

Research Article

Influence of Family Socio-Cultural Factors on Students’ Academic Performance in Public Secondary School in Kisii Central Sub-County of Kisii County, Kenya

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Abstract: National concern is growing about the increase of student failure, educators continue to struggle with the reasons whether the home plays a role in understanding students’ performance. The study was based on Blooms Sub-environment theory and Ecological Systems Theory by Bronfenbrenner. This was a mixed methodology study that adopted the concurrent triangulation design. The target population comprised of 20382 respondents comprised of 42 Principals, 420 Parents Association members and 19920 students. Stratified sampling technique was used to select the category of schools which enabled the researcher to establish a sample size will be 42 principals, 42 PTA Chairpersons and 664 students leading to 748 respondents. The research instruments were questionnaires and interviews guides. Piloting of research instruments was carried out in the neighboring Kisii South Sub- County to establish reliability, validity, dependability and credibility. Validity of instruments was tested using content validity through supervisor’s expertise while reliability of instruments was tested using test re-test technique and Cronbach’s alpha method of 0.75 was used to calculate the internal efficiency. Credibility of the data was tested using data triangulation through multiple analysis while dependability of data was assured through reporting data collection process in details. Qualitative data was analyzed in narrative form while quantitative data was coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 to produce both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were analyzed to find mean, mode and standard deviation while on the other hand inferential statistics was analyzed in form of correlation, regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The study established that home-based factors such as family socio-economic, family socio-cultural, family level of education and family engagement had an association with the academic performance among students in public secondary schools. It was therefore recommended that to reduce the failure rate in public secondary schools, the policy makers, the government and other stakeholders should create education awareness to parents, motivate family engagement in education matters and ensure parents and guardians to be involved in pupils’ the guidance and counselling.

Keywords: family engagement, socio-cultural factors, socio-economic factors.

Background to the Study

Education is the process of instructions aimed at all round development of an individual, facilitating realization of self-potential of an individual, as reported by Adderman, (1999). Education makes a man a right thinker and a correct decision maker. It is through education that knowledge and information is received throughout the world. Without education, a man is as though he is in a closed room but with education, he finds himself in a room with all the windows open towards outside world, Andermann (1999). The United Nations (2010), highlighted education as a basic right and need which is significant in the accomplishment of second goal of the millennium development goals. This is because good academic performance guarantees skilled and dynamic citizens. In addition, one of the aspects of the social pillars of Kenya vision (2030) points out education and training as the medium that will take Kenya to be a middle-income economy.

According to Hacker (2008), all Americans will at least live one year beneath the poverty line which is one dollar a day, at some point between ages 25 and 75. This social economic status of the parents translates into parents’ inability to adequately finance their children education. According to Eze, (2002) home families vary markedly in socio-economic status and academic level, not in amounts of wealth but in the ways in which the family’s income is obtained. In a study conducted on the effects of structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian University students, Uwaifo, (2008) found significance difference between the academic performance of students from single parent family and those from two-parent family structure. Indeed parental involvement and individuals experiences at home play tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what he is. Furthermore, many children have been hindered...
from negative factors arise from home. This include lack of parental encouragement, lack of conducive environment, lack of teachers, low intelligence, poor finance and housing and lack of interest on the part of the student. Children whose schools needs are not provided for at home, many forever remain under achievers and this could affect the general development of the country. Effects of poor academic performance during the school years often carry over to the adulthood, within a higher proportion of school drop-outs, behavioral problems and even delinquency among the population.

Similarly, Okumu (2008) in a study of socio-economic determines primary dropout in Uganda found that high academic attainment are higher among girls in urban than in rural areas. It will be established that educated mothers had the ability to manage time well and hence getting time to be with the children as compared to uneducated mothers. The primary environment of a student is the home and it stands to exert tremendous impact on the students’ achievements as reported by Dempsey (2005). Moreover, the home is the primary agent of education in the child. Thus the way the child lives, the food he eats and his life style is influenced by the home. The type of family system the child is exposed to could influence his academic achievement in school. Keith (1993) reported that academic success of a child depends on what parents do at a home. Also Aremu (2000) found out in his study that undergraduates that received democratic type of parenting performed better than the counterparts from autocratic homes. Jameson (1997), specifies the importance of a quiet time and place for homework. There will be also a discussion on the negative effect. Harris and Gibson, (1996) State that communication is a vital component for school success. Parents who prepare their children talk about setbacks, possible stressors and coping skills lead to better performance. Individual differences in children’s achievement will be studied by Baharudin and Hister, (1998), relative to differences in the quality of the children’s home environment to be positively related with achievement. Children with higher test scores come from supportive homes.

Home based factors affect school achievement and may be influenced if the family culture follows time trend. The essence of a traditional American family has deteriorated with the stress in many today’s family because of poverty, single parenting styles and working mothers, stress in the home deteriorates the environment and these stressors affect school attainment. Even though Hacker (2008) suggests that you cannot purchase a Child’s success or wish it into existence, poverty affects a child’s academic success in many ways. According to Hill (2008) Financial challenges is a prevailing feature among many developing countries around the word with ever increasing severe effects of social and economic backdrop felt in countries within the Sub-Saharan Africa. It is arguably challenge found in different forms both in urban and rural areas only possibly differing in it is intensity with effect felt most in day secondary schools depending on the school size. In the current scenario, education has a role to play in the economic and social development of any nation. Bearing in mind the importance of education, there is need to promote the academic performance or achievement of students, whom form the concrete foundation for the country’s progress. Academic achievement is directly related to students growth and development of knowledge in an educational situation where teaching and learning takes place. In the last three years for example, in Kisii Central sub-county, 46% of public secondary schools had a mean score of 4.8 (DEO Office report, 2015) this is grade C- (minus) which indicates that majority of students did not get university entry of C+ (plus) and above. Basing on the student’s performance, though the government has tried to address some factors such as provision of learning and teaching facilities, deployment of trained teachers.

Statement of the Problem
Examinations have been accepted as an important aspect of the Kenya Education system. Examination is will use to measure the student achievements and is also will use as means of selecting students for higher learning institutions such as university and colleges. Students in secondary schools sit for Kenya Secondary Certificate of education after four years. In the last three years for example, in Kisii Central sub-county, 46% of public secondary schools had a mean score of 4.8 (DEO Office report, 2015). This is grade C- (Minus) which indicates that majority of students did not get university entry of C+ (plus) and above. Basing on the students’ performance though the government has tried to address some factors such as provision of learning and teaching facilities, deployment of trained teachers. The students’ performance still vary, therefore this is the reason why this study sought to analyze influence of family socio-cultural factors on student’s academic performance in public secondary school in Kisii Central Sub-County, Kisii Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW
In all societies the family plays a crucial role in shaping the educational experiences and achievement of children and the transmission of status from one generation to the next. According to Graetz (1995), ones educational success depends very strongly on socio-economic status of parents. Considine and Zapalla (2002), argued that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and
economically foster a high level of academic achievement in their children. The advantages of family income that is cawill use by experimental programs in the United States and Canada during the 1990s examined how income affects children achievement in education. In United States of America child’s educational attainment is strongly linked to his or her family background and children of parents of low socio-economic status are likely to have the same socio-economic status as their parents.

However when examining academic performance, it is imperative that socio-economic status is included due to the fact that Socio-economic status can have a direct effect on this factor and according to Demi and Lewis (2011) the effects of socio-economic status on the academic outcome and future life cause pathways is significant. Children within low income families are less likely to earn passing grades compared to upper class families. Demi and Lewis (2011) concluded that child’s socio-economic status is strongly co-corrected with the individuals’ academic achievement with evidence that children within higher socio-economic status categories, Complete more years of education. Furthermore, an impact on a child’s academic achievement through the resources provided at home that are necessary for a child to achieve in school such as food, clothes, school supplies as quoted bySirin (2005).

In Ghana, Education of children is said to be a national unity priority as they introduced free compulsory basic education policy. Combs (1985), argued that in all nations, children of parents high on the occupation and social scale have far better chance of getting into good secondary schools and from there into the best colleges and universities than equally bright children of ordinary workers or farmers. He adds that the findings of many studies suggests that children who are at the bottom of the social economic hierarchy are not accessible to available educational facilities as the children with families who are located at the middle or top of the hierarchy. Family income according to Escarce (2003) has a profound influence on the education opportunities available to adolescent and on their chances of education success. He adds that due to residential stratification and segregation, low income students usually attend schools with lower funding levels which reduce achievement motivation and much higher risk of education failure when compared with their counterparts. Low income adolescents receive low grades, earn lower scores on standardized test and are much more likely to drop out of school. Considine and Zappala (2002) found that children from families with low income are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational outcomes, lower levels of literacy, innumeracy and comprehension, lower retention rates, exhibit higher levels of problematic school behavior, have difficulties with their studies and display negative attitudes to school activities.

Graetz (1995) carried out a study on socio-economic status in education research and policy and found that socio-economic background remains one of the major sources of educational inequalities and adds that one’s educational success depends very strongly on the social economic status of one’s parents. King Bellow (1989) will use parent’s occupation as a proxy for income to examine the relationship between income and achievement and found that children of farmers had fewer years of schooling than children of parents with white collar jobs. They argued that how much education a child’s parent has is probably the most important factor in determining the child’s educational opportunities. They observed that the higher the attainment for parent’s, the then the greater their aspirations for their children.

On the other hand, Pedrosa et al (2006) in the study on social and educational background pointed out those students who mostly come from deprived socio-economic and educational background performed relatively better than others coming from higher socio-economic and educational areas. Furthermore, he also pointed that due to residential stratification and segregation, the students belonging to low income parents usually attend school with lower funding levels and this situation reduced achievement motivation of the students and high risk of education malfunction in future life endeavors according to Escarce (2003). Similarly, Okumu et al (2008) in study of socio economic determinants of dropout in Uganda found out that high academic attainment are higher among girls in urban than rural areas. It will be established that educated mothers had the ability to manage time well and hence getting time to be with the children as compared to uneducated mothers. Also educated mothers will be found to be more effective in helping their children in academic work. They monitor and supervise their children’s academic work. On the other hand, educated fathers will be found to be very vital in guiding their children to do assignments apart from helping them to access necessary information required for them to achieve good grades in their academic work. It is therefore clear that from this, the level of education of parents is very instrumental in determining the academic achievement of their children.

Socio-cultural factors refer to the non-economic aspects of community and school life, which contribute to secondary school wastage. These factors are often rooted in the beliefs, values, norms and behavior of individuals and groups. The socio-cultural factors discussed below relate to both school and community life. One socio-cultural factor which leads to secondary school wastage is circumcision (Abagi & Odipo, 1997;
it is poorly taught because teachers are not well trained to adequately cover the subject; and/or a narrow focus is adopted, so that emphasis is placed on family life largely and little or no time is given to sex and contraception education (Wa Mahiu & Njau, 1994). Limited or lack of information on sex education generally, and contraceptives in particular, has ensured that some school girls become victims of teenage pregnancy (Okungu, 2004; Wa Mahiu & Njau, 1994). For example, the study by Ruto et al., (2010) reveals that teenage pregnancy is quite common among primary and secondary school learners in Kwale County; Kinango district had 32 reported cases of teenage pregnancy in only one term, and most of the visited schools in Kwale district had cases of teenage pregnancy.

Although Government policy requires that teenage mothers be allowed to come back to school after delivery, and some studies report that this policy is being enforced (Ruto et al., 2010), teenage pregnancy makes a substantial contribution to the dropout of learners without disabilities from school (Okungu, 2004; Ruto et al., 2010; Wa Mahiu & Njau, 1994). Girls’ dropout of school when they become pregnant partly due to the financial constraints that accrue from having a child (Okungu, 2004). But often they are forced to drop out by fathers who view their daughters’ discontinuation from school as a punishment for becoming pregnant. Alternatively, fathers choose to marry them off in an attempt to avoid being subjected to the cultural sanctions associated with pre-marital sex and pregnancy (Okungu, 2004). It is this fear of cultural sanctions, which may also prompt fathers to discontinue their other daughters’ education when older siblings become pregnant. The belief is that keeping younger daughters at home under close supervision will prevent them from becoming pregnant (Okungu, 2004). But perhaps the greatest deterrent for girls’ resumption of school after delivery is the social stigma and humiliation they believe they will experience, or which they actually 38 experience at school (Okungu, 2004; Ruto et al., 2010). Okungu (2004) reports that teachers often view these girls as a bad influence for their colleagues and the pupils emulate this attitude. Other pupils subject the teenage mothers to taunts and other forms of ridicule. As a result, social interactions between the teenage mothers and other pupils at school are severely strained. Many of these girls opt not to resume school after delivery to avoid this social stigma and humiliation (Okungu, 2004; Wa Mahiu & Njau, 1994).

As a former learner at schools for the blind, the researcher knows that conjugal relations among learners with visual impairments in these schools are quite common. Some of these relations result in teenage pregnancy. The situation may be the same in other
The preference for the education of some children over others is another socio-cultural factor which causes wastage. Many parents prefer to educate some children over others. Reviewed literature reveals a preference for the education of boys over that of girls (Juma, 1993; MOEST, 1994; Okungu, 2004), and preference for the education of children without disabilities over their counterparts with disabilities (Commission of Inquiry, 1999). Many parents prefer to educate boys over girls because they believe that girls will get married and be unable to contribute to family sustenance while boys will be able to do so because they will remain at home. Parents further argue that girls who are not educated may be able to do well in life due to the success of their husbands. But boys have to work hard.

Research Methodology

The study was based on Blooms Sub-environment theory and Ecological Systems Theory by Bronfenbrenner. This was a mixed methodology study that adopted the concurrent triangulation design. The target population comprised of 20382 respondents for analysis. Frequency, percentage and mean distributions were used to select the category of schools which enabled the researcher to establish a sample size will be 42 principals, 42 PTA Chairpersons and 664 students leading to 748 respondents. The research instruments were questionnaires and interviews guides. Piloting of research instruments was carried out in the neighboring Kisii South Sub-County Kenya to establish reliability, validity, dependability and credibility. Validity of instruments was tested using content validity through supervisor’s expertise while reliability of instruments was tested using test re-test technique and Cronbach’s alpha method of 0.75 was used to calculate the internal efficiency. Credibility of the data was tested using data triangulation through multiple analysis while dependability of data was assured through reporting data collection process in details. Qualitative data was analyzed in narrative form while quantitative data was coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 to produce both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were analyzed to find mean, mode and standard deviation while on the other hand inferential statistics was analyzed in form of correlation, regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Findings

The study employed frequency, percentage and mean as the descriptive statistics and Chi square test as the appropriate inferential statistics. The analysis, therefore, started with the descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage and mean distribution) for the level of agreement on a five point.

Likert scale of the variable family socio-cultural factors. This helped to establish the influence of family socio-cultural factors on academic performance among students in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya.

Descriptive statistics for influence of family socio-cultural factors on academic performance of students in public secondary schools. For analysis, frequency, percentages and mean ratings of response for each item were determined and summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for influence of family socio-cultural factors on academic performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circumcision practice make students to miss classes which leads to low</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students involvement in household chores decrease the study time which</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leads to low performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy leads to low performance</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of cultural beliefs, preference of education for some other</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children makes students to perform poorly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (Researcher, 2020)

Table 1 shows that 135(44.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that circumcision practice made students to miss classes which led to low performance, 97(31.6%) agreed, 41(13.4%) strongly disagreed, 20(6.5%) disagreed and 14(4.6%) of the respondents were undecided on the statement. The study findings suggested that respondents almost agreed (Mean=3.86) that circumcision practice made students
to miss classes which led to low performance. This implies that absenteeism during circumcision season when children have to prepare themselves for the ceremony leads to low performance. This concurs with the findings of Achola and Pilai (2000) that one socio-cultural factor which leads to secondary school wastage is circumcision. It contributes to wastage because it often leads to absenteeism during circumcision season when children have to prepare themselves for the ceremony.

Similarly, 139(45.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that students involvement in household chores decreased the study time which later led to low performance, 105(34.2%) agreed, 34(11.1%) disagreed, 15(4.9%) strongly disagreed and 14(4.5%) of the respondents were undecided on the statement. It emerged from the study that respondents agreed (Mean=4.04) that students involvement in household chores decreased the study time which later led to low performance.

Additionally, 173(56.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that teenage pregnancy led to low performance, 90(29.3%) agreed, 27(8.8%) of the respondents were undecided, 9(2.9%) strongly disagreed and 8(2.6%) of the respondents were in a disagreement with the statement. The study findings suggested that the respondents agreed (Mean=4.34) that teenage pregnancy led to high repetition rate. This implies that because of the fear of cultural sanctions, fathers discontinue their other daughters’ education when older siblings become pregnant for close supervision of the remaining daughters. This is in line with the findings of Okungu (2004) that it is this fear of cultural sanctions, which may also prompt fathers to discontinue their other daughters’ education when older siblings become pregnant. The belief is that keeping younger daughters at home under close supervision will prevent them from becoming pregnant.

Lastly, 139(45.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that preference of education for some other children as a result of cultural beliefs made others to perform poorly, 119(38.8%) agreed, 29(9.4%) disagreed, 11(3.6%) of the respondents were undecided and 9(2.9%) of the respondents were in a strong disagreement with the statement. The study findings suggested that the respondents agreed (Mean=4.14) that preference of education for some other children as a result of cultural beliefs made students to perform poorly. This implies that because of the cultural beliefs that makes boys to be more educated compared to girls, many girls become absent in schools which later on leads to poor performance. This is in line with the findings of Okungu (2004) that many parents prefer to educate boys over girls because they believe that girls will get married and be unable to contribute to family sustenance while boys will be able to do so because they will remain at home.

These descriptive statistics of objective two was followed by a Chi-square test to establish the relationship between family socio-cultural factors and academic performance among students in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya. This was analyzed under the following sub-section.

Inferential statistics on the association between family socio-cultural factors and academic performance in public secondary schools.

The Chi-square test at p ≤ 0.05 significance level illustrating association between family socio-cultural factors and academic achievement among academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya, are as summarized in Table 8 To achieve this, the hypothesis below was tested;

$H_{02}$: There is no association between family socio-cultural factors and academic achievement among students in public secondary schools.

**Table 2:** Chi-square test for association between family socio-cultural factors and academics among students in public secondary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>1065.249</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>708.270</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>230.753</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>307</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 140 cells (89.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

**Source** (Researcher, 2020)

From the results in Table 8, the P-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association between family socio-cultural factors and academic performance among students in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya is 0.000. Therefore the null hypothesis that, “there is no association between family socio-cultural factors and academic performance among students in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya”, was rejected (p<0.05). This implies that there is a significant association between family socio-cultural factors and academic performance among
students in public secondary schools in Kisii Central Sub-County Kenya.

Thematic analysis on the influence of family socio-cultural factors on academic performance of students in public secondary schools.

This finding was supported by an interviewee who had the following to say:

...Involvement in household work decreases children’s study time and thereby often contributes to a decline in academic performance rate. This factor is a major contributor to the high repetition rate of students in various parts of the Sub-County ... Male Participant, 54 years, Principal.

This implies that when students are involved in a lot of household chores, they do not get time to do their homework, thus, this leads to poor performance. This concurs with the findings of Wa Mahiu and Njau (1994) that another factor which causes the wastage of students without disabilities is involvement in household work.

CONCLUSION

For the influence of family socio-cultural factors on low performance rates among pupils in public secondary schools, it is concluded that there is a significant association between family socio-cultural factors and low performance rates among students in public secondary schools. That is parental low income denied a pupils a chance to pay fee, parental low education level and high extra-curriculum activities/child labour at home made students leads to low performance rate among students in public secondary schools. That is circumcision practice, students’ involvement in household chores, preference of education for some other children and teenage pregnancy leads to low performance rate among students in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

The government and other donors should assist needy students in public secondary schools with fees to motivates them. The policy makers, the government and other stakeholders should create education awareness to parents with low level of education. The policy makers should come up with policies that motivate family engagement in education matters. Lastly, there is need for parents and guardians to be involved in students’ the guidance and counselling to improve the students’ behaviour.

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