division. The sample comprised of five primary schools of which: 80 primary school continuing girls, five primary school class teachers, five headteachers, 40 dropout girls, 20 parents/guardians of the dropouts and two education officers were sampled. This constituted a total of 152 respondents involved in the study. A questionnaire and four interview schedules were the main tools used in data collection. The instruments were refined during the pilot study. Descriptive statistics, especially percentages and frequencies, were used for the data analysis. Results showed that illiteracy, poverty, cultural practices and unwanted pregnancies contributed to girls dropping out of schools, while famine was not a significant factor. It was concluded that if girls are not educated, the society will lose the economic and social benefits associated with the female literacy and schooling. The Kenyan Government should, therefore, introduce community education, especially in rural areas, to educate the people on the importance of girl-child education. Viable and sustainable cost and financing mechanisms in education have to be instituted to stop dropouts from the system, thus enhancing completion rates.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

The completion rate for the girl child education has been in the decline during the last decade and is likely to be one of the greatest problems of the third world in the current millennium. According to Murard (1998), more than two thirds of the 140 million children not receiving primary education in developing countries are girls. She noted that despite the fact that the number of children attending school over the last 30 years is broadly on the increase, it is boys who have benefited most. According to Republic of Kenya (1997) enrollment rate at primary school level stands at 75.9%, with a male:female ratio of 51:49. This represents a drastic decline from 95% enrollment rate recorded in 1989.

While enrollment is steadily declining, dropout rate continues to be high, with 50% of the children, both boys and girls dropping out before completing the primary cycle. Boys are marginally better than girls, with 46.3%, completing, compared to 45.8% of girls. Statistics indicate that the enrollment and retention of girls have consistently lagged behind that of boys in all districts in Kenya. The above trend of events has been happening while the government expenditure on education has been increasing (Abagi, 1997). The government expenditure in education has averaged 35% since 1993. In 1998/99, the government allocated the sector 38% of the national budget (Aduda, 2000). However, the outcome has not been commensurate with the budgetary allocation. The costs of learning inputs far outweighs the output. The government and the parents do

not get their money's worth. Of equal importance is girl child education which has been dropping over the years.

Factors affecting access and retention of girls in schools could be divided into extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Extrinsic factors derive from economic status of the household, humanity, national policies, structural adjustment and socio-cultural values (practices). Intrinsic factors derive from the quality of school environment, and include such factors as quality of the curriculum and pedagogy, gender biased curriculum that reduce the status of women, school culture, cost and management of educational programmes (Abagi, 1997).

According to the World Bank (1988), countries that have the highest rate of women's illiteracy also have a very low enrollment of girls in primary education. On the other hand countries which have succeeded in reducing female illiteracy rate significantly have often succeeded in achieving universal primary education. In spite of the efforts to increase female educational opportunities, enrollment and retention in primary school education are still generally lower for girls than boys in most of the developing countries.

A study commissioned by the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the UNICEF Kenya country office in Nairobi indicate that sexual harassment is a major hazard that adolescent school girls passively suffer on a daily basis as they commute to and from school. From the study, many school girls claimed that sexual harassment disoriented them from school work, thus placing them at an educationally disadvantaged position

vis-a-vis their male counterparts. The study further reveals that lack of financial support from the family often pushed school girls into waiting hands of “money flashing” public service vehicle personnel who are ready to offer the girls concessional fares in return for sexual favours. This has often led to pre-marital sex, early pregnancies, low school participation and performance, and ultimately to school drop-outs, a problem that has attracted national concern in Kenya (Chege, 1997).

The rise in the level of poverty in Kenya is one of the major factors which discourage parents from investing in their children’s education. Families and, by extension many communities, are not in a position to meet the ever-increasing cost of schooling adequately. Further, as a result of the introduction of cost sharing policy in 1988, parents were expected to meet 95% of recurrent cost of their children’s education. Since the level of poverty has also gone up in the country and the cost of education and training at all levels has continued to rise, many Kenyans are unable to meet the cost of education and can no longer have access to education (Abagi, 1997).

Nairobi and Mombasa, with high concentration of urban poor, for instance, record only 56.0% and 62.9% enrollment and completion rates, respectively, while ordinarily one expects them to record high enrollments. Research has shown that the majority of those enrolled in cities are children from urban slums, whose parents are not able to meet the prohibitive education costs. Of the factors affecting access and participation, poverty tops the list (Abagi, 1997).

Regional differences in the provision of educational opportunities correspond to social-economic development which have their origin in the colonial system. Areas of high

economic development have witnessed enormous expansion of educational facilities as compared to those with low economic advancement. Educational development is not only related to the economic development of the region but there is also a relationship between the overall educational progress and advancement of female education. Areas which are backward, are also educationally backward in terms of female education (Keino, 1985). This is particularly the case in some provinces in Kenya, like Rift Valley and North Eastern provinces.

Socio-cultural factors such as initiation ceremonies and gender socialization, are other factors responsible for pupils' failure to complete primary education. In areas where circumcision is still practised, some pupils are pulled out of school to participate in the ceremonies. Once initiated some pupils develop negative attitudes toward teachers and school. In this connection, some circumcised boys are not ready to be taught by female teachers whom they consider as inferior. Similarly some initiated girls feel that they are now grown-up women who should get married. This is because in some communities, girls or boys are expected to get married immediately once they have been initiated. Pressure is therefore put on them to leave school and meet the societal expectations (Abagi and Odipo, 1997). In Cameroon, the practice of female genital mutilation is one of the traditional practices that interferes with girls' access to education. This practice, in addition to resulting in absence from school, also involves health risk. After participating in these activities, girls are considered by society as ready for marriage, thus the practice has negative effect on some girls' attitudes towards school (FEMSA, 1997).

In some communities, cultural practices and beliefs like early marriage and parental preference for boys have contributed to non-enrollment and high-drop-out rate of girls. A recent study in Samburu indicated that early-marriages topped the list of factors affecting access and participation of girls at primary school level (Syong'oh, 1998). In some areas of rural Tanzania, on reaching puberty (from upper primary), girls are expected to participate in initiation ceremonies aimed at preparing them for womanhood and marriage. These ceremonies are often held during the school term and result in girls missing a considerable amount of school time, hence poor performance, repetition and ultimately school drop out (FEMSA, 1997). There was a need, therefore, to establish factors affecting the girls enrollment and retention in primary schools. This study addressed the factors on retention of girls in primary education in Magadi Division of Kajiado District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The enrollment of both boys and girls in both primary and secondary schools in Kenya has been steadily declining over the last two decades. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and parents have continued to expand their budget on education for both boys and girls, valuing it as both a national and private investment.

The poor enrollment of girls among the pastoralists has been accompanied by the increasing trend of girls dropout in primary schools. Early school withdrawal, constitute an element of wastage in terms of time, materials and human resource. It is a wastage a young nation like Kenya can ill afford. There was a need therefore, to investigate how poverty, cultural practices, illiteracy, famine and unwanted pregnancies among the pastoralist community of Magadi Division undermined the participation and retention of

girls in primary schools. Previous studies in education have not given adequate reasons for this trend, hence the current study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors contributing to the primary school girl dropout phenomenon among the pastoral Maasai community of Magadi Division in Kajiado District. The study has also sought solutions to the curb girls' dropout rate in the Division.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

In order to achieve the stated purpose, the study addressed itself to the following objectives:

- (a) To determine the proportion of girls who dropout of school in a given year.
- (b) To investigate the cultural factors contributing to high dropout rate of girls in Magadi Division.
- (c) To examine whether poverty and famine among the pastoralists contributes to girl dropout incidents in Magadi Division.
- (d) To investigate whether unwanted pregnancies among primary school girls contribute to school girls dropout rate in Magadi Division.
- (e) To examine how the level of literacy among the pastoralists contributes to cases of girl dropout from primary schools in Magadi Division.

1.5 Research Questions

- (a) What is the proportion of girl dropouts, out of the total enrollment in school, in a given year in Magadi Division?
- (b) Is there any relationship between cultural practices among the pastoralists and girl dropouts in primary schools of Magadi Division?
- (c) Is there any relationship between level of income among the pastoralist and girl dropouts in primary schools in Magadi Division?
- (d) Is there any relationship between girl dropout rate and unwanted pregnancies among primary school girls in Magadi Division?
- (e) Is the dropout rate among primary school girls in Magadi Division related to the level of literacy of their parents or guardians?
- (f) Is there any relationship between January 1997 and November 1999 famine and girls dropout rate in primary schools in Magadi Division?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research findings provide a detailed information on the determinants of girl dropouts at a micro-level and more so, among the pastoral communities. It provides baseline data for planning educational programmes that would improve girls enrollment and schools' retention power. The findings have shown that educators, parents and the society, have a part to play if the problem of girl dropouts in primary schools is to be curbed. This is of benefit to the government, Ministry of Education, Science and

Technology, teachers, parents, the general public and any other interested party in the promotion of girls education among the pastoralists in Kenya.

The results also provide some baseline data for future research on primary school dropouts in Kajiado District.

1.7 Assumption of the Study

The study assumed that all the head teachers of the schools to be visited availed all the required data.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

- (a) The study would have covered the whole of Kajiado District but due to the extensive nature of the district, time and financial constraints, the study only covered Magadi Division.
- (b) Some schools did not keep accurate records of pupils who drop out of school. The classteachers and education officers assisted in giving more information.
- (c) The Division had inadequate infrastructure making communication from one point to another very difficult. Schools within the division were therefore sampled for the study.

1.9 Delimitation

Magadi Division was chosen on the basis of the researcher's personal observation of the high dropout rate of girls in primary schools. According to a survey carried out in 1998

in Samburu District the dropout rate was recorded at 50%. Of these, 60% were girls (Okwembah, 2000).

1.10 Definition of Terms

The following terms are constantly used throughout this thesis and for the purpose of the study carry the following meanings will be assumed:

Dropout - The term refers to a primary school pupil who withdraws prematurely from the school she/he was enrolled.

Cultural practices - Refers to initiation and beliefs as practiced by the Maasai community of Magadi Division.

Grade Dropout rate - This is the percentage of pupils leaving primary school prematurely. It is calculated by dividing the number of dropouts for each grade in school within a given year by the enrollment of that grade multiplied by 100.

Literacy - This is the ability of parents or guardians to read and write.

Migration - The word refers to the movement of parents or guardians from Magadi Division to other parts of the district or country with their children or dependants.

Primary school - For the purpose of the study, primary schools are understood to be those institutions within the formal education system which seek to provide basic knowledge and skills to school age children for a period of eight years.

Determinants - Refers to factors or conditions which influence girls to drop out of primary education.

Girls retention - Refers to ability for girls to be in the school system until they complete the primary education cycle.

Socio-economic - This relates to a combination of social and economic factors, more specifically social practices and the level of income of a family.

Investment - This refers to the cost of primary education that parents/guardians meet with the hope that their children will be able to provide financial or any other return to them, upon completion of their studies.

Poverty - Refers to the inability of parents/guardians to afford food and education for their children which will be measured by the level of income of the parents/guardians.

Grade – For the purpose of this study, it is either lower or upper primary.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The rate at which girls drop out of school dictates that the barriers to girls education be seen from a wider perspective. The perspectives include, cultural practices, poverty, illiteracy, famine and perceived economic benefits derived from schooling, all of which constitute important determinants of enrollment and retention rate. Though some studies have been done on dropout rates in Kenya, there is inadequate information on how the above factors contribute to the problem of girls dropping out of primary schools among the pastoralists of Magadi Division. This literature review is based on research findings on how the above factors contribute to girl dropouts in primary schools.

2.2 The Relationship between Cultural Practices and High Dropout Rate Among School Girls

Cultural factors and community attitudes to education have been the focus of a good number of studies. In a study commissioned by the United Nations on the status and role of women in Eastern Africa, it was argued that the attitudes of parents on girls' education had not kept pace with modernity, many resist the idea that girls' education must keep pace with that of boys. Traditional attitudes toward girls and their place in society militate against the education for girls. Some tribes have insisted on girls remaining at home during puberty, for initiation and betrothal ceremonies (UNO, 1967).

In some communities in Kenya, girls are made to choose between education and the tribal values. Obviously most opt for those values that come from a positively valued and more emotionally attractive practices into their system of action. Moreover, it is usually easier to do or think as expected rather than to choose an alternative way. This is particularly so since the objectives and conditions of a society are likely to support what is culturally and ideologically expected rather than what is deviant or non-conformist (Chege, 1983). In communities which did not practise female circumcision, there were socio-cultural factors which played and continue to play a crucial role in militating against girls participation in education. The sexual division of labour and the system of bride-wealth and marriage, girls were often denied education, even among households and communities that are wealthy enough to support schooling. Girls were valued as objects of exchange and the custom of charging fine for adultery or pregnancy of unmarried women (Mbilinyi & Mbughuni, 1991).

In many areas in Kenya, parents feared to send their girls to school because they feared the loss of income, or they withdrew them as they approach puberty stage for initiation and to be married off. Furthermore, school girls were considered less submissive and obedient, more resistant to local patriarchal system and more promiscuous. Their schooling was not seen as raising their bride wealth, but instead lowered their exchange value (Mbilinyi & Mbughuni, 1991). Parents and mothers in particular, also have cause to favour boys' education in that they are dependent on adult sons for old age insurance. In addition, the division of labour along gender line, meant that mothers had to rely on their daughters' labour. These attitudes and perceptions continue to influence girls' education in some communities. In Zambia Mulopo (1988) observed that gender

inequalities is caused by parental resistance to send their daughters to school. The future sex roles of a girl as defined by a typical African society, he argues, would be a mother, housewife, homekeeper and such like engagements. These roles, at best, require only a minimum level of education. Parents, therefore, are not usually enthusiastic to send their daughters to school. The expected roles of a boy include being a bread winner for the family. In the modern economy this entails the acquisition of knowledge and skills that provide one with access to wage employment. Boys are therefore, expected to acquire as much training as possible so as to attain a higher status as heads of their respective households. Girls on the other hand are expected to be dependent on their husbands for their livelihood once they marry. Sex-role expectations of the society, is concluded to have initiated sex imbalance in school and career that has been sustained for a long time (Mulopo, 1988). In Mali, a study by Lamine (1983) established that factors that explained dropping out in primary schools were a disturbed psychological environment of the family and cultural values that were inconsistent with schooling. Ngware (2000), while quoting Mbilinyi (1974) found out regional and locational effects to be of less significance on access to primary school than the sex of the child, family background and traditional social structure among peasants and traders in rural areas of Tanzania.

A number of studies in Kenya, have also pointed out that socio-cultural constraints contribute to the low girls' enrollment in education and eventual withdrawal. Maritim (1990) noted that, faced with economic problems parents, particularly in the rural areas where over 95% of schools are located, are forced to carefully select their children to go to school. In this selection process, girls are disadvantaged as boys are favoured because

they are regarded as the long term investment and security in old age. This is particularly the case of families in the lowest socio-economic studies. Their daughters are married early in order to provide economic support in terms of bride wealth to the family. This economic and cultural constraints were against the improvement of educational opportunities for girls.

The cultural practices inculcate the idea that their future is much dependent upon the success of their husbands and thus parents have no firm control over it (Maritim, 1990). For girls whose family pressure on them to continue in school is less and the cultural definition of their roles is established, the motivation for academic excellence may not generally be of significance to them. Maleche (1972) argued that parents neither understand nor fully appreciate the need for education. They still argue that education will make girls discontented and immoral, therefore, less willing to undergo heavy labour in the field combined with domestic drudgery which is traditionally their lot in life. It is also noted that, equally important to girls' education, is the home environment. In the house, girls acquire an image of themselves and their place in society as adults. This image is a hindrance to their interest in education. They are conditioned from an early age to believe that women are inferior to men, that their place is in the home and garden, that they are therefore, the pleasure of the men including bearing them children, and that they are to be seen and not to be heard". Maleche (1972) further argues that equally important in the home influence is the nature and level of conversation since most girls keep very much to their mothers or girl friends. The cultural level of conversation in the home is anything but less stimulating educationally. Usually conversation centres around the days' events, beer, food, dress, children and gossip

about other people. This kind of environment does not generally encourage girls' aspiration for education.

In a study of one community in India, it was noted that because girls are married at an early age they need preparation for all their duties in good time. The school offers nothing in that life, so it is better for the girls to stay at home to learn from their respective mothers, aunts and grandmothers. They get thorough education of practical apprenticeship and socialization. Any risk of their being disoriented by the school is avoided. The school is not rejected as such, but what it offers is not enough to displace the necessities of domestic education (Oxemham, 1974). In some communities, in Sub-Saharan Africa, religious and traditional norms dictate that girls are to be married at a certain age and when they are still in school with no prospects of marriage when they mature, it puts the family in disgrace. The girls are therefore, pulled out of school as soon as they reach maturity to prepare them for marriage (FAWE, 1997).

Some studies also show that individual attitudes in the community can undermine the quality of education. An example includes the case in which parents keep their children at home from going to school to work, or they enroll them but allow them to drop out after a few grades. Such a behaviour is often related to the fact that the members of the community are not convinced that a worthwhile education is being offered (Baker, 1988). In areas where traditional circumcision is still practised, some pupils are pulled out of school to participate in initiation ceremonies. Once initiated some pupils develop a negative attitude towards teachers and the school. In this connection, some circumcised boys are not ready to be taught by women whom they now consider

inferior. Similarly, some female initiates feel that they are now grown-up women who should get married. This is because in some communities, girls or boys are expected to get married immediately after they have been initiated. Pressure is therefore, put on them to leave school and meet traditional expectations (Abagi & Odipo, 1997).

Education is an area which is influenced by powerful cultural constraints. The question posed by many parents in developing countries is: Why should we provide education for our daughters? In their eyes the exercise may be pointless, given the perceived female roles in society. Despite historical trends and socio-economic development, the age old distribution of tasks between the sexes has no means disappeared in certain countries. This is subtly implied when reference is made in connection to tradition or customs, that is, arrangements which tend to perpetuate sexual inequalities. The image, place and future of a female child are still subject to restrictive structures and primarily to a patriarchal system (Murard, 1998). Education for girls, therefore, is often given grudgingly and in some places, it is provided mainly by the family or social group. This lack of an academic culture, which is so pronounced in rural areas is one of the biggest obstacles to girls' academic success. The image of the school as an alien institution has an effect on girls' own perception of her education. She may also see learning as being valueless, incompatible with parental models, and sometimes not worth the effort (Murard, 1998). If a girl has the opportunity to go to school, she is often torn between her academic and domestic duties. In Nepal for example, the housework carried out by a girl of between six and 12 years of age may account for up to one third of her daily routine, leaving little time for study. The specific restriction on girls are such that their lives outside the learning environment often takes priority, which causes them to drop

out of school. This is a common feature of education system in developing countries and it affects girls more than boys because the former are more restricted by the norms of society, to which they have to conform. From the evidence mentioned above, socio-cultural factors are responsible for pupils' failure to complete primary education. There was, therefore, a need to determine whether there are cultural practices that contribute to girls' dropout in primary schools among the pastoralists in Magadi Division of Kajiado District.

2.3 The Relationship between Poverty, Famine and Dropout Rate Among School

Girls

Several studies have focused on the family income to be a factor militating against female participation and retention in primary education. In Ghana, withdrawal from primary and middle schools was explained by the parental failure to afford the expense of retaining the pupil in the school. Even though tuition was free, uniform, exercise books and all other familiar demands, when added up constitute a sizeable drain to household income (Oxenham, 1984). This factor is also highlighted in Nkinyangi's (1980) study of socio-economic determinants of repetition and withdrawal at the primary school level in Kenya. He observes that the phenomena of school withdrawal does not only reflect the socio-economic status of the family but also sex differences. Girls tend to be the victims of dropping out as opposed to boys in low-economic families. In a situation where parents cannot pay fees for boys and girls, girls are sacrificed outright. Male siblings are allowed to proceed while female siblings are allowed to drop out. Ngware (2000), while quoting Stromquist (1998) pointed out that government reductions in support of education and training negatively affect poor

families to a larger extent. He continued to assert that when this happens, it is the girls in the poor families that are affected most.

According to Briggs (1980), there is a direct link between dropout and cost of primary education which include more than the basic fee payable and as a result, many poor children do not enter because of these extra costs. When more sacrifices are demanded, a poor family bearing their child's cost of education might abandon the whole exercise. In a UNESCO survey carried out in South-East Asian countries, it was observed that inability to pay fees and purchase books equipment and clothes, compelled parents to invest in the education of their boys whom they see as a source of future family support in preference to their daughters, whose economic contribution could well be to a different household (UNESCO, 1979). In a study carried out by World Bank (1988) in Sierra Leone it was observed that inability to pay for educational services and facilities has tended to marginalise children from low-income families. The study further identified factors such as absence of state policy on compulsory school for children, rural-urban migration, broken families, low-wages and unemployment among parents, as being determinants for premature school withdrawal.

Many girls are classified as "non-working" (not in the labour force) yet most girls from poor families spend substantial amount of time running the household. In rural Indonesia, for example, girls aged 10 to 15 in the poorest households worked an average of 94 hours a month, compared with 70 hours in the middle income households and 26 hours in the wealthiest households. Low family income can therefore, be seen to bar many pupils from primary education in most of the developing countries. Extreme

economic hardship often results in forms of child labour which, unlike household labour, conflict directly with the right to education. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 250 million children from age 5 - 14, mainly in developing countries, are working. About half of these work full time. Another 150 million to 200 million children, most of them girls, do unpaid domestic work for their families (Kirauni, 2000).

In Kenya, when school fees was virtually abolished in primary schools in the late 1970s by the government, financial problems still persisted. School committees have introduced school funds for items such as building fund, activity fees and equipment levy, among others. This has made primary education expensive. Olembo (1982) who attributes the high dropout rate, to the burden of high levies that replaced tuition fees supports this argument. In addition, Sifuna (1979) decries the parents' plight and observes that:

“Despite the proclamation of the Government that shifted the burden of paying for cost of construction from the families of school children to the entire community and institution, it was still a fact that the incidence of the burden of building schools and equipping them is borne by parents of the school children” (p 114).

—The cost of education is particularly high at all levels in Kenya, in relation to the ability of the families to pay for it. The main cause of dropout at primary school level has been found to be financial difficulty or poverty. Kirui (1982), while quoting Raju (1973), reached the same conclusion as is evident from the following extract:-

“The difficulty of getting money to pay for the education of sons and daughters is the main cause of premature withdrawal of pupils from schools.”

In many developing countries, the number of people living in absolute poverty has continued to grow. Many of these are rural dwellers with large numbers of children for whom a few years of primary schooling have remained the only existing learning opportunity. Attempts on the part of local community and schooling authorities to have parents pay larger share of educational cost have often aggravated the economic dilemmas of the poor. As regards fathers and mothers themselves, their desire for education has been submerged by immediate survival needs. Literacy and primary schooling have become luxuries which the poor can ill afford. Undoubtedly basic education in sub-sahara Africa has suffered as a result of poverty occasioned by foreign debt repayments, poor investments and misplaced domestic priorities. Whereas enrollments have continued to decline, girls education has suffered most. Almost in all countries, it is a rule of thumb among households with limited resources to send boys to school in preference to girls (Daily Nation, 2000). The Ministry of Education, in a consultative meeting with donors (1996) summarized the situation by stating that:

“The level of poverty in the country has gone up and the plight of the poor aggravated to the extent where many Kenyans can no longer have access to basic needs and services because they simply cannot cost-share; for example, the number of primary school pupils in absolute poverty, need for text books and school feeding has gone up from 1.7 million and 53,000 to 4.2 million and 2.1 million, respectively” (P 2).

Many children in low-income countries go to school hungry, are under nourished, or suffer from malnutrition. There is evidence that malnutrition is more prevalent among girls than boys. In India, Phillipines and Guatamala, girls were more often malnourished, suffered from kwashiorkor and receive less food than boys (Safilios-Roths-child, 1979). In Bangladesh, girls suffer from anemia and are undernourished

(World Bank, 1990). A growing body of research links malnutrition and its effects on children with impeded cognitive development and ability to learn. In Guatemala girls' mental development scores improved when they were given a protein supplement (Safilios-Rothschild, 1979). Improved nutrition and elimination of hunger can raise the ability of the child to benefit from instruction. The measurable indicators are increased enrollment and attendance and improved cognitive development and academic performance.

In the Dominican Republic the discontinuation of a primary school feeding programme was associated with 19 percent dropout in boys' and a 43 percent dropout in girls enrollment (Levinger, 1986). Two different studies carried out in India observed that schools offering feeding programmes experienced substantially higher attendance at the first grade level (Levinger, 1986). Prather (1991) while quoting Easton and Fass (1989) found school feeding programmes to be critical in parental calculation of school enrollment and selection. In Jamaica, a school breakfast programme improved mathematics achievement attendance and retention (Bellow & King, 1991).

Some communities in Kenya reside in drought-prone areas where famine is a permanent nightmare. The government has not paid significant attention to removal of barriers to food production in the rural areas. Issues such as rural financing, food processing and inputs are largely absent. The cost of failing to transform the rural areas is felt at the national, regional and continental levels as urban-bound migration continues to increase at an alarming rate (Abagi, 1997).

Medical and anthropological research demonstrates that in much of the developing countries, especially in Asia, girls are less well cared for and less nourished than boys. It is obvious that children who are chronically hungry or ill, cannot learn effectively, even if they are given a chance. Of course, where girls are given less opportunity to eat they are unlikely to be given an opportunity to learn doubling the pattern of disadvantage of girls. In a survey carried out by Odalo (1999) in the famine-stricken districts of Ukambani region, he found out that schools were losing an average of 15 to 20 children every month. Indeed the situation seems pathetic as evidenced by the following extract from one of the headteachers from Makueni district:-

“It is unfortunate what hunger can do. A number of boys, including standard eight pupils, are out hunting wild game, or seeking employment at the trading centres where they are given food for their labour. But the situation is worse for the girls, many of whom have turned to prostitution. Many others have dropped out of school to work as house maids in towns” (P 24).

The pastoralists have not been left out either. The year-long drought in Laikipia, Samburu and Isiolo districts have driven the pastoral communities to desperation as they struggle to save their families from starvation (Daily Nation, 1999).

As the level of poverty rises, child labour has become crucial for family survival. Child labour is increasingly employed in domestic activities, agriculture, and petty trade in rural and urban Kenya. Poor households and in some cases children themselves, have carefully analysed the opportunity costs of education. As a result parents have continued to send their children, particularly daughters, into labour market - mainly as domestic workers in urban centres. Meanwhile, boys from the coast region and in rich agricultural areas abandon school in order to earn money as beach boys and tea or coffee

pickers, respectively (Abagi & Odipo, 1997). It is therefore, very clear that the basic education in developing countries has frequently become impoverished and in effect, real learning seems no longer possible. The goal of universal primary education is actually receding.

There was, therefore, a need to determine the effect of household income and famine on girl's enrollment and retention in primary school in Magadi Division. The information is important to the government, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the administrators, in their endeavours to promote universal primary education in the country.

2.4 Relationship between Parental Level of Literacy and High Dropout Rate

Among School Girls

Sociological studies have established a direct relationship between parental education level and children's enrollment and promotion. Chege (1983) while carrying out his studies, on the education of girls in Kenya, established that parental level of education seems to be a major factor influencing participation of girls in schools. He noted that over 60% of the girls came from families where the father had some formal education, 45% of them came from families that had fathers who had obtained formal education upto primary school level. Girls from the most educated family background constituted 16.7% of the CPE candidates, with 69% of the girls coming from homes whose mothers had some education. The educational level of older family members had a similar effect. Shrestha (1986), in reference to Nepal also established that literacy is the single most important determinant of whether children participate in formal school. It is

observed that a child's father's education is substantially more productive of educational participation, if the child is a girl rather than a boy. The correlation between father's education and education participation was 0.337 for girls but 0.202 for boys. It is also argued that parents who themselves are educated, other things being equal, are likely to impart a positive view of schooling among their children. Studies in many other nations almost invariably report that the educational experience and outlook of parents is transmitted to their offsprings. In many instances, parental education is a more significant predictor of children's education than any other factor. A study of determinants of educational participation among large sample of the rural population of Botswana in 1974, for example, found that the education of the head of the household is the single most determining factor (Chemichorsky, 1985).

Further studies have established that countries which have the highest rate of women's illiteracy have also very low enrollment rates for girls in primary education. On the other hand, countries which have recently succeeded in reducing their female illiteracy rate significantly are those which have often succeeded in achieving universal primary education. It was shown in Nepal that the literacy level has a positive impact on school enrollment and pupil retention (Kasayu & Nanandher, 1985). It is further argued that very early in the life of their children, educated parents are able to provide differential advantages. The home environment is especially significant when schooling, as in Kenya, is organized around formal and formidable terminal examination.

The educated parents who purchase books and educational toys, speak English at home, utilize nursery school and who otherwise deploy resources in a manner creating pre-

school condition conducive to successful school performance, provide initial advantages which are difficult to match in poor uneducated and rural families (Prewith, 1974). In his study in Ghana, Levy (1992) found out that learning materials cast a big influence on children's schooling whether for boys or girls. But the effect on girls is roughly twice as great, whether for girls actual enrollment or for the probability that the girls will continue to the next grade. Paternal education also promotes children enrollment, more for girls than for boys but the effects of learning materials are stronger.

According to the studies cited above illiteracy among parents is a stumbling block to development of women, especially educational development which play an important role in promoting economic development and social well being. It was therefore, important to empirically determine the relationship between illiteracy among the pastoralists and girls dropout in primary schools in Magadi Division.

2.5 The Relationship between Unwanted Pregnancies and High Dropout Rate

Among School Girls

According to Gikonyo and Sharma (1979), children always learned about sexual matters from any and every source that is available to them. They cannot fail to be curious about an aspect of life which is all around them. They are also driven to satisfy this curiosity by whatever means they can. The risk is that without recourse to trusted adult who give truthful information, they will be forced to learn to fantasy solution of great inaccuracy and later from children whose knowledge may be as inaccurate as their own knowledge. The phenomena is common in many schools as the issue of sex education has been taken lightly or is not handled at all in schools. Currently there is

controversy over sex education in Kenya. Some citizens feel that the subject could be handled very well in schools while others feel that it should be left to the parents (FEMSA, 1997). From a practical experience most parents have failed to play their role in this respect.

Studies on sexual harassment and pregnancies among school girls in Kenya are limited. However, available surveys and case studies show that sexual harassment and pregnancies are posing a great threat to girls participation and retention in education, (Abagi, 1997). Abagi and Odipo (1997), in their studies noted that male teachers, outsiders and some women teachers have been identified as the main culprits in perpetuating sexual harassment. They argued that there are cases where girls are forced or induced into engaging in sex. While quoting a report by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), they indicated that more than 12,000 girls dropout of Kenya's schools yearly due to pregnancy. Such hostile environment, they noted, has two negative effects.

First, it discourages parents from sending their daughters to school; secondly, pupils lose interest in education or, if pregnant, they are kicked out of the school system altogether. Karoki (1992) observed that, there is disillusionment that leads to poor self-esteem. These girls cannot live to the expected standards economically, socially and in most cases, cannot assert their presence in society or family as a child is viewed as an evidence of immorality.

Teenage pregnancies are common among primary school girls. Headteachers take this issue very seriously as directed by the Education Act. When girls discover that they are pregnant they opt to dropout from school before they are discovered, others abort and continue with their studies, while others give birth and either transfer to other schools or just stick at home and forget about schooling. In support of this issue of pregnancy among female students, Owuor (1988) reported that between January and December 1988, 10,000 school girls dropped from school due to unwanted pregnancies. The findings of Kann and Mugabe (1988) in Botswana revealed that pregnancy was the single major variable explaining dropout among the girls. In rural districts of Tanzania, Mbunda (1983) found that more girls than boys drop out of the primary school cycle and that pregnancy and search for employment were the major explanatory variables of higher female dropout rate.

Ghana has a number of examples of cultural practices that compromise girls' access to education. One of these is the Trokosi system which is found among some communities in the rural areas. This traditional practice requires parents accused of wrongdoing to atone for this by giving a daughter to the Trokosi cult to serve out bondage. During their time in the cult, the girls do not attend school. There have also been cases of girls becoming pregnant while within the cult, indicating the existence of sexual harassment and abuse of the girls within the cult (FEMSA, 1997). Sexual harassment is downplayed in most communities. However, sexual harassment of girls by males in the community including family members, teachers and boys can have a drastic effect on the girls' education and result in her dropping out of school.

Sexual harassment in Kenya has not received the attention and action it deserves. Many people seem to lack the most basic awareness of what entails sexual harassment and its negative effect on other people. This explains why the few research findings available in the area tend to be confined to library shelves for academic reference, rather than circulated for dissemination, public scrutiny and discussion. It was therefore, imperative to determine the relationship between unwanted pregnancy and dropout among primary school girls in Magadi Division so that tangible solutions are identified to curb the same. The information is valuable to the Government of Kenya and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology if universal education for all is to be achieved by the year 2015.

2.6 Conceptual Framework on the Factors Affecting Dropout Rate in Primary

Education:

The conceptual framework given as Figure 1, shows how socio-economic factors contribute to school drop out in primary schools. The cost of education coupled with the deteriorating (rising) poverty, which has reduced the disposable income available to the families, has made it difficult to provide an education for all children, regardless of sex (FAWE, 1988). In Kenya education is financed through cost sharing with parents bearing the bigger share of the burden. Most of them are unable to feed the children properly and provide adequate health services. Children whose parents cannot afford cost of instructional materials, school uniform, tuition fees, and activity fees tend to go to school irregularly. In the long run, they drop out of school. It is evident from the

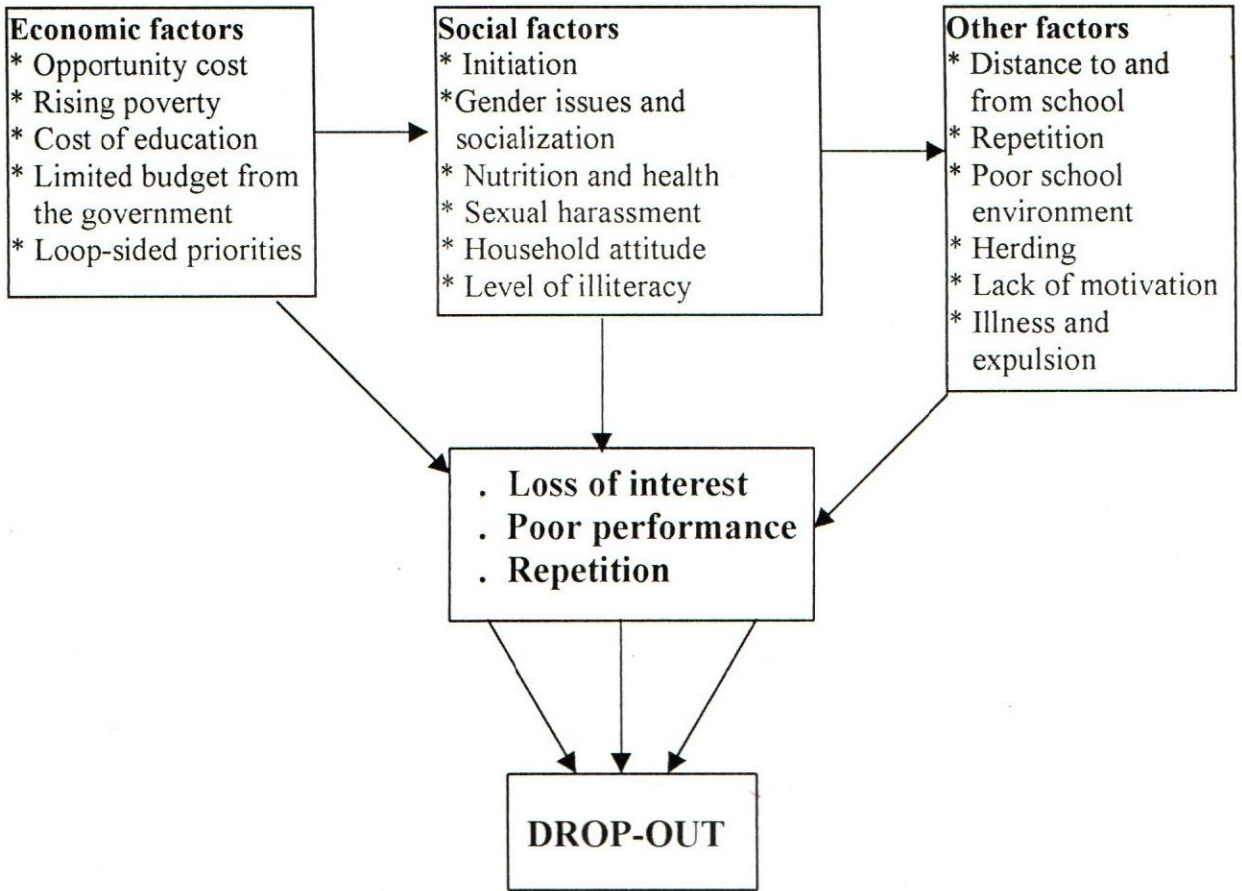


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework of Factors Affecting the Dropout Rate in Primary Education. Source (Abagi & Odipo, 1998)

framework, that parents face a lot of problems in educating their children beyond the primary level. Their children, therefore, perform poorly in school, causing repetition and eventually drop out (FAWE, 1991).

The conceptual framework also shows that socio-cultural practices such as initiation, gender socialization, sexual harassment, level of literacy, nutrition and health, are also responsible for school dropout in primary school. Girls are expected to participate in initiation ceremonies aimed at preparing them for woman hood and marriage. This affect the education in general and when they return to school their performance is poor, leading to repetition and loss of interest of schooling and eventually they drop out. Another effect of these ceremonies is that, once initiated, girls regard themselves as adults and ready for marriage and no longer see the need to concentrate on the school work as they feel that it would be of little use to them in their future roles as mothers and wives.

Sexual harassment from male peers and male teachers is also a factor of school-girl pregnancies and the resultant drop out. The girls are always the losers as they often have to leave school once they are pregnant (FAWE, 1998). From the conceptual framework, it is also very clear that the high drop out rate of girls is also due to the negative attitude that many parents have towards education of girls. This negative attitude is attributed to socio-cultural beliefs regarding gender roles and abilities. Nutrition and health are other important factors which affect girls' education.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study was descriptive survey. Survey research usually uses questionnaires and interviews in order to determine the opinion, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of groups of people of interest to the researcher (Kathuri and Pals, 1993). In this study an attempt was made to discover or clarify the factors contributing to girl dropouts phenomenon among the Maasai pastoralists, from primary school in Magadi Division.

3.2 The Study Area

Magadi Division, the focus of the study, is in Kajiado District. According to Kajiado District Development Plan of 1988, Magadi Division has four locations namely Uldonyonyokie, Olkiramatian, Magadi and Shompole locations.

The Division covers an area of 2,749 Km² with a population of 14,528, according to the 1989 population census. The population was projected to be 25,282 by 1999. The official census results of 1999 at the Divisional level have not been made public. The division has eight public primary schools with the population of 1439 pupils of which 935 are boys and 504 are girls.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study was the primary school girls in the public primary schools in Magadi Division. The division has eight public primary schools with a population of 1,439 pupils of which 935 are boys and 504 are girls. There are 59 both trained and untrained teachers in the division.. The list of the schools was obtained from the Assistant Education Officer of Magadi Division.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

Due to extensive nature of Kajiado District, financial and time constraints,, a sample was selected from the population of primary schools in Magadi Division. Both non-probability and probability sampling were used in this study. A sample is important because it increases the scope and flexibility of coverage due to ability to use limited time and resources (Kathuri & Pals, 1993).

According to Kajiado District Development Plan (1997 - 1998), the number of public primary schools in Magadi Division are eight. The eight schools could not be easily managed. The sample size therefore, was reduced to five. The five primary schools sampled depended on the rate of girls dropout which was the dependent variable. This was achieved by ranking schools according to the rate of dropouts using the information available in the divisional education office. The top five schools with the highest dropout rate were selected for the study. The five primary schools were representative of the primary schools in Magadi Division.

Non probability sampling was used to select key informers, that was class teachers, headteachers, education officers and parents. Purposive sampling was used to select the 32 informers. The 40 dropouts were selected using convenience sampling. Probability sampling was used to sample the continuing school girls from standard one to eight. Simple random sampling was used to obtain the sample size from the population of the school girls. In all, the research study was based on a sample of 152 respondents, namely 80 primary schools continuing girls, five primary school class teachers, five headteachers; twenty parents/guardians of the dropouts, 40 girl dropouts and two education officers. Borg and Gall (1983) recommend the minimum sample size in survey research to be 100 subjects in major sub-group. This means, therefore, the sample of 152 respondents for this research was an appropriate sample size. The table I summarises the samples chosen.

Table I: Summary of the samples chosen:

Continuing school girls	80
Parents/guardians	20
Dropouts	40
Headteachers	5
Classteachers	5
Education officers	2
Total	152

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The measuring instruments that were used for the study were a standard questionnaire for the continuing primary school girls and dropout girls, and interview schedules for class teachers, parents or guardians, headteachers and education officers.

3.5.1 *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire is a collection of items or questions to which a research subject is expected to respond. In this study the instrument was developed such that it contained items that were to help achieve research objectives outlined in chapter one. The items were based on the educational level of the respondents. The questionnaire was organized in two modules according to the respondents. Module one was the questionnaire for the continuing school girls and module two was the questionnaire for the dropouts. The questionnaires were written in English but administered in Kiswahili and Maasai languages for the respondents who did not understand English.

3.5.2 *Interview Schedule*

Interview is one of the methods or approaches used in survey research for collecting data. It is an oral exchange between an interviewer and interviewee who may be an individual or group(s) of individuals.

In this study the researcher used this method to interview headteachers, class teachers, parents or guardians of the dropouts and the education officers in the division. This method was carried out with the help of an interview schedule. This schedule was to help the researcher to explore all the issues in the study. The interview schedule was also to help the investigator to ask balanced questions and any other questions not adequately covered in the questionnaires.

To achieve validity of the instruments, they were revised with the guidance from the research supervisor. Any inadequate wording and ambiguity in the questionnaire was

removed. A pilot study was also carried out and the questionnaire was adjusted, accordingly. Throughout the field work the questionnaire was made flexible to meet the different kinds of respondents. Modification of co-efficient alpha K-R20 was used to estimate the reliability of the instruments. K-R20 is considered by many specialists in education measurements to be the most satisfactory method of determining reliability (Borg & Gall, 1983). The reliability coefficient for the study was .85. According to Borg & Gall (1983) a reliability level of .75 is satisfactory for many research projects. In the light of this statement regarding reliability, the .85 reliability level in this study was therefore considered appropriate.

3.6 Data Collection

Permission to conduct research in Magadi Division was sought from the Office of the President of the Republic of Kenya. When permission was granted, letters of authority to conduct research were requested from Divisional Education Officers of Magadi Division. Before starting the data collection, schools were contacted informing them of the intended visit. A letter of introduction and explanation of purpose of the study was mailed to each school. Each school was visited once to confirm the acceptance of the exercise by headteachers and other members of staff. They were briefed on the objectives of the research and issued with the questionnaires for the continuing school girls. The researcher with the help of the class teachers, administered the questionnaires to the pupils. The researcher visited each school again after two weeks to collect completed questionnaires and to interview the headteachers and classteachers.

3.7 Data Analysis

After the data had been collected it was analysed to facilitate answering the research questions. The completed questionnaires were examined for errors before subjecting them to analysis. This was done for the purpose of checking completeness, clarity and consistency in answering of questions.

Responses to each variable were manually tallied and totalled and grouped accordingly. Grouped responses were expressed in percentages. The responses created statistics which were to be used in descriptive analysis of the data. The use of tables, percentages and frequency distributions were extensively employed to summarize the data.

The proportion of girls' dropout in five primary schools were analysed through the help of the school registers. All those girls who were marked absent and never came back throughout the year of study were taken to have dropped out of school. This was also confirmed by the school headteachers and the class teachers. It was, therefore, possible to identify the number of girls who dropped out in 1997, 1998 and 1999 in each sampled primary school. The number was totalled up for the three years and expressed in percentages. This enabled the researcher to ascertain the proportion of girl dropouts in the five primary schools.

While checking on the girls who had dropped out of school an attempt was also made to identify the grade in which each girl was when she dropped out of school. This enabled the analysis of data on the distribution of girl dropouts by grade.

Through the interview between the researcher and the dropout girls, it was possible to identify the most significant variables as given by the dropouts. Each of the 40 dropouts sampled for the study, was able to give the real reason why she dropped out of school. Counts for each variable was made and expressed in percentages. It was, therefore, possible to ascertain the significant variables which made the dropouts to drop out of school before completing the primary cycle.

The interview between the researcher with informants (Headteachers, Classteachers and Education Officers) was very significant in ascertaining the significant variables in the study. They gave their reasons for girls' dropout. According to the variables they mentioned, they were accounted, totalled and expressed in percentages. The researcher was able to identify the most significant variables which occasioned girl dropouts.

The parents of the dropouts were traced and interviewed. Each parent gave the real reason why his/her daughter terminated her primary education and why he/she was unwilling to take the daughter back to school. The reason each parent gave were tallied, totalled and expressed in percentages. It was possible to identify the significant variables which occasioned girls' dropout in primary schools as given by the parents.

The continuing primary school girls were given questionnaires to fill. Before analysis, the questionnaires were examined for errors. Responses for each variable were tallied and totalled and expressed in percentages. It was, therefore, possible to ascertain the significant variables as given by the primary school girls.

In ranking the factors leading to the girls' dropout, all responses were grouped accordingly as given by different subjects, that is, the headteachers, classteachers and education officers, the dropout themselves, the parents of the dropouts and the continuing primary school girls. Their responses to each variable were totalled and expressed in percentages. The significant variable was therefore, determined.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This study ascertains the causes, characteristics and magnitude of primary school dropout rate among girls. A total of 152 respondents were sampled for the study. This included 80 continuing school girls, five headteachers, five class teachers, 40 girl dropouts, 20 parents/guardians of the dropouts and two education officers. It was possible to collect 61 filled questionnaires from the continuing primary school girls, comprising a response rate of 76.3%. Of the 20 parents sampled for the interview schedule 16 of them were interviewed giving a response rate of 80%. But it was rather difficult to extract information from them as they viewed the interview with contempt. However, with persuasion and explanation of the purpose of the study a good rapport was established.

A visit to the education officers of the division helped in confirming some information from schools and giving a general overview of the problem. The findings have been reported in tables, percentages, frequencies and descriptive illustrations. Each table has been explained.

4.2 Proportion of Girl Dropouts rate in Five Primary Schools

It was important to ascertain the proportion of girl dropout rate in order to be able to explain the dropout rate. The schools involved included Loika, Ereret, Oldonyonyokie,

Iparakuo and Shompole. The schools had different dropout rates. This information is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Girls' Enrollment and Dropout in Five Primary Schools between January 1997 and November 1999

SCHOOL	1997		1998		1999		TOTAL DROPOUTS	% OF DROPOUTS
	ENROL	DROPOUTS	ENROL	DROPOUTS	ENROL	DROPOUTS		
OLOIKA	32	5	45	5	38	4	14	18.7
ERORET	39	0	32	6	40	2	8	10.7
OLDONYONYOKIE	24	5	33	0	35	18	23	20.7
ILPARAKUO	48	10	55	0	60	0	10	13.3
SHOMPOLE	30	5	37	4	35	11	20	26.7
TOTAL	173	25	202	15	208	35	75	100%

It can be observed from Table 2, that dropout rates in Magadi Division has been evident, between January, 1997 and November, 1999. The highest dropout rate was in 1999, with a dropout rate of 16.8%. This was because of the prolonged drought, which made parents to withdraw their children from schools as they were moving to new places for water and pasture for their animals, inability to pay activity fees due to economic hardship caused by prolonged drought, and initiation ceremonies.

It can also be observed that dropout rate is higher in some schools than others. It is highest in Shompole and Oldonyonyokie (26.7% and 20.7%, respectively). Accordingly to respondents sampled for the study, the high rate of dropout in Shompole Primary School can be explained by the fact that the school is situated on the part of the division where traditional practices and moranism are still very strong and most parents have negative attitude towards education, especially girl-child education. They claimed that education make girls to forget their parents and tradition, marry people of their own

choice and leads to immoral behaviour. It was surprising to note that not even a single girl had joined secondary school from the school. Indeed Shampole region lags behind in educational development. The study therefore is consistent with the study carried out by Keino (1985) that areas which lagged behind educationally are also backward in terms of female education. Oldonyenyokie had the highest dropout in 1999 (51.4%). This period coincided with the coming of morans back home. During these occasions, girls sing together and compose love songs to their warrior boyfriends. They adorn themselves with beautiful necklaces and soft hides. They develop negative attitude towards schooling while others are married off by their parents.

Eroret is along Magadi-Nairobi Highway. This has influenced lifestyle of the people living along the highway, in that they have developed positive attitude towards modern life, including education. Eroret and Ilparakuo had the lowest dropout during the period, 10.7% and 13.3%, respectively. Ilparakuo is a few kilometres from Magadi township. It seems that the dropout rate was enhanced by the interaction between the Maasai community and other communities living within the township. Indeed the community around the school is currently supporting the education of both boys and girls.

4.3 Reasons for Early Withdrawal as given by Dropouts

The reasons for early withdrawal in Magadi Division as given by the dropouts included illiteracy of their parents, cultural practices, poverty, unwanted pregnancies and famine. Other factors mentioned included long distance to and from school, repetition, poor performance and herding of animals at home. These are indicated in Table 2.

Table 3 Frequency of Reasons for Early Withdrawal as Given by the Dropouts.

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
POVERTY	16	17.4
CULTURAL PRACTICES	10	10.9
ILLITERACY	36	39.1
UNWANTED PREGNANCY	16	17.4
FAMINE	2	2.2
OTHER FACTORS	12	13.1

According to Table 3, it can be observed that most dropouts withdrew out of school because of illiteracy of their parents. This can be explained by the fact that about 90% of the 40 dropouts came from families whose parents never went to school. Such parents are unlikely to import a positive view of the school among their children. This means that illiteracy is a major factor in the high dropout rate in Magadi Division. Other main factors included pregnancy and poverty with 17.4% and 17.4%, respectively. The inability to pay activity fees and other required payments by the parents' poverty was indicated as a cause of girls dropout. Most dropouts maintained that, when their parents were faced with the decision whether to pay activity fee or examination fee for a son or a daughter, most parents among the pastoralists chose to pay for the boys, irrespective of which of the two is brighter than the other. In fact most girls dropped out of school because of this biasness. This study is consistent with the research carried by Maritim (1990) which observed that when parents are faced with economic problems they select their children to go to school. The girls are disadvantaged as boys are favoured because they are regarded as the long term investment and security in old age.

Cultural practices accounted for 25% of the total 40 dropouts sampled for the study. Some girls reported that they participated in initiation ceremonies which were aimed at preparing them for womanhood and marriage. Of the 10 girls who dropped out of school due to cultural practices, five of them (12.5%) dropped out due to marriage, while three of them (10%) never went back to school after genital mutilation while two of them (5%) dropped out after they underwent ear piercing. The ceremonies were held during the school term and resulted into missing a considerable amount of school time. The result was poor performance, repetition and ultimately school dropout. In fact, it was reported that some girls dropped out of school after being misled by their mothers into believing that going to school jeopardized their chances of getting married.

Famine was not a significant explanatory variable for the dropout. This is because the school feeding programme which had been running since 1985 through the assistance of the World Food Programme had significantly boosted enrollment and retention in all the schools under study. However, some dropouts admitted having dropped out of school when they migrated with their families during drought season in search of water for their animals.

Other factors which were mentioned by the dropouts included long distance, repetition and herding of animals at home. Four girls (10%) dropped out of school because of long distances from and to school, while three girls (7.5%) dropped out after being forced to repeat classes for several years.

4.4 Reasons of Dropping Out as given by Headteachers, Class Teachers and Education Officers

The subjects cited a number of factors occasioning girl dropouts in primary school in Magadi Division. Most of them thought that the major factors contributing to girls' early withdrawal were cultural practices, high level of illiteracy in the division, unwanted pregnancies and poverty. Other factors mentioned by the subjects included lack of parental interest, support and involvement in their daughters academic work, repetition, chronic absenteeism, poor school environment, home chores, moranisms, lack of role model in the community and long distances covered to and from school. This is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 Frequency of Dropping out as Given by Headteachers, Classteachers and Education Officers

REASONS	FREQUENCY				PERCENTAGE
	Headteachers	Classteachers	Education officers	Total	
ILLITERACY	4	4	2	10	22.2
CULTURAL PRACTICES	5	4	2	11	24.4
POVERTY	5	3	2	10	22.2
UNWANTED PREGNANCY	3	2	1	06	13.3
FAMINE	-	-	-	-	-
OTHER FACTORS	3	3	2	08	17.8

Table 4 shows the causes of dropping out as given by headteachers, class teachers and educational officers. From the analysis, it can be observed that most headteachers, classteachers and education officers thought that the major factors contributing to girls' early withdrawal from primary schools were cultural practices, high level of illiteracy among parents and poverty.

According to education officers and headteachers, most parents had little or no education themselves, therefore, did not have the knowledge or skills required to help or monitor their children's academic work . They complained that in many homes, a 'culture' of parental monitoring of children's work was lacking. They all accepted that this was due to illiteracy of their parents. The class teachers interviewed reported that one of the reasons for girls' poor performance and eventual dropout was the lack of parental interest, support and involvement in their daughters' academic work. Classteachers attributed this lack of involvement to a number of factors. One was that most parents had the attitude that academic work was the preserve of the school and in particular the teacher and were therefore, reluctant or unwilling to become involved. Repetition and chronic absenteeism were other variables mentioned by the class teachers. Poor school environment was also mentioned by some class teachers. They asserted that some schools had poorly constructed classrooms with no desks for the pupils. Most of them sat on stones, timber or on the floor. Such an environment was not attractive especially for the girls who were very conscious about their seating behaviour.

According to headteachers and education officers, traditional practices like early marriage and initiation rites interfered more with education of girls. Girls were unilaterally withdrawn from school for initiation rites and married off thereafter. This was due to the belief that the daughter was seen as a source of wealth for the family because when she is married, the family would get bridewealth. In fact, it was realized, among the pastoralists that what matters was how many cows, goats and sheep one owned rather than how many children one had educated.

Education officers and some headteachers expressed alarm over high dropout rate and declining academic standards due to circumcision. They complained that on reaching puberty girls were expected to participate in initiation ceremonies aimed at preparing them for womanhood and marriage. These ceremonies were often held during the school term and resulted in girls missing a considerable amount of school time. Participation in these ceremonies was said to affect girls' participation in education in general and led to girls' dropout. They asserted that these ceremonies were common among the disadvantaged parents with little or no education, who had little awareness of the advantages of educating/educated girls. This is consistent with the study carried out by Abagi and Odipo (1997) that girls are pulled out of school to participate initiation ceremonies and marriage thereafter.

Education officers were particularly concerned of the pupils who were forced to drop out of school to take care of their siblings as the parents went out in search of food and water while others had gone to milk cows, draw water, collect firewood, plaster houses and even tend sheep, goats and calves, especially in families where there were no boys.

Unwanted pregnancies were also reported to be one of the major problems causing girls' dropout in Magadi Division. Education officers and most headteachers revealed that the Maasai morans were the major culprits of this. They complained that girls between nine and twelve years old began to associate more with the warriors. This was the time they may select boyfriends from among the warriors and may even begin to have lovers if they wanted to. A number of school girls were impregnated during this association, which had the blessings from parents. Their parents married the girls off immediately if

they were circumcised. Other culprits mentioned included government officers and teachers. At the time of collecting this data, two teachers were serving interdiction for conceiving school girls. This study therefore has relationship with the findings of Kann and Mugabe (1988) in Botswana that revealed that pregnancy was the major variable explaining dropout among the girls.

All the school headteachers and most class teachers said that the cost of textbooks, exercise books, uniform and other support services were very high to most parents. They asserted that to majority of the parents, it was difficult for them to meet all the costs of education even though they were willing to pay. When some parents were confronted with limited charges, it was reported, they tended to withdraw their children from school, with girls being the worst hit. This concurs with Nkinyangi's (1980) findings that the phenomenon of primary school withdrawal not only reflect the socio-economic status of the family but also sex differences.

Education officers revealed that the high cost of primary education negatively affected access to education, retention rate and increasing dropout rate. To them, this had increased household preferences of educating boys over girls. Education participation therefore, correlated with family wealth, contrary to the expectation that the wealthy would tend to keep their children at home to herd.

It was also revealed by the education officers that there was complete absence of females' positive role models in the academic field. Role models, they asserted, did simple jobs like cooking, fetching water, plastering houses and herding. This had had

great influence on the young girls in the community. This study concurs with the study of Murard (1980) that lack of academic culture which is pronounced in rural areas, is one of the biggest obstacles to girls' academic success.

4.5 Reasons of Dropping out as Given by the Dropouts' Parents

Most parents of the dropouts considered the main causes of girls' dropout to be low level of income, unwanted pregnancies, cultural practices, illiteracy and famine. Other factors mentioned included distance to and from school, the few parents who had undergone formal education indeed complained about lack of role models in the community, herding and poor school environment. Table 4 summarizes this information.

Table 5 Frequency of Reasons for Dropping Out as Given by the Dropouts' Parents

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
POVERTY	09	30
CULTURAL PRACTICES	06	20
ILLITERACY	03	10
UNWANTED PREGNANCIES	07	23.3
FAMINE	03	10
OTHER FACTORS	02	6.7

From Table 5 of the analysis, it can be observed that most parents considered the main causes of girl dropouts in primary schools to be poverty, unwanted pregnancies and cultural practices. According to the parents or guardians, high cost of education was the most important variable. They indicated that, there were bewildering array of charges associated with education. These included activity fees, unofficial fees, the cost of

uniform and trial examinations, transport and teaching materials. This was aggravated by the general economic hardships encountered by the pastoralist Maasais. Worse still was the economic returns of girls' education to their biological families which was seen by most parents to be much lower than those of the boys and hence not "a viable investment". The study established that most Maasai parents feared educating their girls because they could run away and be married even before completing their education.

It was also established by this researcher that girls dropped out of school because of cultural practices of the Maasai community. Six of the twenty parents, admitted that girls dropped out of school because of cultural practices. One of the most recurrent topics raised as the reason for not educating Maasai girls was the fact that once educated, the young women "forget their parents and their tradition" and lost respect for the decisions of the elders. There was a more serious complaint about educated Maasai young women, that once they got educated not only did they abandon their cultural traditions but many became pregnant and had to drop out of school. Some parents alleged that education led to immoral behaviour such as fornication and even prostitution among some of the educated young Maasai girls, while other parents believed that education made the girls marry people of their own choice who may not be ready to pay the bride price. Most parents said that girls had to undergo initiation rites for identity, preparation for adulthood and marriage. This indeed affected girls' education. This study therefore has relationship with the study carried out by Maleche (1972) that asserts that parents were unwilling to educate their daughters because education make them discontented and immoral.

Unwanted pregnancies was another factor the parents maintained, occasioned girl dropouts in primary schools. The parents asserted that if girls were discovered to be pregnant they were married off immediately to the junior elders of their fathers' choice. If a girl became pregnant before circumcision she was circumcised immediately, since in Maasailand, children must not give birth to children. After circumcision the girls entered into married life without being given time to go back to school. Parents, therefore, saw the education of their daughters as waste of time and money.

Distance to and from school was another problem mentioned by most parents. They asserted that primary school-age children had to walk several kilometres to school, making them anxious about their safety. Hence the reason why parents did not encourage the children to go to school. Indeed this had negative implications on gender equity in a number of primary schools.

4.6 Causes of Dropout as Given by Continuing Primary School Girls

The continuing primary school girls identified a number of factors occasioning girl dropouts in primary schools. Top on the list included high level of illiteracy among their parents, cultural practices, high cost of education and unwanted pregnancies. Distance to and from school, sexual harassment, forced repetition and herding of animals were other factors mentioned as affecting girls' education. This information is summarised in Table 6.

Table 6 Frequency of Causes of Withdrawal as Given by Continuing Primary School Girls

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
POVERTY	39	27.7
CULTURAL PRACTICES	36	25.5
ILLITERACY	44	31.2
UNWANTED PREGNANCIES	10	7.1
FAMINE	NIL	NIL
OTHER FACTORS	12	8.5

The statistics presented in Table 6 mostly indicate that most pupils dropped out of primary schools because of the illiteracy, poverty and cultural practices in the community. Most of the continuing primary school girls in the sample accepted that most of the dropouts came from families whose parents were illiterate and did not understand the importance of formal education. The pupils asserted that their parents saw education of girls as waste of time and resources. The pupils asserted that when girls were sent home for activity fees and examination fees they did not return to school and that most parents preferred to pay the fees for the boys than for the girls. Most of the continuing girls accepted that after female genital mutilation, most parents preferred to marry off their daughters instead of sending them back to school. The girls said that some older women insisted on having their daughters circumcised to maintain their eligibility for marriage. Peer pressure and threats of being ostracized were also being used to make those who resisted to give in. To avoid social rejection, therefore, the girls abandoned their education for circumcision. Some girls accepted that there was prevalence of pregnancies among school girls with most of them pointing to the morans.

This is consistent with the study by Abagi and Odipo (1997) that in some communities in Kenya girls are pressurised to leave school and meet traditional expectations.

Distance to and from school, sexual harassment from boys, teachers and morans on the way to and from school and forced repetition were other factors mentioned leading to girls' dropout in primary school. Famine was not indicated as a factor occasioning dropping out probably because schools under study provided lunch for all pupils.

4.7 Distribution of Dropout by Grade

While analysing the data on the proportion of girls' dropout in five primary schools it was established that there was higher dropout in the upper primary than the lower primary. This is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Percentage Distribution of Girl Dropouts by Grade

YEAR	1997	1998	1999	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Std 1 - 3	12	8	14	34	45.3
Std 4 - 8	13	7	21	41	54.7

The above table shows a difference between dropout rate in lower primary (1 - 3) and upper primary (4 - 8). It is evident that more pupils dropped out from school between standard 4 - 8 than in the lower primary 1 - 3.

This can be attributed to the age of the girls. Girls between standard (4 - 8) and some in standard 3 are mature enough to undergo initiations and are also ready for marriage unlike those in standard 1 - 2. Most girls in the region reached their adolescence when

they were in the upper primary. This was because most girls overstay at home before enrolling in school because of the distance they had to cover and herding of goats. The dropout rate in standard 1 - 3 was mostly caused by the distance to and from school, herding, initiation for those who enrolled in school late, lack of interest in education and failure to adjust to school environment.

4.8 Frequency Distribution of Reasons for Dropping out from Primary Schools

From the information given by the Headteachers, Classteachers and Education Officers, the dropout girls, continuing primary school girls and the parents of the dropouts, it is possible to rank the factors leading to the girls' dropout in Magadi Division. This is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8 Ranking of Factors Leading to Girl Dropouts

Reasons for Dropping out	Frequencies as given by:				Total frequency	Percentage
	Dropouts	Parents of Dropouts	Continuing Pr. School Girls	Headteachers, Education Officers, Class teachers		
Poverty	16	09	39	10	74	24
Cultural practices	10	06	36	11	63	20.5
Illiteracy	36	03	44	10	93	30.2
Unwanted pregnancy	16	07	10	06	39	12.7
Famine	2	03	-	-	05	1.6
Other factors	12	02	12	08	34	11

Of all the explanatory variables included in the table for determining dropping out, illiteracy of the parents and poverty were very significant factors with 30.2% and 24%,

respectively. The high rate of illiteracy, as indicated by the subjects, in the region had indeed undermined its education. Of the 40 dropouts interviewed, 36 of them came from the families whose parents were illiterate. This was confirmed by the continuing primary school girls and the other informants. This implies therefore, education of parents is important in the enrollment and retention of girls in primary education. That is, education of the parents provide conducive environment for schooling. This is consistent with the study carried out by Chege (1983) that established that parental level of education is the major factor which influences participation and retention of girls in schools.

Poverty which accounted for 24% of the total frequency was another significant factor which militated against participation and retention of girls in Magadi Division. All the subjects accepted that poverty discouraged parents from investing in the education of their children. It is evident therefore, that from the study, most families were not in a position to meet the ever-increasing cost of primary education, hence the high dropout rate due to this factor. According to Abagi (1997), poverty tops the lists of the factors affecting access and participation in primary school. The study asserts that Kenyans are no longer able to meet the cost of education because of the rise in the level of poverty in the country. This has been confirmed by this study.

Cultural practices which accounted for 20.5% of the total frequency was another important factor which occasioned girl dropouts. Most of the continuing primary school girls accepted this factor which was confirmed by the informers. Unwanted pregnancy was also mentioned by all subjects. It accounted for 12.7% of the total frequency.

Famine was not a significant factor with only 1.6% of the total. It was only mentioned by two dropouts and three parents of the dropouts. Other factors such as distance to and from school, repetition, poor school environment were also cited by the subjects as causing girl dropouts in primary schools in Magadi Division. They accounted for 11% of the total frequency.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Findings

Kenya, like other developing countries, is concerned about curbing educational wastage in view of her meager resources and the vital role of education in national development. The purpose of this study was to establish the extent of primary school dropout among girls, its trend and causal factors, with a view to contributing to the alleviation of the concern.

The study established that primary school girls dropout rate in Magadi Division was high and that it was more in the upper primary than in the lower primary. In the upper primary, pupils were biologically mature hence affected by female genital mutilation, unwanted pregnancies and early marriages. The study also established that the high dropout rate was not uniform across primary schools. The study also established that the main factors that caused girl dropouts at primary school level were level of literacy among parents, unwanted pregnancies, poverty and cultural practices. The cultural practices that contributed most to girls' dropout were early marriages and female genital mutilation. Famine was not a significant factor for the dropout. This was probably because most schools under study provided lunch for their pupils. Other factors under investigation, which occasioned girl dropouts in Magadi Division included distance to and from school, learning environment and repetition.

5.2 Conclusions

High rate of illiteracy among parents/guardians low level of income and cultural practices were the major causes of primary school girl dropouts in Magadi Division. The school environment of most schools were not conducive to attract and retain pupils, especially the girl child. Famine was not a significant variable of primary school girls dropouts in the division.

5.3 Implications and Recommendations

While education opportunities have continued to expand in Kenya, there are a number of pupils who continue to drop out of school before completing the primary cycle. Regrettably this is occurring notwithstanding the fact that society continues to invest heavily in education. The main goal of education expansion is to improve the country's human resource for further economic development (Sessional Paper No. 1, 1986). But economic returns on education can only be realized if the participants are able to complete their education, and expectedly attain valuable knowledge and skills that are applicable for advancement and national development.

The majority of those who drop out at the primary school level do so while they are still at the lower grades before attaining functional literacy. Attaining non-functional literacy, which in due course lapses into illiteracy, entails total loss of all costs invested on the individual, either by the family or the government.

Future employment prospects for school dropouts have shown to be much lower than for those who complete at various levels of education systems. The very reasons that

prompt the youth to leave school prematurely continue to make them poor candidates and competitors for employment. As a result school dropouts become a burden to their family and society.

In this respect, dropping out at primary school level triggers a chain of economic and social problems; unemployment, high dependency ratio, high illiteracy and the general poverty in the society and youth delinquency. The following recommendations are therefore, made from the study.

5.3.1 *Economic strategies*

There is no complete discussion of female education in developing countries if it does not address the role poverty plays in undermining efforts to improve it. Simply lowering the cost of education or raising its benefits can do little in cases of extreme poverty.

However, primary data indicate that cutting primary education costs would make sense. This has implications of boosting access to education, retention of pupils in schools, and equality of education. The first step to this important action is to review the policy of cost-sharing where the government takes charge of instructional-related expenses from parents. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should make sure that all the bulk of the money approved by parliament goes to the instructional related materials and is distributed and used efficiently.

Government spending should be restructured in a bid to increase relative government budget in primary education. At present the sub-sector takes about 55% of the total education budget. It would make more sense to shift resources from other levels of

education so that basic education takes about 65% of the budget. This should be based on the premise that primary education is crucial to the basic development of Kenya. Besides, evidence suggests that economic and social returns of primary education in a barely industrialized country like Kenya, are higher than investments in secondary and university education. The other sectors of education should then be allocated the remaining percentage as deemed appropriate (Abagi, 1997).

The government should abolish building funds, tuition fees, activity fees, mock fee and special funds. If these indirect costs are to be retained, alternative sources to finance them should be worked out with the communities. At the same time there is a need to reduce school construction expenditure by county councils, communities and non-governmental organizations. In this regard, cheap types of school buildings should be erected. Equally the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in partnership with local communities, should assist schools in bulk procurement of building materials and furniture, and in hiring of local artisans such as trainees from National Youth Service, Youth Polytechnics or institutes of technology.

The government and other relevant organizations and institutions should provide academic scholarships and bursaries aimed at keeping girls from disadvantaged families in school, especially those who perform well in schools.

The government should encourage communities to start income generating activities which would in turn provide more disposable income to families which would enable them to acquire education for their children, in particular, the girl-child.

Another important action which can be recommended is the setting up of District Basic Education Fund in each district. This could be done through local and national harambees. Appeals could also be made to the economically advantaged individuals, institutions and societies to boost such a fund. The money collected would be used to develop basic education in specific districts. Individual pupils and schools would have access to such funds depending on their critical needs. We need to organize a funds drive like the two major national harambees (voluntary contributions) for the youth's and the women's development initiatives, in order to improve the education of girls in the country.

5.3.2 Sensitization of the parents and community

Parents and the community in general need to be sensitized and made aware of the rights of children and in particular the girl-child, especially the right to education and the right to be protected from any threats to their well-being. Practices that threaten the well being and education of girls should, therefore, be challenged and abolished. Examples of such practices include female genital mutilation and early marriage. The community and the parents should be made aware that the girl-child has a right to have a say on the issue of her future, especially where issues like marriage are concerned. Moreover, sensitization activities should be aimed at changing the attitudes of parents to the education of girls, and develop the belief that there can be no meaningful development in a country, if the education of half the population, girls and women is ignored.

The community and parents in particular require sensitization on the need for family planning in order to have a manageable number of children and reduce the pressure on

family income, in providing essential goods and services, including education. These would enable parents to educate all their children, both boys and girls. They should also be sensitized to invest equally, in the education of girls and boys at the primary school level. This calls for drastic intervention and affirmative action in the community.

Parents should be encouraged to be more interested in the activities of the school, to be willing to visit school and talk to the teachers, and to enquire about the progress of their children, especially the girls, and seek advice on how they could assist them.

Teachers' sensitivity should also be targeted. This should be achieved by teaching trainees to be gender sensitive in their teaching, methodology and content. It is expected that the greater self-confidence instilled in girls in teaching, the respect the boys learn and the increased gender sensitivity and responsiveness of teachers, contribute to the creation of enabling environment for girls to complete primary school.

This sensitization of the community and the parents should be carried out through the use of respected people with relevant training, qualifications and experience. Existing community structures such as Parents Teachers Associations in schools, Mothers Unions and Youth Associations should be involved to this end. Community leaders and other opinion leaders should also be specifically targeted for sensitization and should also be involved in community sensitization efforts. Senior education officials as well as headteachers and teachers in primary schools level should also participate in community sensitization. Women role models who have succeeded in education should be invited to address and sensitize parents on the importance of girl-child education.

5.3.3 Introduction of legislation for the right of the girl-child

To save girl-child education, measures should be formulated and enforced by law to protect girls from the practices that threaten their well-being. For example, the legal age for marriage should be enforced, while those who sexually abuse and impregnate under-age girls should be dealt with severely by the law as a deterrent to other would-be offenders.

Cultural practices which have been obstacles to girl-child education, like female genital mutilation, should be outlawed and the communities educated about or sensitized on the disadvantages of such practices to the girl, her family and the community.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should have clearly spelt out procedures for dealing with cases of sexual harassment, abuse and school girls pregnancies in primary schools. The current penalty on these is very discriminative for it is only applied to teachers while some civil servants and senior government personalities are left out yet they are also known to be culprits. A universal legislation should, therefore, be introduced if sexual harassment, abuse, and pregnancy is to be reduced if not eliminated in our society. This is because many school girls claimed that sexual harassment disorient them from school work and place them at an educationally disadvantage position visa-vis their male counterparts (Chege, 1997).

Education, at least to the end of the basic level, should be made accessible and affordable to most people in the country in order to encourage high participation and

retention in the formal education system. A policy to re-admit girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy should be given legal status.

5.3.4 *Recruiting female teachers*

Interviews and anecdotal evidence in the Maasai community suggest that increasing the number of female teachers will boost girls enrollment and retention in primary schools. Female teachers are in short supply especially in rural areas. These shortages arise partly from the requirement needed for admission into teacher training programmes. Though the requirements are minimal, the majority of the women still do not possess them, especially in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

To enlarge the pool of female teachers, they should be recruited from rural areas. Although local recruitment and local training appears to be effective at increasing the supply of female teachers in rural areas improving the number of opportunities, actively recruiting young girls from rural areas and subsidizing their secondary and teacher education, as well as providing girls with the option of being posted in a school near home, are features of coherent strategy. These female teachers in rural areas will not only act as role models to the young girls in primary schools but also a positive encouragement to them. This will improve the participation and retention of girls in primary schools.

With the assistance of Teachers' Service Commission, the government should use positive discrimination in teacher training admissions and recruitment to redress the gender imbalance in the teaching force. At least, some of the vacant teacher posts at all

levels, including primary schools, and some percentage of educational administrative posts should be earmarked for women. The government should also introduce special allowances and provide proper housing to attract female teachers to rural areas of Kenya. Close positive correspondence between the presence of female teachers and girls' enrollment was found in the Philippines. A close positive correspondence between the presence of female teachers and girls' enrollment and retention was found in Philippines. In Nepal the percentage of female teachers in schools had positive effects on enrollment of all rural children (Shrestha, et al. 1991). This means, therefore, female teachers are effective in promoting girls' educational participation -access and retention.

5.3.5 Introduction of guidance and counselling at the community level

Since high proportions of pregnancies occur outside the school term, there is a need for parents to become more active as counsellors instead of leaving this job to their teachers. Parents and teachers need to act together in counselling and therefore, it is recommended that the Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A.) be the most appropriate entry point. Parents need to be actively brought together with teachers and trained in the teaching of human reproduction. In turn, they should be frank and straight forward in enlightening their children about sex.

Parents and teachers should teach the young girls other consequences of premarital sex apart from early pregnancies. These include the contraction of venereal diseases and in particular the deadly disease, AIDS. They should also be made aware that pre-marital

sex affects their school performance. Parents and teachers should also discuss the use of contraceptives with their adolescents.

Sex education should be included in the school curriculum as a social and examinable unit where teachers teach it as they do in other subjects. In addition, this course should not be confined to the classroom. Anybody capable should contribute in this exercise. Consequently, invitation of guest speakers on the subject is advised.

5.3.6 School administrators should collaborate with parents

School administrators need to collaborate with parents in order to prevent students who are at risk from dropping out. Efforts from the two groups are complementary as causes of dropping out are both internal (from within the school) and external (from outside the school). Such joint efforts when backed with appropriate policy decisions will go a long way in alleviating the problem of school dropouts especially among female students (Ngware, 2000).

5.3.7 School mapping and satellite schools

Proximity to or distance from school was cited as a variable or determinant of girls' participation. Feeder or satellite schools that girls can attend for the first two or three years of primary education should be initiated. These feeder schools should be located some distance away from regular complete primary schools. This is to bring schools nearer to girls in the first three grades, hence improving enrollment. The schools should be staffed with a predominantly female teaching force. Satellite school programmes that reduce distance to school have enjoyed success in Bangladesh. In Egypt the location of

a school within 1 km of a community resulted in an enrollment rate of 94 percent for boys and 74 percent for girls and when the distance was 2 km boys' enrollment fell only slightly to 90 percent, but girls' enrollment declined sharply to 64 percent (World Bank, 1990).

5.3.8 Introduction of single-sex schools

Single-sex schooling for girls seems not only to increase access, but also raise girls' attainment, achievement and aspirations. Because of differences in the social and economic roles of girls and boys prescribed by tradition, culture and religion, schools must be structured and organized differently for girls. In a single-sex school, female students benefit from having fewer social distractions, especially from their male classmates or school mates. These type of schools would also remove the common belief that male students receive more sustained attention from teachers in co-educational establishment, even when the women are brighter and more interested in learning. Consciously or otherwise, teachers in co-educational environment are reported to treat men more serious, and as more important students. When that competition is removed, the girls immediately benefit.

5.3.9 Parental literacy and education

Numerous studies have shown that the higher the level of parental education the higher the educational participation of their daughters (Kelly and Elliot 1982, Khan 1989, Chamies 1983). Results have shown that women education exerts the most influence on the girl. In Kenya adult education, especially women should be enhanced in order to promote girls' education. Strategies to increase women's literacy and education,

especially in rural areas, should be established. Shrestha (1986) in reference to Nepal established that literacy of adult family member is the single most important determinant of whether children participate in formal school.

5.3.10 *Schools should be made acceptable: culturally appropriate*

In many parts of the Maasai land, parental concern for their daughters' physical safety and moral security are of paramount importance and a prime factor influencing girls' educational access and retention. Schools should, therefore, be made acceptable to parents. They should be responding to parental concerns and conforming to cultural and community standards. That is, the schools should be more culturally appropriate, offering the propriety and moral security of sheltered and traditional environment, with the assurance that modern values will not undermine the girls' role as obedient daughter and dutiful wife and mother. In Islamic countries there is a tendency to send girls to religious schools. In addition to providing literacy and religious education, such schools are perceived as promoting traditional social values, unlike westernized public schools. This implies, therefore, it is possible to establish culturally appropriate schools among the traditional Maasai people of Kenya.

5.3.11 *Development and construction of effective schools in rural areas of Kenya*

School quality matters to parents; and there is evidence that parental perception of school quality affects girls' educational participation to a greater degree than the boys. In Kenya, therefore, quality schools for girls should be established to boost the interest of the parents to send their daughters to school. The schools should have appropriate basic facilities, notable latrines, boundary walls, necessary to protect girls' modesty and

provide security, desks and chairs. Such facilities would make the school a conducive environment for study and stay, a home far from real home. Indeed this would increase participation and retention of girls in the education system.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

1. A research should be carried out to establish the role of the church and the community in encouraging girl-child education in Kenya.
2. A study should be carried out to find out the causes of low enrollment of girls in primary schools in Magadi Division.
3. A research should be carried out to find out how some cultural practices can be incorporated into the formal education.
4. A study should be carried out to establish the economic and social impacts of girls' primary education in Kenya.
5. A research should be carried out to determine the impacts of women's education in rural Kenya.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire for Continuing Primary Schools Girls

Note to respondent

The information you volunteer will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for the intended research purposes only. Please respond by placing a tick (✓) against the response which best represents your opinion or write down your response on the spaces provided.

A. Identification of pupil.

1. Name of school
2. Class
3. Age
4. Religion
5. Village
6. Sub-location.....
7. Location.....

B. Family Background (if your mother or father is dead, describe your guardians)

8. Father's level of education
 - (a) Lower primary
 - (b) Upper primary
 - (c) Never went to school
 - (d) Any other

9. Mother's level of education

- (a) Lower primary
- (b) Upper primary
- (c) Never went to school
- (d) Any other

10. How many wives does your father have?

- (a) None
- (b) One
- (c) More than one

11. How many are you in your family?

Brothers

Sisters

C. Brother(s) and Sister(s) education

12. Apart from you how many children of primary school age (7 - 15) are in your family?

Boy(s)

Girl(s)

13. How many children are now in primary school?

	Boy(s)	Girl(s)
Std 1
Std 2
Std 3
Std 4

Std 5
Std 6
Std 7
Std 8

14. How many children never went to school?

Boy(s)

Girl(s)

15. Do you have brother(s) or sister(s) who have dropped from school before completing primary education?

Yes

No

If yes, how many brother(s) or sister(s) have dropped out?

Brother(s)

Sister(s).....

16. Why do you think your brother(s) or sister(s) dropped out of school?

(a) Financial problem

(b) Married off

(c) Became pregnant

(d) Any other (Please specify)

Please state

17. Has any of your sister(s) dropped from school because of pregnancy?

Yes

No

If yes, state the class she was when she or they dropped.

Before standard 4

Lower primary

Upper primary

D. Cultural practices

18. Does your family still practice circumcision of girls?

Yes

No

If yes, how many continued with education after the initiation?

19. Do you have sister(s) who were/was married before completing primary school?

Yes

No

(If yes, how many were married off before completing primary education?)

(a) 1

(b) 2

(c) More than 2

20. Does your family still practice piercing of ears among girls?

Yes

No

If yes, what happens to the school girls when they undergo the process?

(a) They drop out of school

(b) They continue with education

(c) They are married off

Any other, please state

21. What do you think is the attitude of your parents toward education of daughters?

Negative

Positive

Neutral

If negative, please state

E. Level of Income of the Parents

22. Do your parents keep any livestock?

Yes

No

If yes, what kind of livestock do they keep?

(a) Cattle

(b) Goat

(c) Sheep

(d) Donkey

(e) All

Is it for sale or domestic use?

(a) Sale

(b) Domestic use

(c) Both

23. Do your parents keep any poultry for sale?

Yes

No

24. Do your parents have any other source of income?

Yes

No

25. Do your parents have problems paying your fees?

Yes

No

If yes, who has been paying your fees?

(a) NGO

(b) Church

(c) Relative

(d) Any other (Please specify)

26. Pupils are sometimes sent away from school for a number of reasons, some of these may be:-

(i) Failure to pay fees in time.

(ii) Lack of school uniform .

(iii) Failure to bring other items required by the school .

Indicate by ticking (✓) any of the following which may have caused you to be sent away from school. (You may tick more than one as cases may apply).

27. Select by ticking the activities in which you assist your parents with when you are not at school.

(a) Fetching water

(b) Grazing livestock

(c) Caring for the young ones

(d) Gathering and preparing food

(e) Working for other family foods

28. Tick (✓) one or more of the following that indicate how you normally get your lunch during school days.

(a) I return home for lunch

(b) The school provides free lunch

(b) I bring my lunch to school

(d) My parents pay for my lunch

29. Which other problem(s) do you face in your school?

.....
.....
.....

30. Are there cases of sexual harassment in your primary school?

Yes

No

If yes, who are responsible?

(a) School boys

(b) Morans on the way to or from school

(c) Teachers

(d) All

31. (a) Are pupils made to repeat in your school?

Yes

No

(b) What happens when girls are made to repeat in your school?

(i) They accept to repeat

(ii) They refuse

(iii) They drop out of school

32. Which reasons do you think prevent girls from going to school early?

(a) Herding of livestock

(b) Distance to school

(c) They hate going to school early

(d) Lack of school uniform

(e) Security

APPENDIX II

Questionnaire for Dropouts

This questionnaire will be administered orally by the researcher and research assistant.

A. Identification of the dropout

- 1. Former Primary School
- 2. Village
- 3. Sub-location
- 4. Location

B. Family background and education (where there is no father and mother describe the guardian.

- 5. What is your father's level of education?
 - (a) Lower primary
 - (b) Upper primary
 - (c) Never went to school
 - (d) Others

- 6. What is your mother's level of education?
 - (a) Lower primary
 - (b) Upper primary
 - (c) Never went to school
 - (d) Others

- 7. How many children are in your family?
 - (a) Brothers
 - (b) Sisters

8. How many children are now in primary school?

(a) Brothers

(b) Sisters

9. How many children never went to school in your family?

(a) Brothers

(b) Sisters

10. How many sisters went to primary school but dropped out?

.....

11. Which year did you drop out of school?

(a) 1997

(b) 1998

(c) 1999

12. What reason(s) made you to drop out of school?

.....

.....

.....

If you are assisted do you think you will go back to school?

Yes

No

If no, please state

Family level of income

13. What is the source of income of your parents?

- (a) Sale of livestock
- (b) Sale of poultry
- (c) Wages
- (d) Farming
- (e) Any other

14. Do your parents have any other source of income?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state

15. Did you use to have fees problem while you were in school?

- Yes
- No

If yes, who used to assist you financially while you were in school?

.....

Cultural practices

16. Mention some of the cultural practices practiced by members of your family.

.....
.....

17. Have you undergone some of these cultural practices?

- Yes
- No

18. How did these cultural practices affect your education?

(a) Dropped out of school

(b) Continued with education

(c) Married off

(d) Stayed at home

19. Do you have sisters who were married off before completing primary education?

Yes

No

20. Which other problem(s) were you facing while you were in school?

.....

.....

.....

21. What was the attitude of your parents towards your education?

.....

.....

22. Did you use to get help from teachers?

.....

.....

23. How did you use to like your school or class?

.....

.....

APPENDIX III

Interview schedule for Class Teachers, Headteachers and Education Officers

Note to respondent

The information you volunteer will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for the intended research purposes.

1. (a) How many pupils do you have in your primary school or Division?

.....
.....

(b) How many are:

- (i) Boys
- (ii) Girls

2. (a) What was the enrollment of your school(s) in the following years?

- (i) 1997
- (ii) 1998
- (iii) 1999

(b) How many were:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
(i) 1997
(ii) 1998
(iii) 1999

3. What can you say about the enrollment of boys and girls in your school or division?

.....
.....

4. What are the major problems facing schools in this division?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. Are there cases where pupils drop out of school before completing primary education?

.....
.....

6. What is the attitude of the local community towards education of girls?

.....
.....
.....

7. What are some of the cultural practices being practised by the local community?

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. How has the culture of the community affected the education of girls in primary schools?

.....

9. In your view, what is the educational level of parents who take their daughters to school?

.....
.....
.....

10. What are some of the reasons why the parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school?

.....
.....
.....

11. What are the major sources of income of the local community?

.....
.....
.....

12. What is the level of income of parents whose daughters drop out of primary school?

.....
.....
.....
.....

13. Are there cases where pupils drop out of school because of hunger?

.....
.....

14. What are the major sources of food to the local community?

.....
.....

.....
.....

15. Do you have cases where primary school girls get pregnant? Explain

Yes

.....
.....

No

.....
.....

16. How has the government tried to improve the education of girls in this division?

.....
.....
.....
.....

17. In your own opinion, what do you think should be done to improve the education of girls in this division?

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX IV

Interview schedule for the parents of the dropouts.

1. Have you ever been to school?

Yes

No

If yes, upto what level?

(a) Primary

(b) Secondary

(c) Above secondary

2. How do you earn your living?

(a) Business

(b) Employed

(c) Sale of livestock

(d) Any other

3. How many children do you have in primary school?

.....

4. How many are

(a) boys?.....

(b) Girls?.....

5. How many have completed primary school?

.....

6. Do you have some children who dropped before completing primary education?

Yes

No

7. How many are

(a) Boys?

(b) Girls?

8. Which reason(s) made your daughter(s) to drop out of school?

.....

.....

.....

9. Which year did she or they drop out?

(a) 1997

(b) 1998

(c) 1999

(d) Any other year

10. What was the age(s) of your daughter(s) when they dropped out of school?

(a) Below 10 years

(b) Above 15 years

(c) Between 10 - 15 years

11. Had she or they repeated any class before dropping out?

Yes

No

If yes, how many times?

(a) Once

(b) Twice

(c) Thrice

(d) Severally

12. a) Do you believe in educating your daughter(s)?

b) Yes

No

13. How far is the nearest primary school from your home?

(a) Less than 1 kilometres

(b) Between 2 - 4 kilometres

(c) More than 4 kilometres

14. What is the importance of initiation in your community?

.....

.....

15. Does it affect the education of your children?

a) Yes

No

b) How does it affect?

.....

.....