

The Enrolment of Pupils by Gender in Public Primary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya

John M. Mbunde, Ph D
Senior Lecturer, School of Education
The Presbyterian University of East Africa,
Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract - This paper discusses the enrolment of pupils by gender in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The objective was to establish the enrolment of pupils by gender in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research was based on the Max Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy. The target population was 204 public primary schools. The sample size was 41. The research employed descriptive survey design. The schools selected were 14 from Westland and Dagoretti districts and 13 from Lang'ata district through simple random sampling. The research instrument used was the head teachers' questionnaire. Validation of the instrument was done by the expert judgment review by supervisors from the Department of Educational Administration and Planning of the University of Nairobi. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data which was presented in a table. The study established that slightly over half, 52.0 percent of the pupils were females while 48.0 percent were males in Nairobi, County, Kenya. Therefore, it was concluded that there was gender disparity in the enrolment of in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya. It was recommended that The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should intensify its efforts to close the gap in gender disparity in the enrolment of pupils in public primary schools.

Key Words: Enrolment, Gender, Public primary schools

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Unpublished [15] noted that Worldwide, 57 percent of all children out of school were girls down from 59 percent in 1999. On average a child whose mother has no education is twice as likely to be out of school as a child whose mother has some education. Unpublished [10] stated that changes in the economy with greater incentives for women to work combined with evidence from many societies that daughters are often more likely to care for elderly parents than sons, have started to change this situation and gives the impetus to female education. Evidence of this comes from South-East Asia; where ideologies of female docility and caring are beginning to change with the opening up of new economic opportunities have subsequent delays in the age of marriage and child bearing.

Unpublished [6] argued that there are some countries where they favour girls. In Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe these disparities are usually small

and almost all should be eliminated by 2015. Unpublished [15] stated that in Chile, pass rates in examinations are higher for girls in primary education and dropout rates are lower.

Unpublished [2] noted that in Western Nigeria the birth of a boy is more valuable than that of a girl or that it is more important for boys to do well at school. Unpublished [11] asserted that en become the custodians of education and societal values.

Unpublished [9] argued that with the Kenyan Government's intervention and public awakening parents are now sending their girls to school. Considering that 413,390 girls compared to 426369 boys took 2013 KCPE examination, the gender parity now stands at 49.2 percent girls and 50.8 percent which is the closest we have been towards achieving gender parity in KCPE examination.

Unpublished [8] pointed out that the patriarchal practices encouraged preference to be given to the education of a boy rather than that of a girl. Unpublished [13] indicated that gender disparity exists in education generally and there is need to identify and eliminate all policies that hinder girls' full participation in education. Unpublished [11] indicated that the imbalance in boys and girls participation in schooling has therefore been linked to the age-long belief to male superhot and female subordinate. Unpublished [9] stated that with the Government intervention and public awakening parents are now sending their girls to school.

Unpublished [15] pointed out that improving access to education has been accorded a high priority in the policies of most third world countries, which clearly reflects the global recognition of the contribution that only education makes to development. Education is the major single factor that can narrow social and gender imbalance in all areas of development. Although the number of educated children in the world has grown in the past 10 years, boys have proportionately fared much better than girls. In the year 2000, 105 million children worldwide were not enrolled in primary school. This number had declined to 72 million by 2007 and about 39 million of these were girls. This can be attributed to factors such as lack of adequate school facilities, lack of funds and gender inequalities in society at large.

Unpublished [14] noted that the national goals of education in Kenya and the primary education level objectives reflect the importance of primary education. In particular, the objectives of primary education are carried out in producing Kenyans who have knowledge and skills

that enables them to fit in the society. This is reflected in many key Government documents. Key among them is the National Development Plan of 2002-2008 in which the Government has identified education as key to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All. They acknowledge that a weak educational foundation will seriously impair a nation's development progress. Effective primary education is a rock-bottom necessity for development. The effects of primary education in development are largely a result of the cognitive skills: literacy, numeracy and problem solving.

Statement of the Problem

Unpublished [11] indicated that the overall situation in Kenya and Sub- Sahara Africa as a whole reveals that females are disadvantaged at all levels of education in terms of access, participation and performance. Gender disparity at all levels of education continues to be the greatest challenge to the Government.

Unpublished [1] stated that the empowerments of women through supportive structures encourage and enable them to realize their full potential. Unpublished [7] asserted that there is a need to make strategic life choices in a context where the ability was previously denied to them. This will make them more useful. Unpublished [4] argued that gender influences people's attitudes, social roles and responses to situations. Females are understanding, kind, soft but firm in nature. Their male counterparts are often aggressive, gender of decisive and quick in decision-making. Unpublished [17] indicated that poor primary schools compromise the entire system for human capital development. They provide graduates who are poorly prepared for secondary and tertiary education and ill-equipped for life-long learning. The consequence is an insufficient number of truly educated managers, workers and parents who can effectively contribute to development. The most effective sign of ineffective primary education systems are inadequate enrolments, low primary completion and low pupil achievement.

Research Objective

The research addressed the following objective:
To establish the extent of enrolment of pupils by gender in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Unpublished [5] noted that a population refers to a group to which the results of a study can be generalized. Unpublished [3] stated that the target population is all members of a real or hypothetical set of subjects or people or events of the study unpublished [3] The schools were merely the sampling units where the population resided. The population within the targeted schools was 204 head teachers. The sample size was 41. The research employed descriptive survey design. The schools selected were 14 from Westland and Dagoretti districts and 13 from Lang'ata district through simple random sampling. The research instrument used was the head teachers' questionnaire. Validation of the instrument was done by the

expert judgment review by supervisors from the Department of Educational Administration and Planning of the University of Nairobi. The reliability coefficient of the research instrument was determined by split half-technique method and was found to be 0.73. Descriptive statistics and distribution techniques were used to analyze the data using SPSS 20 Version computer programme. The data was presented in a table.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Research Question: What is the enrolment of pupils by gender in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya?

The gender of pupils was to establish enrolment of the boys and girls in public primary schools. The head teachers were asked to indicate the gender of their pupils and the results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the pupils by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Females	11086	52.0
Males	10234	48.0
Totals	21320	100.0

The findings in Table 1 indicate that slightly over half, 52.0 percent of the pupils were females while 48.0 percent were males. Therefore, there were slightly more females (52.0 percent) than males (48.0 percent).

CONCLUSION

The study established that slightly over half, 52.0 percent of the pupils were females while 48.0 percent were males in Nairobi, County, Kenya. Therefore, it was concluded that there was gender disparity in the enrolment of pupils in public schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

RECOMMENDATION

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should intensify its efforts to close the gap in gender disparity in the enrolment of pupils in public primary schools.

REFERENCES

- [1] Alsop, R. & Heinsohn, N. (2005). *Monitoring empowerment in practice: Structuring analysis and framing indicators*. World Bank policy research working paper 3510. Washington DC: World Bank.
- [2] Bakare-Yussuf, B. (2003). Beyond determination: The phenomenology of African a male existence, feminist Africa 2003, issue 2.
- [3] Borg, W. K. & Gall, M. D. (2003). *Educational research. An introduction* (7th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- [4] Garba, P. K. & Garba, A. G. (2010). *Women in Economic business. Research and graduate training in Nigeria*. Nairobi: African Economic Research Consortium, Kenya.
- [5] Glass, G. V. (1996). *Basic statistics for behavioural sciences* (3rd ed.). London: Allyn and Bacon.
- [6] Hertz, B. & Sperling, G. (2004). *What works in girls' education? Evidence and policies from the developing world*. New York: Council on Foreign Research.
- [7] Kabeer, N. (2001). *Discussing women's empowerment: theory and practice*. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Corporation Agency.

- [8] Kitetu, C. (1998). An examination of physics class discourse practices and the construction of gendered identities in a Kenyan secondary classroom. Unpublished PhD, Thesis. Lancaster: Lancaster University.
- [9] Mareng, C. (2010). Development of women education in Kenya. *International NGO journal*, Vol. 5 (3) 67-73.
- [10] McNavy, K. (2003). "Women's changing roles in the context of demographic transition" *Background paper for EFA. Global monitoring report 2004*. Paris: UNESCO.
- [11] Ministry of Education. (2007). *Gender policy in education*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education.
- [12] Rampele, M. (1995). *The effective action book*. Cape Town: IDASA Publishers information Centre.
- [13] Republic of Kenya. (2007). *Handbook for inspection of educational institutions*. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- [14] Republic of Kenya. (2002). *Report of the sector review and development direction*. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- [15] UNESCO. (2007). *Strong foundations, global monitoring report 2007*. Paris: UNESCO.
- [16] UNESCO. (2003). *Gender education for all. The leap in equality. Global monitoring report 2003/4*. Paris: UNESCO.
- [17] World Bank. (1995). *Policy paper on primary education*. Nairobi: World Bank.