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## Socio-Economic and Religious Factors Contributing to Drop Out Among Male Pupils in Primary Schools of Igembe Sub County, Kenya

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### Abstract

*Education plays a key role in human development through the process of empowering people to improve their well being and participation in national building. Drop out however poses a serious threat to gains in education despite the government emphasis on education for all by the year 2015. In Igembe sub County the problem is more pronounced among the male children. This study sought information on causes of drop out among boys and strategies that could be adopted to address the problem. The study established that drop out of male pupils was a common problem that required urgent attention. The major factors leading to drop out included: child labor, family instability, initiation, drug abuse and lack of role models. The study recommends affirmative action for the boy child, abolishing of child labor and initiation of boys only after completion of primary school as strategies that could address dropout among male pupils.*

**Keywords:** Dropout, Male pupils, Primary Schools

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### Introduction

The World Bank (1984) describes Education as a pervasive element that must be integrated horizontally and vertically in all development efforts. World Bank emphasizes that education is not only the main key for self advancement but also a means of promoting social and political consciousness. Education plays the major role in human development through the process of empowering people to improve their well being and to participate actively in National Building (Nafula, 2002). Few global goals on education have been as consistently and deeply supported as the notion that every child in every country should have a chance to complete at least primary education (World Bank, 2003). Harvey (2004) observed that 885 million people worldwide did not have reading and writing skills. Harvey (2004) regretted that literacy being a fundamental human right it was also a prerequisite to modern development. Harvey (2004) highlighted the following challenges to developing Nations due to lack of basic literacy:-

- i. Poverty
- ii. Low life expectancy
- iii. Political oppression
- iv. Drug and substance abuses
- v. Under development
- vi. Thuggery, robbery and idleness.

Due to these limitations the Government of Kenya established a commission of inquiry into the education system of Kenya which recommended an expanded free basic education for early childhood to secondary level (Republic of Kenya, 2003). In 1990 UNESCO organized a meeting at Jomtien, Thailand to discuss ways of achieving the goal of lifelong education. During this World conference on EFA, experts and leader agreed that there was need to ensure

that all school age children were afforded an opportunity to enroll (Republic of Kenya, 2003). The World Education Forum meeting in Dakar, Senegal reaffirmed its commitment and provided deadlines for achieving EFA (Republic of Kenya, 2003). They stipulated that all member countries should ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. Kenya is committed to EFA initiative stipulated in Kenya Gazette supplement number 95 of 2001 (Republic of Kenya, 2002).

The national Rainbow coalition (NARC) manifesto (2002) came up with FPE which led to an increase of 18% in public primary school. This means that enrolment rose from 5.9 million pupils in 2002 to 7.2 million pupils in 2003 (GOK, 2003). The main challenge to FPE as highlighted by UNESCO (2005) in provision of basic education was drop-out, Abagi(1997) pointed out that the Kenyan Government spends more than half of its expenditure on education and out of this, a quarter of these resources are spent on those who dropout. Drop out constitutes a serious drain and waste of national resources. This is not only because education consumes large proportions of National resources but also the government looks upon education as a productive investment (Akeyo, 2004). Kichakuri (2002) emphasized that the government and society in general can benefit from education only if pupils are able to complete the cycle of education they enroll for, failure to complete is tantamount to a considerable loss in manpower development that Kenya cannot afford at this stage of development.

Education is the foundation of economic development of human resources without which limitations are bound to be there (Kichakuri, 2002). Psacharopoulos (1985) in his study on education for development found that education brought in high social rates of return which he estimated to be 27% for completed primary education and 15 – 17 % for secondary education. Psacharopoulos (1985) also found that private return of education were significantly higher than social returns reaching 49% for primary and 26% for secondary education. Psacharopoulos (1985) concluded that education remains a profitable occupation and its social rate of return exceeds other sectors of the economy. This gave impetus to the current study.

Todaro (1994) observes that causes of wastage vary from region to region, country to country, school to school and individual to individual. The World Bank (1998) called for various studies on drop-out to be carried in various regions, countries and localities to minimize drop-out and improve efficiency in education. The Media pointed out that due to the emphasis on “rerouting girls back to school,” the drop-out rate had declined although it was still high in some districts such as Kisumu and Suba. Currently the dropout rate in the whole nation stands at 2.1% for boys and 2.0% for girls. Despite these observations no study had been done to establish the causes of higher dropout of boys. This gave impetus to the current study. The same report points out that in fighting drop-out for girls the drop-out of boys should also be considered because it can compound the problem. This was because the studies done at Suba district indicated that young men who dropped out of school enticed young girls with money earned for fishing and make them to also drop from school (Mwaniki, 2008). The Study sought ways of reducing boys’ dropout which could also help in reducing girls’ dropout.

In Igembe district, Kimondo (2007) observed that the drop-out rate of male pupils in primary schools was higher than that of the females. Kimondo (2007) stated that from pre-school to standard four, there was a balance between the two sexes but later the number of males became very few. However he did not explain what caused that situation and that issue became the contention of this study. Gatere (2007) cited two cases of primary schools visited in Mutuati division in which one class had 10 boys against 30 girls in standard eight. The other case had only 5 boys in a class of 35 pupils in standard eight. Despite these observations no study had been made by policy makers and educationist in the region alike to establish the basis of the problem.

### **Statement of the problem**

Since the introduction of formal education in Kenya, the Government has struggled to provide education to all its citizens with the aim of attaining EFA by 2015. Basic education is a pre-requisite for attaining the Kenyan Vision 2030 in which the country is expected to be industrialized. The major drawback in attaining EFA and vision 2030 is the school dropout. Despite the huge expenditure by the Government in providing free primary education, a substantial amount of this expenditure is spent on those who drop out of school. This is wastage of the scarce national resources since the dropouts have not acquired the knowledge and skills expected of them. In Igembe

District the report from Kimondo (2007) and Gatere (2007) on education pointed out that the dropout rate of male pupils was higher to that of females. Despite these observations there was no research which had been carried out on the causes of that trend. The study sought to determine the causes of dropout of male pupils in primary schools.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:-

To determine the causes of drop out on primary school male pupils

To determine strategies of reducing the dropout of male pupils

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study experienced the following limitations: Problems in obtaining the needed school records; this was due to poor record keeping by the school administration. The data on the number of male pupils enrolled at a particular point and the number graduating out of that cohort was limited. The school administration also lacked accurate information in terms of the reasons that led to inability of some pupils completing the cycle.

### **Methodology**

The study used the *ex-post facto* research design. This is appropriate for this study because the dropouts are being investigated after dropout had already taken place. The factors that cause pupils to drop out are the independent variable which cannot be manipulated by the researcher. This justifies the choice of this design since the researcher was trying to establish the possible causes and effect relationship between dependent and independent variable in an existing situation. This study was carried out in Igembe District Meru County, Kenya. The District was chosen since according to Kimondo (2007) and Gatere (2007) it was among few Districts in Kenya in which the dropout of male pupils was higher than that of the females. The District has seven education zones and two political constituencies with the Headquarter at Maua Town. Major economic activity of the district is farming especially growing of *Miraa* plant (*cartha endulis*) whose herbs are chewed and acts a brain stimulant. Other activities are tea farming, dairy farming, animal production, trade and tourism to some extent.

The target and accessible population constituted of educational officers. Head teachers, guidance and counseling teachers and pupils. The target population therefore consisted of 6,455 standard eight pupils, 153 head teachers, 153 guidance and counseling teachers and 1 DEO. This made a total population of 6,762. In the study, standard eight pupils were sampled purposely. This was because they had more experiences concerning dropouts, since they were older than other pupils in school. It was also assumed that the standard eight pupils were more competent in English language which was required in filling of the questionnaires. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993) a population of 6,762 requires a sample of 364 individuals. This was obtained from 30 primary schools which were sampled using simple random sampling. The researcher used 30 head teachers and 30 guidance and counseling teachers from the sampled schools for this study. 26 sampled primary schools provided 10 class eight pupils each and the other 4 primary schools provided 11 class eight pupils each and this made a total of 3-4 pupils. A sample size of 364 was used for the study.

The data for this research was collected using questionnaire and observation schedule. There were three sets of questionnaires, one for standard 8 pupils, the second for head teachers and the third for guidance and counseling teachers. Questionnaires were selected on the strength that they were more commonly used in quantitative research as they are standardized; highly structured and were compatible with the design. During visits to sampled schools the researcher made observations on the situation in the sampled schools and locations and paid particular attention to distance to school, socio-economic activities in neighborhoods of the school and engagement of the boys outside the school in the sampled community. The purpose of making personal observation was to obtain additional and collaborative data which enhanced the data gathered through questionnaire. The researcher made use of independent experts in the area of education administration of Chuka University in establishment of instrument validity. In testing the reliability of the instrument, the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient of 0.869 for head teacher's questionnaire, 0.834 for guidance and counseling teachers, and 0.792 for standard eight pupils' questionnaire was obtained. Instruments were considered reliable. The data acquired by the researcher was both quantitative and qualitative and was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.5,

a popular software programme utilized by social and behavioral scientists. Descriptive statistics was used in analyzing data.

### Demographic Data of Respondents

The study sought information on gender of both head teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. Majority (83.3%) of the Head teachers was males and 16.7% were females. Similarly majority (56.7%) of guidance and counseling teachers were males and 43.3% were females. This indicates that females were under represented in both the headship and in guidance and counseling in schools. Probably this may explain why male pupils are dropping out of school at high rate. These findings were similar to those found by Gachoki (2005) who explained that in controlling dropout, women are more motherly than men therefore; due to Oedipus complex syndrome, male pupils are attracted to women teachers whom they view as their mothers. Due to this male pupils would like mothers love and attention and in search for this boys would approach female teachers more than their male counterparts. This indicates that there is need to increase the number of female head teachers and female guidance and counseling teachers.

The study sought information on the administrative experience of Head teachers. This refers to the number of years teachers had headed a school. The questionnaire contained items that sought information on administrative experiences of head teachers. The study established that 43.3% of head teacher had been in headship for 0-5 years, 36.7% had been in headship for 6 – 10 years, 13.3% had been in headship for 11 – 15 years and 6.7 % had been in headship for over 20 years.

The study sought information on the years of stay of head teachers in the station they were during the time of the study. The study established that 43.3% of head teachers has stayed in their station for 0 – 5 years, 43.3% had stayed for 6 – 10 years 10% had stayed for 11 – 15 years while 3.3% of head teachers had stayed in their station for 16 – 20 years. The study indicated that, 90% of the head teacher had stayed for less than 10 years in the station they were at the time for carrying out the study. A part was included in the questionnaire that sought information on the experiences of the guidance and counseling teachers. Majority of guidance and counseling teachers (80%) had experience of only 0-5 years whereas 16.7% of guidance and counseling teachers had experience of 6 -10 years and only 3.3% of guidance and counseling teachers had experience of 11 – 15 years. This indicated that majority of guidance and counseling teachers are relatively young in this area.

The researcher sought information on the courses undertaken by the guidance and counseling teachers in guidance and counseling. Only 6.7% of the respondents had diploma course in guidance and counseling and 6.7% had certificate in guidance and counseling. 16.7% of respondents had attended seminars, 6.7% had attended seminars while 36.7% had only covered guidance and counseling as a unit in college. This shows that majority of guidance and counseling teachers in primary school in the area of study had not been equipped with relevant skills to perform their duties. This may offer some explanation on the causes of drop out of the boy child. The researcher used 153 boys (50.3%) and 151 Girls (49.7%). The researcher sought information on the age of the pupil respondents and these were recorded in table 1.

**Table 1:**

#### Age of Pupils

| Age     | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---------|---------------|----------------|
| 12 – 13 | 34            | 11.3           |
| 14 – 15 | 191           | 62.8           |
| 16 – 17 | 69            | 22.7           |
| 18 – 19 | 10            | 3.2            |

Majority of the pupils, 62.8% were in age of 14 – 15 years. 11.3% of respondents were in age of 12 – 13 years, 22.7% were in age of 16 – 17 years while 3.2% were in age of 18 – 19 years. This implies that majority of the pupils are above the primary school going age. This may account partially for the drop-out rate.

The researcher sought information on the type of family in which the pupil respondents come from. Majority of respondents (83.2%) came from families with both parents. The finding indicates that, 2.3% of respondents were from single father families whereas 11.3% were from single mother families. 2.0% had no parents and 1.0% did not respond. This indicates that majority of respondent were from families with both parents and few were from single parent families and total orphaned families. Majority of pupils in primary school were children from parents who were drop outs. The findings indicated that 61.5% fathers and 58.9% of mothers of respondents had only reached primary school; only 20.1% of fathers and 24.7% of mothers of respondents had reached secondary school. The study indicated that 5.6% of fathers and 8.9% of mothers had reached college. It's only 10.3% of fathers who had reached university while 9.9% of fathers and 3.9% of mothers had never attended school. This indicated that most of the parents had poor education backgrounds and this may probably be the main cause of drop-out of boy child.

### Causes of dropout

A section was included in pupil's questionnaire that sought information on whether pupils knew any male pupils from their school who had dropped out of school. In the study, 94.4% pupils indicated that they knew male pupils who had dropped out of school and only 4.6% of the respondents said they did not after circumcision since they became rebellious in school. Such students demand a share of a parent's property and other drop out of school in order to inherit their father's property. Others dropped out of school in order to look for money from lucrative miraa business. Other reasons stated are: use of drugs, unstable families, laziness, peer pressure, lack of motivation, forced repetition, lack of guidance, indiscipline, lack of basic things like food and clothes.

The researcher sought information on the classes in which drop-out took place. Majority of male pupils (32.2%) dropped out of school in class 5 – 6 while 14.8% dropped in class 3 – 4 and 30.1% in class 7 – 8 whereas 14.1% of pupils indicated that dropout was uniform at all levels. 3.0% of pupils did not respond to that item. The researcher sought further information on what the dropouts did to earn a living. That information is presented on Table 2.

**Table 2**

#### Work Done by Dropouts to Earn a Living

| Work   | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Casual in picking <i>miraa</i> or petty <i>miraa</i> trade | 287           | 94.4           |
| Employed as houseboys                                      | 68            | 22.4           |
| Employed to take care of cattle                            | 46            | 15.1           |
| Stealing   | 14            | 4.6            |

Table 2 indicated that 94.4% of the respondents indicated that the school dropouts were employed as casuals in *miraa* picking or did petty *miraa* trade whereas 22.4% of the dropouts were employed as house boys while 15.1% were employed to take care of cattle. 4.6% of the respondents said that some of dropouts earned their living through stealing.

### Extent of drop –out

The researcher sought information from head teachers and guidance and counseling teachers on extent of dropout of male pupils in their stations. In the study of 13.39% of Head teachers and 13.48% of guidance and counseling teachers indicated that the dropout of male pupils had affected their institution to a very great extent, while 53.3% of head teachers' respondents and 63.3% guidance and counseling teachers respondents indicated that the dropout of male pupils had affected their institutions to a great extent. Only 6.7% of Head teachers respondents had no opinion, while 23.3% of Head teachers respondents and 20% of guidance and counseling teacher

respondents said that male pupils had affected their institutions to a small extent whereas 3.3% of both Head teacher and Guidance counseling teacher respondents said that the dropout of male pupils had affected their institutions to a very small extent. These findings implied that the dropout of male pupils affected the sampled schools to a great extent hence the need to seek solutions to curb that problem. This was a clear indication that dropout of male pupils was a real problem that needed to be addressed urgently. Factors that led to dropout of pupils could be school related or out of school. School related factors included; the school administration and the indiscipline. The out of the school factors were those found outside the school. Those included parent's social economic and marital status, child labor, HIV/AIDS, and traditions of the community. The questionnaire for pupils contained a section to inquire whether the respondents had felt like dropping out of school and 15.8% of the respondents said they had felt like dropping out of school. The reasons which made them feel like dropping out of the school, respondents gave the following reasons as illustrated in Table 3.

### Reasons for Feeling like dropping out of School

|  | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Lack of basic needs such as food       | 24            | 37.5           |
| Enticement from classmates who         |               |                |
| Dropped out of school                  | 14            | 21.9           |
| Divorce of parents                     | 8             | 12.5           |
| Irresponsible parents/drunkard parents | 7             | 10.9           |
| Lack of motivation from parents        | 5             | 7.8            |
| Mistreatment from stepmothers          | 4             | 6.25           |
| Not doing well in exams                | 2             | 3.13           |
| <b>Totals</b>                          | <b>64</b>     | <b>100</b>     |

The study established that, 37.5% of the respondents who had felt like dropping out of school gave the reason as lack of basic needs at home such as food whereas 21% stated that they felt like dropping out of school due to enticement from classmates who had dropped out of school while 12.5 felt like dropping out of school due to irresponsible parents who became perpetual drunkards while 7.8% felt like dropping out of school due to lack of motivation from parents. One respondent said "my father was always telling me to go out and look for money like my age mates". The other 6.25% felt like dropping out of school due to mistreatment from their step mothers while 3.1% felt like dropping out due to performance in school.

### School administration and Dropout of Male pupils

The questionnaires contained parts that sought information on the effect of school administration on dropout of male pupils in primary school. The views and opinions of head teacher, guidance and counseling and standard 8 pupils on the items of the questionnaire dealing with this aspect were analyzed as shown in table 4.

**Table 4**

#### Administration Related Causes of School Dropout

| Major cause                              | Head teacher |      | Guidance and Counseling Teacher |      | Standard 8 pupils |      |
|--|--------------|------|---------------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
|  | F            | %    | F                               | %    | F                 | %    |
| Lack of interest in Enhancing activities | 18           | 60.0 | 15                              | 50.0 | 106               | 34.9 |



|   |    |      |    |      |     |      |
|---|----|------|----|------|-----|------|
| Lack of motivation  | 14 | 46.7 | 13 | 43.3 | 134 | 44.1 |
| Lack of counseling  | 12 | 40.0 | 8  | 26.7 | 140 | 46.1 |
| Poor relationship<br>Between administration and<br>pupils | 11 | 26.6 | 1  | 3.3  | 63  | 20.1 |
| Poor academic performance                                 | 10 | 33.3 | 16 | 53.3 | 160 | 52.6 |
| Lack of conducive<br>environment                          | 9  | 30.0 | 2  | 6.7  | 85  | 27.0 |
| Poor relationship between<br>Head teacher and teacher     | 2  | 6.7  | 1  | 3.3  | 48  | 15.8 |
| Lack of confidence with<br>Head teacher                   | 2  | 6.7  | 0  | 0    | 27  | 8.9  |
| Absenteeism of head<br>Teacher                            | 0  | 0    | 0  | 0    | 0   | 0    |

From Table 4 it can be deduced that lack of interest in enhancing activities was the major contributor to dropout of males pupils according to head teachers, 60% attributed this to the causes of dropouts, while 50% of guidance and counseling teachers and 34.9 % standard 8 pupils supported what head teacher had said. The school administration should ensure that learning facilities were interesting to pupils to avoid boredom. Schools should promote interesting activities like games, music, drama and price giving days in order to make life interesting. The second administrative related factor that caused dropout was demonization of pupils. That was supported by 46.7% of head teachers, 43, 3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 44.1% of standard eight pupils. According to Gachoki (2007) lack of motivation made pupils to lack reason to remain in school. The third major contributor of dropout which was related to administration was lack of counseling. This was supported by 40% of head teachers, 26.7% of guidance and Counseling teachers and 46.1% of pupils. In primary schools, guidance and counseling focuses on the complete development of an individual through a series of services designed to maximize school learning, stimulate career development and respond to social concern which inhibit individual growth. Guidance and counseling should involve teachers, administrators, parents and other education specialist but Gachoki (2007) regretted that most parents had left guidance and counseling to schools. It is therefore important to improve and strengthen guidance and counseling sessions in schools.

The other factors mentioned included poor relationship between administration and pupils with 36.6% of head teachers, 3.3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 20.1% of the pupils. Wairimu (2006) noted that cordial relationship between administration and pupils creates a lot of interest in school and this creates strong motivation which keeps pupils in school. Poor performance was mentioned by 33.3% of head teachers, 53.3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 52.6% of pupils as an administrative factor which leads to dropout. Wambui (2007) noted that when pupils perform poorly they normally give up especially when they are paraded and embarrassed in front of other pupils. The other factors included: lack of peaceful and conducive environment for learning, poor relationship between head teachers and teachers, lack of confidence with head teacher and absenteeism of head teachers. Lack of peaceful and conducive environment for learning was mentioned by 30% of head teachers, 6.7 of guidance and counseling teachers and 27% of pupils. This was commonly found in low marginal area where cattle rustling are common. Poor relationship between head teacher and teachers was mentioned by 6.7% of head teachers, 3.3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 15.8% of pupils. Lack of confidence with head teacher was mentioned by only 6.7% of head teachers and 8.9 of pupils while absenteeism of head teachers was mentioned by 8.9% of pupils. Absenteeism of head teachers may cause dropout since there is no supervision of curriculum teaching and discipline may not be effective.

### **Discipline and Dropout of Male Pupils**

The questionnaire contained items that sought information on the effect of discipline on school dropout of male pupils. Causes of dropout related to discipline include: drug abuse, indiscipline, rebellion against school environment, punishment and desertion. The leading factor was drug abuse which was mentioned by 66.7% of head teachers, 76.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 66.8% of pupils. It was noted that drug abuse was mentioned more by the guidance and counseling teachers than others. That was probably due to the fact that

guidance and counseling masters interact with pupils more and had more information. Drug abuse was characterized by taking drugs such as barbiturates, taking of illegal substances such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin and others or abusing legal substances such as *miraa*, nicotine and alcohol. Gachoki (2007) noted that drug and substance abusers can lead to physical and psychological dependence and the victims also forget some essential activities like eating, going to school or even taking care of themselves. The observation schedules added more weight on that factor since several children of school going ages were found chewing *miraa* in shopping centers around their schools. That was an indication that drug and substance abuses played a significant role in the dropout of boy child. That was found to agree with findings of Wanjohi (2002) on her study on factors leading to dropout rate in Rongai Division who stated that 90% of respondents said that boys drop out of school due to drug abuses especially alcohol. The second factor was indiscipline which was stated by 70% of head teachers, 63.3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 63.2% of pupil respondents. These findings were similar to findings of Michieka (1983) who noted that indiscipline was one of the main contributors of dropout in Kisii. The effect of punishment on dropout was mentioned by 46.7% of head teachers, 33.3% of guidance and counseling teachers and 51.6% of pupil respondents. Rebellion against school environment was mentioned by 43.5% of head teachers, 50.0% of guidance and counseling and 39.1% of the pupils while desertion was not mentioned by any of the head teachers but was mentioned by 46.7% of guidance counseling teachers and 41.1% of the pupils.

The questionnaires sought information from respondents concerning the effect of parent socio-economic factors on dropout. The major factor which contributed to dropout included: Lack of role models which was mentioned by 73.3% of head teachers, 76.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 47.05% of pupils. The second was low level of parental education which was stated by 66.7% of Head teachers, 90% of guidance and counseling teachers and 53.9% of pupils. This was followed by hunger which was stated by 66.7% of head teachers, 76.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 63.8% of pupils. The effect of lack of uniform to dropout was mentioned by 40% of pupils and that was found to be minor since it scored below 50% in the three questionnaires.

The researcher sought information on the effect of child labor on the dropout of male pupils in primary schools. Majority of respondents (90%) of Head teachers, 96.7% of guidance and counseling teachers, and 89.8% of pupils. The effect of boys taking parental roles was low since it was only mentioned by 40% of Head teachers, 50.0% of guidance and counseling teachers and 50.3% of pupils. 94.4% of the dropouts were either picking *miraa* or doing petty trade involving *miraa*. The observation schedule added more weight on that point since most of boys of school age seen around schools catchment areas were picking *miraa*, preparing and packaging *miraa*, carrying *miraa* from farms to towns and doing petty trade in *miraa*. Similar observation done by Wangui (2008) on alarms over boy's dropout in central province reports that boys dropout to pick coffee in plantations, work in horticultural farmers, work in quarries and other are recruited into illegal criminal gangs.

### **Traditional and Dropout of Male Pupils**

The questionnaires contained sections that sought information on the effect of traditions on the dropout of male pupils in primary schools. The effects of traditions and initiations on dropout in the study was significant since was mentioned by 57.9% of pupils. The respondents explained that after initiation boys are said to be grown up and have freedom to engage in activities of their choice. These traditional graduates assume that they have power and authority and when they go to school, they become rebellious and subsequently drop out of school. These traditional graduates are also entitled to inherit property of their parents, therefore most dropout of school to acquire properties.

### **Gender affected by Dropout**

The questionnaire sought information on the gender that was mainly affected by dropout. The findings of the study are illustrated on table 5.

#### **Table 5.**

#### **Extent of Boy's Dropout**



| Gender | Head teacher |     | Guidance and counseling |      | Standard 8 pupils |      |
|--------|--------------|-----|-------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
|        | F            | %   | F                       | %    | F                 | %    |
| Boys   | 28           | 93  | 26                      | 86.7 | 165               | 54.3 |
| Girls  | 2            | 72  | 4                       | 13.3 | 139               | 45.7 |
| Total  | 30           | 100 | 30                      | 100  | 304               | 100  |

Majority (93%) of head teacher felt that it was boys who drop out of school more than girls, while 87% of guidance and counseling teachers agreed with the Head teachers and 54.3% of pupils said that boys were mainly affected by dropout than girls. That indicated that boy's were more affected by dropout than girls in the District.

The researcher sought further explanation on why boys were dropping out of school more than the girls. The head teacher said that boy's dropout to pick *miraa* an activity which does not favor girls since it was a taboo for girls to climb tress. The other reason given was that initiation led for demand for more freedom and that caused rebellion and subsequent dropout from school. Traditional graduates were also entitled to inheritance of father's property and that led to lack of concentration in school and subsequent dropout from school. On the contrary, the girls were not entitled to inherit parents 'property and the only way available for them to make up in life was to remain in school. Guidance and counseling teachers emphasized further that there was no proper follow – up of boys after initiation since they were said to be traditional graduates. The standard 8 pupils also emphasized that the money from *miraa* lured boys out of school especially from orphaned and unstable families due to many unmet needs.

An item was included in questionnaire that sought information on whether the dropout of boys had any effect to the girls. Majority of Head teachers (73.3%) said that the dropout of boys also affected girls. That was supported by 60% of Guidance and counseling teachers and 62.85 of the pupils. When the respondents were requested to give explanation for their answers, head teacher stated that the dropout of boys also affects girls since boys who dropped out of school acquired money from *miraa* which they used to lure girls leading to dropout. Guidance and counseling emphasized that the boys who had dropped out of school enticed girls in primary schools with money earned from *miraa* and that led to early sex which led to pregnancy. The pupils argued that the dropout acquired a lot of money from *miraa* which they used to buy presents to girls like mobile phones in exchange for sex which led to pregnancy and dropout. Others reported that due to lack of basic needs, some girls opt to borrow form classmates who dropped out of school and when this happens boys are rewarded with sex which led to pregnancy and subsequent dropout.

### **Suggestions on Ways of reducing he dropout of Male Pupils**

The Head teachers, Guidance and counseling and standard 8 pupils were asked to give suggestions in what could be done to reduce the drop out of male pupils in primary school. The suggestions by the three sets of respondents are presented on Table 6.

**Table 6**

### **Methods of Addressing the Problem of Dropout in schools**

| Method of addressing problem of dropout | Head Teachers |      | Guidance and counseling |      | Standard 8 pupils |      |
|---|---------------|------|-------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
|   | f             | %    | f                       | %    | f                 | %    |
| Stopping child labor                    | 24            | 80   | 26                      | 86.7 | 224               | 73.7 |
| Forcing parents to educate boys         | 25            | 83.3 | 22                      | 73.3 | 217               | 71.4 |
| Initiating boys after primary school    | 21            | 70   | 23                      | 76.7 | 229               | 75.3 |
| Strengthening guidance and counseling   | 21            | 70   | 20                      | 66.7 | 227               | 74.7 |
| Improvement of discipline in schools    | 20            | 66.7 | 18                      | 60   | 169               | 55.6 |
| Involvement of all stake holders        | 17            | 56.7 | 14                      | 46.7 | 125               | 41.1 |

|  |    |      |    |      |     |       |
|--|----|------|----|------|-----|-------|
| Affirmative action for boy child             | 16 | 53.3 | 15 | 50   | 145 | 47.7  |
| Having activities to motivate pupils         | 14 | 46.7 | 15 | 50   | 142 | 46.7  |
| Abolish drugs such as <i>miraa</i> in school | 12 | 40   | 10 | 33.3 | 129 | 42.4  |
| Follow up of dropouts                        | 12 | 40   | 11 | 36.7 | 111 | 36.65 |

Majority of Head teachers (80%) and 86.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 73.7% of standard 8 pupils suggested abolishing child labor would help reduce dropout. They stated that child labor could be stopped through arresting and prosecuting people who hire children as laborers. The second major method of curbing the dropout of boys was by use of provincial administration to arrest parents who do not take boys to school. This was stated by 83.3% of head teachers, 76.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 75.3% of standard 8 pupils who stated that school dropout could be prevented by stopping the initiation of boys in primary schools. The strengthening of guidance and counseling department in schools as way of stopping dropout of male pupils was stated by 70% of head teachers, 66.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 74.7% of standard 8 pupils. 66.7% of head teachers, 60% of guidance and counseling teachers, and 55.6% of standard 8 pupils stated that dropout could be controlled by improvement of discipline in schools. 60% of head teachers stated that there should be involvement of all stake holders in stopping dropout and that was supported by 63.3% of guidance and counseling teacher and 56.6% of standard 8 pupils. The putting of emphasis on boy child by stakeholders was stated by 53.3 per cent of Head teachers, 50% of guidance and counseling teachers and 47.7% of standard 8 pupils. The use of role model speakers as a way of curbing dropout of male pupils was stated by 50% of head teacher, 46.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 61.5% of standard 8 pupils. The use of interesting activities in school was mentioned by 46% of Head teachers, 50% of guidance and counseling and 46.7 of standard 8 pupils. 40% of Head teacher stated that dropout could be controlled by abolishing the use of drugs such as *miraa* in schools. This was supported by 33.3% of guidance and counseling teacher, and 42.4 of standard 8 pupils. 40% of Head teachers said that there should be proper follow-up of dropouts and use of chiefs to make them return to school. That was supported by 36.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 36.5 of standard 8 pupils. The reaccepting of dropouts back to school was stated by 26.7% of Head teachers, 56.7% of guidance and counseling teachers and 32.2% of standard 8 pupils.

## Conclusion

The study established that dropout of male in primary schools was a major challenge that requires to be addressed to urgently. The findings of the study indicate that there are shortcomings in the methods used by primary schools in curbing the dropout of male pupils. The guidance and counseling teachers have not been equipped with the relevant skills required to deal with the problem of dropout in schools. There is need therefore to take them for induction courses in order to equip them with necessary skills and knowledge. The study established the major factors that lead to dropout which includes: child labor, family instability, initiation and traditions, low level of parental education, drug and substance abuses, hunger and lack of role models. In order to overcome these problems, the study calls for joint effort among school administration, parents, sponsors, NGOs and other stakeholder in implementation of the suggested methods of curbing dropout of male pupils. The study established that there is a relationship between dropout of boys and that of girls since when boys drop out of school; they make girls also to follow the same suit. Dropouts do not have permanent employment and great number was usually found idle in market places as noted in the observation schedule. This idleness leads to serious social problems such as drugs and substances abuses. These idle boys also at the end of the day require drinking and eating and this may lead to stealing. Some of the dropouts may succeed to acquire finances at a very young age. These fellows are not mature enough to have sound managerial skills especially of finances and this led to misuse of funds and property especially the one inherited from their parents. Others use the resources earned to lure girls in primary schools into early pre-marital sex which leads to early pregnancies, early marriages and subsequent drop out from school. The presence of drop-outs who do not value education in the community and also very young uneducated parents complicated the matter since such parents do not have interest in education and this leads to further drop-out of their children. The other social implication of drop-out of male pupils in primary school is that the number of girls joining secondary schools and colleges is higher than that of boys. Most of successful career ladies from the area usually do not get equal matches from the community therefore most are married outside the area and this has caused serious brain-drain. The drop-outs do not move out of the village and they just inter-marry in the villages leading to inbreeding.

## Recommendation of the Study

Based on the findings of the current study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. There should be affirmative action for boy child since he is becoming endangered in the district. This is because education offers the best opportunity for one to come out of poverty and to be good managers of the resources available.
- ii. Community mobilization programmes are essential in the District to sensitize people on the importance of education. This should be carried out through seminars and workshops for parents, leaders and members of the community.
- iii. Child labour should be highly discouraged and those involved be prosecuted. The provincial Administration should be vigilant and should arrest members of the community who hire school children to work in the *miraa* firms.
- iv. There should be use of community policing to curb those who sell drugs to pupils. The discipline of pupils in schools should also be improved to curb the problem of drugs and alcohol.
- v. Boy's initiations should not be done in primary schools, but after completing primary school to improve to improve the transition from primary to secondary school.
- vi. There should be frequent meetings in all primary schools between, pupils, parents and teachers to address the problems for drop-outs. In such meeting people from the community who have succeeded through education should be called to address both parents and pupils. These would act as role models to be emulated by the pupils.

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