

# FACTORS INFLUENCING BOY CHILD RETENTION IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY EDUCATION IN NYAMIRA SUB COUNTY, KENYA

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**Abstract:** Despite the fact that the government of Kenya has introduced free day secondary education (FDSE) many school going aged students are at home, also repetition and dropout rate continues to rise. Although many studies have been carried out in other parts of Kenya, none has investigated the factors behind the increased dropout rate of the boy child in secondary education particularly in Nyamira Sub County. The purpose of this study was to explore the factors facing the boy child's retention in secondary education in Nyamira Sub County. The objectives of the study were: to find the extent to which household factors and school factors influence retention of the boy child in public day secondary education. The study used mixed methods research design. This study was guided by systems theory of organizations in an attempt to find out selected factors that influenced boy child's retention to secondary education in Nyamira Sub County together with a conceptual framework. The units of analysis were 33 public day secondary schools. The target population was 33 principals, 33 HODs guidance and counseling, 33 Chairpersons of Parents association (PA), 47 Class teachers, 2 ZQASOs and 1935 students. Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table was used to select a sample of 28 principals, 28 chair persons of PA and 28 HODs G/C, 42 class teachers and 321 students selected through stratified random sampling, and 2DQASOs were picked out through purposive sampling. Questionnaires, Interview schedule and document analysis were used to collect data which was analyzed and coding done before data analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using regression data analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed in an ongoing process as themes and sub themes emerged from the study. On the issue of household factors facing the boy child, the study revealed that family income, labour needed at home and level of education of parents were critical. On the concern about school related factors severe punishment, promotion standards, cost of education and lunch fees balance were the main factors. The study results would be used to provide useful information to the policy makers on the implementation of workable strategies that will promote boys' education and provide a basis upon which other related studies can be anchored. It was concluded that the household factors greatly influenced boy child retention in secondary education. Information gathered would contribute to knowledge by analyzing factors and situations that limit boy-child retention in secondary education. A study on the role of parents on public day secondary education in Nyamira Sub County would expound the present study.

**Keywords:** education in, (FDSE), Nyamira Sub County.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study:

School dropout problem has reached epidemic proportions internationally and has become a global problem confronting the education industry around the world (Bridge, Dilulio, and Morison, 2006). Across the world about 71 million

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teenagers are not attending secondary school, this does jeopardize economic growth and social cohesion [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2012].

When noticing that girls' enrolment surpasses that of boys in secondary education, preoccupation with "the reverse gender gap" has been generated in industrialized countries, for example, United Kingdom (UK), United States (US) and Australia. It does appear that notions of masculinity negatively affect the participation and even performance of boys in schooling as reflected in higher rates of repetition, secondary school completion and academic performance in reading (UNESCO, 2006).

A study by (UNESCO 1998) reveals that while children in more developed countries and in Arab states move from one grade to another without a marked decrease in the number in the cohorts, the problem of loss of students in the cohorts is worse in the less developed countries, southern Asia and Sub Saharan Africa. Another study by (UNICEF ,1998) revealed that drop-out rates are highest in regions with lowest average incomes and lowest enrolment rates. In south Asia, for example, 40% dropout before completing secondary school; in Africa 26% drop out; in South Asia up to 22% of the students drop out; in the Middle East 7%, in East Asia 6% and in the developed countries up to 2% of the students drop out of secondary education.

Boys in Latin America and the Caribbean usually have higher repetition rates and lower achievement rates than girls. The reasons for boys' underachievement are becoming clearer through a growing number of studies. One study observed that boys' underachievement is inextricably linked to notions of gender and power (UNICEF ,2003). Boys' weak performance in school may be related to their traditional socialization for example, achievement in language and literature is considered to be more 'feminine' than 'masculine'. In Jamaica, one study found that boys were continually told they were lazy and inattentive to their studies. This resulted in low self-esteem and poor academic achievement and test results (MSI/EQUATE 2005). Boy's underachievement is a growing problem that requires policy attention. However, it "should not divert attention from the continuing issue of low retention for girls to secondary and secondary education in many developing countries" UNESCO (2007).

The Barbados, a medium income country focuses advocacy and policy dialogue in three main programme areas, early childhood development, adolescent and life skills and social investment for child protection. The predominant religion is Christianity and the sub region is unique in that there are several areas in which empowerment of boys /men has been identified as a more pressing need than girls/women in education (UNICEF ,2007). Most interventions in the prior year in Barbados had been girls /women oriented due to the fact that they were perceived to be a vulnerable group as compared to boys /men. This emphasis is done with the hope that boys /men were capable of empowering themselves. This paradigm shift which focused on boys/ men empowerment came into play when Barbados government realized that more and more emphasis had been tagged on girls /women disregarding boys/men thereby positioning them at a disadvantage point when compared with their female counterparts. Therefore, the study is to find out the factors facing the boy-child retention in secondary education and how to address them. Hunt, (2008) discovered that in some parts of the world, boys' educational outcomes lag behind girls' outcomes. In Botswana, Lesotho, and Namibia, some boys are taken out of school or denied entry all together to become cattle herders a task that falls to them since many adult males are forced to seek wage employment elsewhere.

Moses (2006) says that the dropout problem is pervasive in the Kenyan education system. Many children, who enter school, are unable to complete secondary education and multiple factors are responsible for children dropping out of school. Risk factors begin to add up even before students enroll in school that includes: poverty, low educational level of parents, the weak family structure, pattern of schooling of sibling, and lack of pre-school experiences. Family background and domestic problems create an environment which negatively affects the value of education. Further, students could drop out as a result of a multitude of school factors such as uncongenial atmosphere, poor comprehension, absenteeism, attitude and behavior of the teachers, and failure or repetition in the same grade. When students experience school failure, they become frustrated with lack of achievement and end up alienated and experience exclusion leading to eventual dropout. It is important to carefully design preventive measures and intervention strategies that could be adopted in order to help all adolescent dropouts.

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The emergence of drugs and substance abuse as well as motor bike riding and casual jobs in tea buyers (Liberalized tea sector) and outlawed social groupings divert the attention of boys who are already in schools by offering them immediate gratification to the detriment of being in schools. Nyamira sub-county in Nyamira County is not an exception to these pertinent factors facing the boy child. In one of the county education days the then secretary for education honorable Kaimenyi asserted that “most secondary school aged boys involve themselves in motor bike riding and cash generating activities drawing them from schools”. Daily Nation, 20/06/2015 ‘Alarm as girls top the class and boys drop out’. There is no counterpart organization or clear effort towards boy-child’s retention in secondary education in mixed day secondary education in Nyamira sub-county, Kenya. These worrying trend have motivated the study in order to find out the factors facing the boy child in his endeavor to retention in secondary education in Nyamira Sub County, Kenya.

**1.2 Statement of the problem:**

Over the years the boy-child has become vulnerable and endangered as far as education is concerned (World Bank, 2005). A report from the District Education Officer (DEO) Nyamira Sub-County education office on enrolment and dropout (2015) indicated that more boys than girls are dropping out of school, a matter of concern for this study. In the last 5 years (2011 – 2015) there has been a consistently high dropout rate among boys from public day secondary schools within Nyamira Sub-County especially in form 3. For example in the year 2011 there were 1492 boys at the beginning of the year and 1,387 at the end of the year showing a drop out of 105 boys in the sub-county. While in 2012 the number of boys in the sub-county at the beginning of the year were 1546 and 1,428 at the close of the year meaning 118 boys had dropped out. In 2014 the number of boys at the start of the year were 1674 and 1,293 at the end of the year an indication that 381 boys dropped out of school whereas at the beginning of year 2015 the number of boys were 1769 the figure dropped to 1,436 at the end of the year meaning that 333 boys dropped out from school. This trend is an indication that the number of boys in public day secondary schools in Nyamira Sub-County is consistently declining and therefore the need to investigate selected factors contributing to the high boy-child drop-out rate in public day secondary schools in Nyamira Sub-County.

**1.3 Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of this study was to establish the factors influencing boy child’s retention in mixed public day secondary schools in Nyamira Sub County, Kenya

**1.4 Objectives of the Study:**

Objectives to guide the study were to:

- i) Find out the extent to which house hold factors influence retention of boy child in secondary education.
- ii) Establish influence of school factors on retention of boy child in secondary education.

**1.5 Scope of the study:**

The study focused on form 3 students on the household factors, school based factors and community related factors hindering the boy-child retention and retention to secondary education in mixed day secondary schools in Nyamira Sub County. The study was undertaken in 28 secondary schools in Nyamira sub County which is in Nyamira County in the lake region of Kenya. Respondents were drawn from the sampled population and included students, teachers, principals chair persons of PA and DQASOs. It covered Nyamaiya and Nyamira divisions between the months of November 2015 and January 2016.

**1.6 Limitations of the study:**

Thirty percent of the interviewed principals were newly transferred therefore lacked retention in relevant information on the boy child’s retention to secondary education. The deputy principals and senior teachers provided the researcher with the relevant information.

Most of the boys were unwilling to respond to fill the questionnaires fearing that they will be penalized; the researcher assured them of confidentiality.

Most of the chair persons found it tedious to travel to the hotel for discussion. The researcher reimbursed them fare to the venue.

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**1.7 Theoretical frame work:**

This study was based on systems theory of organizations advanced by Miler and Rice in 1967 (Armstrong, 2006). The theory considers organizations as open systems which relates, depends and are influenced by their environment. As an open system organization transforms inputs into output within its environment. A major assumption of the theory is that all systems are purposeful and goal directed. The school system exists to achieve objectives through the collective efforts of individuals embedded in larger community and institutional settings. School dropout rates are one such phenomenon that can be explained as a product of dysfunctional elements within the education system. Using the systems theory perspective, there are three general classes of factors that affect the dropout rates in a school system. These are: the retention of the students entering the system (dependent variables); the policies, and programs of the system itself (intervening variables); and the economic and social conditions of the family, school and surrounding community (independent variables). A dropout rate is an output or result of the school's educational activity and function of the processes and environmental factors associated with the system.

These elements do not operate in isolation but are interrelated making school dropout a process. The systems theory is an alternative to the classical and neo-classical organizations theories advanced by Backer in 1973 Oso and Onen, (2008) because they considers schools as fragmented and closed social units independent of external forces. As adopted in this study, systems theory holds that household, school related and community related factors that influence retention of the boy child to secondary education in Nyamira Sub County emerge from the interactions schools have with their external environment.

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW****2.1 Household selected factors facing the boy child's retention to public day secondary education:**

Globally, girls make up the majority of out-of-school children, but in specific countries in the East Asia region, including the Philippines, Torres (2011), boys account for the majority. A study by Grootaert and Patrinosas cited in Buchmann and Hannum (2001) connected child household labour and declining school participation in the Philippines. Another study, on the school-to-work transitions in the Philippines, suggests that a combination of social norms and poverty compels boys to leave school without high-end skills and enter the labour force at an early stage. This is linked to non-secure work such as low-wage work, self-employment or family-based economic activities Torres (2011).

In (UNESCO, 2009) it was identified that child labour, either with or without parental permission, as the main reason for secondary-age children not attending school.

UNICEF (2009) in its analysis revealed that boys' enrolment rates were significantly lower than those of girls in Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand. In 2011, the East Asia and Pacific Regional United Nations Girls' Education Initiative undertook a research review to investigate the issue of boys' underperformance in these four countries. The methodology used is a broader gender analysis utilized the information provided in the case studies, government policy reviews and analyses of other relevant sources. The findings of these underlying gender dynamics were that boys are considered more independent, believed to be less interested in learning and have the potential to earn money while working means that boys are more likely to leave school.

In South Africa, Sibanda (2004) found that both individual and household level attributes are important determinants of dropping out of secondary school. The study indicates that ethnicity, household size, female household headship and the household heads level of education are school predictors of school withdrawal. The selection process for staying in secondary school seems to favour children from upper income groups compared to their low income counterparts in Kenya and South Africa .

A study from Australia Hodgson, (2006,) shows that higher academic achievement does not result in more favorable labour market positions, as male early school leavers are more likely to be employed than women. The results of Hodgson's study indicate that gender has a role to play in a student's success along with individual aptitude and achievement, and suggests that women must obtain higher qualifications to remain competitive. This, in turn implies that men need lower levels of education to be competitive in the job market, which may act as a pull factor encouraging boys to leave school. Parental decisions about withdrawing children from school may be influenced by gender. Parents may

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consider boys more useful outside of school, due to their potential higher wages. Traditional gender notions mean that boys are considered stronger and more independent. These attributes are considered useful in manual roles and in agrarian societies, the roles being typically filled by boys OECD, (2013). Evidence suggests that because of this, boys are more likely than girls to be taken out of school and put to work, although the case studies do not conclusively support this theory.

In Malaysia, Goolamally and Ahmad,(2010), the perception is that parents boys' capacity to secure a job without having a high level of education, whereas a girl needs more education to improve her chances of getting a job. Thus girls are kept in school longer. Labour force participation rates demonstrate this. In 2009, 79 per cent of men aged 15 and over participated in the labor force, compared to only 44 per cent of women, this issues compound the disadvantages due to gender-specific factors, increasing the trend of boys leaving school. Therefore the researcher came up with this topic to address the problem of the boy child who is given a lower priority of retention in secondary education as compared to the girl-child, Martinez (2011).

A second trend is that while boys might enroll, they often do not complete their course of study. In the Philippines, for example, although gender parity has been achieved in secondary-level enrolment, boys are much less likely to reach grade six than girls. Boys are also more prone to repeat a grade in secondary school as shown by the repetition rate, which is nearly twice as high for boys than for girls. Furthermore, boys are at greater risk of leaving and dropping out of secondary school compared to girls, Torres (2011).

Children drop out of school for a variety of reasons. These include the offer of paid work, group influence (often in relation to fishing), household work, sickness of another household member, pregnancy, early marriage, lack of money, lack of ability, inheritance and long distances from school. These reasons for the low completion rates appear to be similar to government statistics, which found that, despite free secondary education, cost is a factor for fifty-five per cent of dropouts in Uganda, Avenstrup (2004).

Poverty and economic challenges of the time contribute to lack of motivation, negative self-concept in terms of academic abilities, failure at school, domestic violence, delinquency, and higher dropout rates Prinsloo, (2004). The changing nature of the family affects schooling access Edet and Ekegre, (2010). Boys whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school Russel (2001). A number of reasons are put forward for the link between parental education and retention in school. Some researchers indicate that non-educated parents cannot provide the support or often do not appreciate the benefits of schooling Pryor and Ampiah (2003). Higher parental education is associated to increased retention in education, higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates Ainsworth, Beegle and Koda (2005). Parents, who have attained a certain level of education, might want their children to achieve at least the same level.

A Framework of readmitting boys who drop out of school is recommended to maximize retention, enrolments and participation of boys in education. Guidance and counseling should be enhanced in schools and the boy child should be shielded from harmful practices such as drug abuse and deviant behavior, Njeru and Orodho (2003). Parents should be sensitized on the importance of enrolling their children to secondary schools. The study helped in revealing the extent of the problem facing boy child secondary education thus opening avenues for further in depth study into gender issues in education. Looking at the above studies, the researcher will try to establish the house hold factors that hinder the boy child's retention in mixed day secondary education and find ways to improve the situation.

A study by Marston (2008) explored why fewer boys than girls transisted to secondary schools. The study explores many factors associated with, culture, enrolment, retention, participation and progress which lie at the individual, household, school and community level and maps out how these factors interact the research explored the effects of the factors on boy child. This study adopted mixed method survey method in order to answer the objectives and research questions it sought to achieve. The study was carried out among students, parents and teachers in Public day Secondary Schools. A total of 156 respondents (84 students, 36 teachers 36 parents) were purposively sampled as subjects of the study. The main research instruments were questionnaires and interview schedule. The factors identified include drug abuse, lack of guidance and counseling, child labor, poverty, weak family institutions, corporal punishment and negative parental attitude. Other factors included allure to easy money which led boys to join criminal gangs. This is as a result of the prevalence of a terror group 'Mungiki' that recruit the youth in large numbers in Kieni East Sub County, Kenya. The findings revealed that the highest dropout rate among boys is in form three followed by form two. There is no such a study carried out in Nyamira Sub County though similar challenges are observed in the area of study.



## 2.2 School based selected factors facing the boy child's retention to public day secondary education:

In Malaysia, the language of instruction changes at secondary level, from bilingual to Malay. While the scope of Goolamally and Ahmad (2010) study did not include an investigation into whether boys studying in minority languages are leaving education at higher rates than Malay-speaking students, ethnicity does seem to be systematically related to the likelihood of children not attending school. In their study they noted that only half of Orang Asli ethnic minority students in Malaysia who completed secondary school continued on to lower secondary. The lack of data on out-of-school children means that a clear picture of the issues has not emerged. World Bank (2012). Data from the Malaysian Ministry of education show that boys comprise a higher proportion of the total population enrolled at primary level, but that this declines as students enter the secondary level and further falls at the tertiary level Goolamally and Ahmad, (2010). A decrease in the school attendance of boys at secondary and tertiary levels is also seen in (Mongolia, Undarya and Enkhjargal, 2011).

The majority of Secondary school teachers in the Asia- region are women. This is perceived as a factor contributing to boys' under achievement in the report from Malaysia Goolamally and Ahmad (2010), where the majority of teachers are female and are seen to favor girls. The link between female teachers and girls' educational achievement has been clearly charted UNESCO (2006). It is widely recognized that the fewer the female teachers, the wider the enrolment, retention and promotion gaps are between female and male students (UNICEF, 2009). Studies by Dee (2006) found that the sex of the teacher has a large influence on a student's test performance and engagement with academic material, as well as the teacher's perception of students. "Simply put, girls have better educational outcomes when taught by women and boys are better off when taught by men" Dee (2006). One area in which male teachers may play a particularly significant role is as informal counselors and mentors for male students. They may encourage boys to stay at school or guide them to alternative learning pathways. However, such informal mentoring systems should be supplemented with formal guidance and counseling systems within schools, including good training for the informal mentoring process. Such systems can advocate for meaningful, personal career choices for boys, and serve to bridge the gap between the academic curriculum in post-secondary education and labor market needs. School career guidance can help students to prepare for market-oriented employment. Counseling and guidance services that are gender-responsive redress gender inequalities by promoting attitudinal and behavioral changes (Raghavan, 2009).

There is a common perception in Mongolia that boys are likely to be more severely punished by teachers than girls. "Boys reported they prefer dealing with female teachers and are in fact afraid of male teachers as they beat them painfully" Undarya and Enkhjargal (2011). Boys may also face other forms of violence in school, such as physical fighting with their peers. While school guidance and counseling are relatively new concepts in Asia and the Pacific, development of counseling could be a key tool to reduce the number of out-of-school male students. Study in Mongolia found that boys and older children were more likely to be discriminated against than girls and younger children, and to experience physical violence at the hands of peers and teachers Save the Children, (2009), as cited in Undarya and Enkhjargal (2011).

A boy child education is more endangered with more girls enrolling in school than boys in Bunkum County. A survey done in has revealed that most young men in informal business popularly known as boda boda are school drop outs leading to a decline in the number of the male in schools. Statistics reveal that candidates registered for the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education KCSE (2011), the number of girls were 1,581 above that of boys who were 1,526 while in primary schools, the registered candidates to sit for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) 2011, the number of girls were 2,723 above that of boys who were 2,606. This statistics, are evidence enough that if no action is taken towards boy child education, sooner or later the number of educated men will drop. It is a great concern because it is likely to impact negatively in the future since there is shortage of educated men from this region Wachiye (2011).

The insensitive school environment affects boy's transition. It is revealed that the long distance from home to school is a problem. In most instances parents would prefer girls to go to boarding school while the boy goes to the day school. Other factors included lack of mentors; class repetition, victimization, inadequate facilities, poor academic performance and majority of teachers in secondary schools are female. This concurs with Brostrom (2000) who suggested that negative experience of transition is often due to problems associated with the school rather than the child.

The over emphasis on the girl-child education in Central part of Kenya has seen the number of boys attending schools going down and has contributed to the decline in boy child enrollment in schools in central province, it has been noted by stakeholders. In some Sub Counties like Tetu, Kenya there is only one boys' boarding school Kimathi Boys, an indication

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that much emphasis is being put on girl child at the expense of boy-child. Further to that most mixed secondary schools in the region have been converted into girls' boarding schools that leave the boy-child with few options. Some boy-child has been reported to have dropped out of school to join illegal groups such as mungiki (Education News, 2012).

The situation is made worse when a score of fathers who should be role models to their children have been reported to be consuming too much illicit brew that has consequently led to the decrease in birth rates. 2011 KCPE results indicated that the number of girl who registered for examinations were more than boys by 14,443 in Nyeri County. This has been greatly contributed by the fact that boys drop out of school due to high poverty level that turns them into working in coffee farms, tea farms, quarries, hawking and rice farms especially in areas like Mwea, Nyandarua and Murang'a , Kenya. Some boys have also dropped out of school due to discouragement of high marks required in order to join form one. Oppression from home and high expectations, that man is the only person who can be a bread winner for the family. This has greatly contributed to increased cases of child labor and abuse. The reasons given from the above studies made the researcher to come up with the study in order to find possible solutions to address them.

The lack of support systems for children, and the lack of sensitivity of education authorities and teachers to the needs of children at risk also contribute to drop out (Sarkar, 2004). Knesting (2008) found that a caring school environment where teachers engaged and listened actively to learners played a positive role in the prevention of school dropout. The manner of learner-teacher communication was noted as important, as learners responded more positively to relationships based on acceptance, respect, support and high expectations. Learners also needed to be made aware of the purpose and benefits of graduating (Knesting, 2008).

Boys who perform poorly tend to stay away from school more frequently; weak academic performance often leads to grade repetition; repeaters and underachievers attend school intermittently; and this somewhat circular chain of events is eventually broken when pupils drop out of the education system (Hunt, 2008). High levels of indiscipline at school are indicative of boys becoming disengaged with school and this eventually leads to drop out. In a study by Wamalwa (2011) on indiscipline cases reported among boys in Dagoretti District, 35.2% of the teachers who participated in the study reported that the boy child was abusing drugs and substances, 54.5% reported that the boy child played truant, 19.3% reported that the boy child demonstrated aggressive behavior such as bullying and fighting.

In their study Hunter and May (2003) found that boys from poor families, single-parent families and those with poorly educated parents were more likely to drop out of school.

A boy child education is more endangered with more girls enrolling in school than boys in Bungoma County, Kenya. A survey done has revealed that most young men in informal business popularly known as boda boda (motorbike business) are school drop outs leading to a decline in the number of the male in schools. Statistics reveal that candidates registered for the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education (KCSE) (2011), the number of girls were 1,581 above that of boys who were 1,526.

No similar study has been carried in Nyamira Sub County despite the fact that there is low retention rate for a boy child (71 %) in Nyamira Sub County compared to girls (91 %). This study therefore aim at studying the school related factors facing the boy child retention to public day secondary education and come up with ways of tackling the problem.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design:

This study employed a mixed methods research designs utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Mixed method research design was used in the preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification, Orodho (2002). The study was fit within the provisions of mixed method survey research design because the researcher collected data and reported things the way they were without manipulation of any variable.

#### 3.2 Study Location:

Nyamira Sub County is in Nyamira County of the Lake region of Kenya. According to Nyamira County, (2015) Nyamira Sub County has two divisions namely: Nyamira and Nyamaiya. It lies between the latitude 00° 30' 00" south and between longitude 340° 45' and 350° 00' east. It covers an area of 899.3 sq. km with a temperature range of 10.1°C and 28.7°C and

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rain fall of between 600 mm and 2300 mm per annum. Agriculture especially tea planting is the main economic contributor to the county. Main cash crops are tea, sugarcane, bananas, maize (Nyamira County, 2015). Most farmers also keep livestock for dairy and beef products they also practice fish farming among others. It has a total population of 598,252 people. It has 1 satellite campus of a University, 1 medical training college, 1 teacher's training college, 2 youth polytechnics, 9 tertiary colleges of which 7 are private, 31 ACE, 50 public secondary schools, 101 public primary schools, 45 private primary schools, 93 public and 46 private ECD centers 3423 boys and 3495 girls in public day secondary schools.

**3.3 Target population:**

The units of analysis were the 33 public day secondary schools in Nyamira Sub County. The study population, therefore, comprised the following: 33 principals, 47 class teachers, 33 HOD G/C, 1935 form three students, 33 chairpersons of PA and 2 District Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (DQASOs) in Nyamira Sub County, Kenya.

**3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques:**

A sample is part of the target population that is selected for the purpose of study, Mugenda and Mugenda (2005). Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table was used to sample 28 principals, 28 chair persons of PA and 28 HODs G/C, 41 class teachers and 321 students selected through stratified random sampling, 2 DQASOs were picked out through purposive sampling. (Chandran, 2004) says that a sample size of any study should be based on what a researcher considers statistically logical and practicable. Stratified random sampling enables the researcher to achieve desired representation from various sub groups in the population. This was to ensure that no data was left out that a researcher wanted from respondents.

**3.5 Data Collection Instruments:**

The main instruments of data collection for this study were questionnaires and interview schedule.

**3.6 Reliability of the Instruments:**

The study employed the split-half method to find out the reliability of the questionnaire. The developed questionnaires were administered once and the scores of each half were recorded separately. Pearson's product moment formula was used to calculate the correlation coefficient between the two halves. The study also used Spearman-Brown correction formulae so as to improve reliability of split half.

**3.7 Validity of the Research Instruments:**

The instruments were presented to respondents to determine whether the questions were clear, comprehensible, and in sound order (face validity). Oswald and Price (2006) define face validity as the degree to which an instrument appears to measure what it claims. In other words, does the measuring tool look like it measures what it is supposed to measure? Face validity was achieved by asking respondents to rate the validity of tools as it appears to them. The responses enabled the researcher to authenticate the tools as being adequately constructed to collect the required data.

**3.8 Data Collection Procedure:**

Before the collection of any data from the sample, an authorization letter was sought from the Director of Post Graduate Studies of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. The letter enabled the researcher to acquire a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. This permit enabled the researcher to get permission from the County Commissioner and the Director of Education Nyamira County and District Education Officer Nyamira Sub-County to carry out the study in the public day secondary schools. Respondents were informed on the importance of the study and were assured verbally of confidential treatment of information provided.

**3.9 Data Analysis:**

Quantitative Data from questionnaires and observation checklist was analyzed using mixed method statistics by the help of SPSS version 22. Wolveto (2009) describes mixed method statistics as one that involves the process of computing a mass of raw data into tables, charts, with regression analysis tests.

In Qualitative Data Analysis the study adopted all the six phases of thematic analysis which included arrangement of data by transcribing interviews, typing the field notes, and sorting the documents into files; reading through the data to obtain a



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general sense of the information; encoding all of the data that emerged relevant into categories; identifying themes that show the relationships between categories; presenting and describing in detail of thematic information; and forming direct interpretations based on each of the themes identified in the analysis.

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1 Household Factors facing the boy retention in Secondary Education in Nyamira Sub County:**

This was responded to by 23 principals, 37 class teachers, 23 HODs G/C, 2DQASOs, 25 chairpersons of PA and 321 students.

The first objective for the study was to find out the extent to which house hold selected factors influence retention of boy child to secondary education. In order to achieve this, the Relationship between caring for a sick parent, level of education of parents , labour needed at home , family income and the number of days a student is absent from school was analyzed and the results computed in table 4.1.1:

**Table 4.1.1: Multiple Regression Model summary for household factors**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.392 <sup>a</sup>	.153	.139	10.235

a. Predictors: (Constant), CARING FOR A SICK PARENT, LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARENTS, LABOUR NEEDED AT HOME, FAMILY INCOME

The results show that the R<sup>2</sup> value was .153. This indicates that caring for a sick parent, level of education expected by parents, labour needed at home, family income determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 15.3 % while 84.6 % of the variations can be explained by other factors.

**Table 4.1.2: Multiple Regression coefficient summary for household factors and retention**

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	42.871	4.712		9.098	.000
	LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARENTS	-.100	1.142	-.005	-.088	.930
	FAMILY INCOME	-4.157	.690	-.373	-6.025	.000
	LABOUR NEEDED AT HOME	.305	.925	.020	.330	.741
	CARING FOR A SICK PARENT	1.357	.733	.112	1.851	.065

a. Dependent Variable: CLASS SIZE

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if household selected factors influence retention of the boy child in secondary education. The B value from the table indicates that 1.357 (caring for a sick parent), -.305 (labour needed at home), -4.157 (family income), -.100 (cost of education) and .526( level of education of parents). It was found that family income significantly predicted retention of the boy child in secondary education (Beta=- .373) p<001, than the other four factors.

These results are consistent with Hunter and May (2003) who found that boys from poor families, single-parent families and those with poorly educated parents were more likely to drop out of school.

This agrees with Prinsloo ( 2004) who said that poverty and economic challenges of the time contribute to lack of motivation, negative self-concept in terms of academic abilities, failure at school, domestic violence, delinquency, and higher dropout rates.

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**Table 4.1.3: The regression model summary for family income and retention**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.375 <sup>a</sup>	.141	.137	10.246

The results show that the R<sup>2</sup> value was .141. This indicates that family income alone determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 14.1 % while 1.2 % of the variations can be explained by the other 3 factors. Therefore family income has a greater significance on the retention of the boy child in secondary education.

From the result of the study it came out clearly that family income significantly determines retention of the boy child in secondary education because from the income they can be sustained in school and this reduces the chances of dropping out.

Despite the implementation of FDSE in Kenya since 2012, there are hidden charges the parents and guardians incur to educate their children through day schools and boys are not exempted.

This study concurs with a study by Croft (2002) in Nigeria which was of the opinion that household income is an important factor in determining retention in education; this is so because educating a child attracts some potential costs such as school fees, uniforms, and the opportunity costs.

**Table 4.1.4: The regression model summary for parent’s level of education and retention**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.352 <sup>a</sup>	.124	.109	2.960

The results show that the R<sup>2</sup> value was .124. This indicates that sister education, fathers education, brother education and mother education determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 12.4% while 87.6 % of the variations can be explained by other factors.

The findings of this study is in agreement with the findings of Orodho (2013) who reported that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones and this plays a significant role in retention of children in education. This study revealed that educated parents are able to assist their children progress in education wholesomely.

This concurs with a study in India, Ersado (2005) observes that parental level of education is the most consistent determinant of a child education. Which is supported by a study by Ersado (2005) which talks of ‘the widely accepted notion that parental education is the most consistent determinant of child education (and employment decisions)?’ Higher parental level of education is associated with increased access to education, higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates (Ersado, 2005).

Boys whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school (Russel, 2001).

**Table 4.1.5 The correlations analysis on family income and retention**

Correlations			
		FAMILY INCOME	THE NUMBER OF TIME THE STUDENT HAS MISSED CLASS THIS TERM
FAMILY INCOME	Pearson Correlation	1	-.491**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	236	236
THE NUMBER OF TIME THE STUDENT HAS MISSED CLASS THIS TERM	Pearson Correlation	-.491**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	236	236

\*\***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

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The correlation results further show that the relationship was significant since  $P < .05(.000)$  (Garrett-Mayer, 2006). This is an indication that family income has a significant effect on the number of times a student is absent from school thus retention.

This finding is consistent with that of Orodho (2013) and Syombua (2007) who found out that family’s income level actually influences pupils’ access to education. That the demand for education was governed by a number of socio-economic factors within the family which included occupation and income levels.

From the thematic analysis of the descriptive analysis one of the principals asserted that:

*“Many boys come from poor families and they cannot afford lunch fees. They are forced to stay at home due to fees balances and miss a lot of lessons as a result they fail to be promoted to the next level and end up dropping out of school”.(P1)*

When asked about the house hold factors facing the boy child in retention in secondary education one of the DQASOs asserted that:

*“The boy child’s number in secondary schools in Nyamira Sub County is on the decrease some of the reasons causing it include, irresponsible fathers who take most of the time at the work place and drinking dens forgetting their responsibilities. This has made the boy child to feel neglected and eventually drops out of school.”(Q<sub>1</sub>)*

On the same aspect another DQUASO added that:

*“Most boys have dropped out of school because of the domestic work they engage in at home. Some are offered paid labour from which they generate income to support their poor families.”(Q<sub>2</sub>)*

In one of the focussed group discussion a chairperson stood and asserted that:

*“Watoto wengi vijana (wavulana) wana nguvu na wanasaidia kazi ya shambani badala ya kuajili mtu wa kazi na hawana pesa”,*Majority of the young boys are energetic and can assist greatly as a source of man power because their poor parents cannot afford to employ someone to help in labour at home work(C<sub>2</sub>)

Another chairperson confirmed that:

*“An irresponsible father contributes to dropping out of the boy child because they need to be their role models. They also added that most boys fail to attend to classes because they engage themselves in casual labour to generate income to sustain their poor families.”(C<sub>7</sub>)*

The selected house hold factors contribute greatly to the retention of the boy child in secondary education. From the study the researcher realized that family income and the level of the parent’s education greatly determine the retention of the boy child in secondary education.

**4.2 School Related Factors Facing the Boy Child’s Retention in Secondary Education in Nyamira Sub County:**

The second objective for the study was to establish selected school related factors affecting retention of boy child to secondary education. In order to achieve this, punishment approaches, loss of privilege, choices and consequences , clear school rules and the number of days a student is absent from school was analyzed and the results computed and summarized as shown in table 4.2.1.

**Table 4.2.1: Multiple Regression Model summary on school related factors**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.252 <sup>a</sup>	.063	.047	10.758

a. Predictors: (Constant), PUNISHMENT APPROACHES, LOSS OF PREVILEGE, CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES, CLEAR SCHOOL RULES

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The results show that the  $R^2$  value was .063. This indicates that punishment approaches, loss of privilege, choices and consequences and clear school rules determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 6.3 % while 95.7% of the variations can be explained by other factors. In most cases boys opt to drop out of school especially when punished because of the poor choices and consequences.

In their study Boyle, Brock, Mace and Sibbons ( 2002) said that the use of corporal punishment or force is practiced by teachers in many countries including Kenya and Nyamira sub county in particular . Corporal punishments and harassment destabilize children and prevent them from completing their school. They do not lead to school dropout alone but also expose them to physical and psychological dangers which eventually lead to low retention rate. All schools have clear school rules but those boys who cannot adhere to them, drop out and this leads to low retention rate.

**Table 4.2.2: Multiple Regression coefficients summary on school factors and retention**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	48.560	5.530		8.781	.000
1 SENDING HOME FOR FEES FREQUENTLY	.526	.577	.060	.912	.363
COST OF EDUCATION	-2.618	1.116	-.159	-2.346	.020
SCHOOL CULTURE	.377	.762	.033	.495	.621
PUNISHMENT APPROACHES	-1.160	.737	-.104	-1.574	.117
ACCESS TO LOCAL BURSARIES	.839	.789	.069	1.063	.289

a. Dependent Variable: CLASS SIZE

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if school selected factors influence retention of the boy child in secondary education. The B value from table 4.4.2.2 indicates that 0.839 (access to local bursaries), -1.160 (punishment approaches), .377 (school culture), -2.618 (cost of education) and .526( sending home for fees). It was found that cost of education to a little extent significantly predicted retention of the boy child ins secondary education (Beta=- 15.9)  $p < 001$ , than the other four factors.

These include grade repetition, low achievement. It is unclear whether grade repetition increases the chances of completion, but what is apparent is that grade repetition extends the age range in a particular grade, and thus increases the possibility of drop out. Teaching to different age groups has different requirements in terms of teaching/learning practices and curriculum (Little, 2008).

This concurs with Knesting (2008) in his study who found that a caring school environment where teachers engaged and listened actively to learners played a positive role in the prevention of school dropout.

**Table 4.2.3: Multiple Regression Model Summary on cost of education and retention**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.210 <sup>a</sup>	.044	.040	10.804

The results show that the  $R^2$  value was .044. This indicates that cost of education determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 4.4% while 95.6% of the variations can be explained by other factors.

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From the result it was realized that there was frequent sending away for lunch fees and this eventually makes the boy child to engage themselves in paid labour like breaking of building stones and riding of motor bikes for a little pay which they convert to lunch fees. The society views the boy child as a source of man power therefore when they are absent from school they are engaged in incoming generating activities around their residential areas.

This is in consistent with a UNESCO report of 2009 whereby it was identified that child labour, Without the parent’s permission remains the main reason the boy child drops out of school.

This concurs with Achoka et al (2007) who found that making free day secondary education free is not enough; parents’ guardians and sponsors are still expected to provide facilities such as uniform, feeding, medical care and other statutory fees upon which some fail to provide for their children sustenance in secondary schools.

**4.2.4 Multiple Regression Model summary on punishment and retention**

Model summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.348 <sup>a</sup>	.121	.112	6.755

The results show that the R<sup>2</sup> value was .121. This indicates that punishment approaches determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 12.1 % while 87.9% of the variations can be explained by other variables.

This concurs with (Russel, 2001) in his study that boys whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision making and are generally more involved in their schooling are less likely to drop out of school because they become self-disciplined. High levels of indiscipline at school are indicative of boys becoming disengaged with school and this eventually leads to drop out.

This also agrees with a study by Wamalwa (2011) on indiscipline cases reported among boys in Dagoretti District, 35.2% of the teachers who participated in the study reported that the boy child was abusing drugs and substances, 54.5% reported that the boy child played truant, 19.3% reported that the boy child demonstrated aggressive behavior such as bullying and fighting.

**Table 4.2.5: Multiple Regression Model summary on ignoring and retention**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.118 <sup>a</sup>	.014	.010	3.120

The results show that the R<sup>2</sup> value was .014. This indicates that ignoring determines the number of days a boy child is absent from school by 1.4 % while 98.6% of the variations can be explained by other variables.

The boy child is not expected to express his emotions or any weaknesses. For example, he is taught not to cry but always behave in a brave manner since boy child is socialized not to display their weakness; they tend to suffer in silence. These dynamics have not only contributed to the neglect of issues that affect the boy child among the Kalenjin. Society teaches males that they must be in control all the times. Therefore males tend to dominate in many aspect of life. The confounding power, control and domination imply that males do not have problems. Quite often males look well and confident on the outside, but are not so on inside thus cognitive discordance (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

This concurs with a study done in Guyana, boys will seek out negative role models to compensate for gaps in role models at home or at school (Jha and Kelleher 2006). As a result, boys develop an anti-schooling attitude that prevents educational success.

The findings differed with the works of Knesting (2008) who found learner - teacher communication to be an important factor affecting drop outs. The findings also do not conform to the works of Dobson (2001) and Francis (2000) who emphasize discrimination as an important factor contributing to boy dropouts.



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From the thematic analysis of qualitative data the following was obtained from the study.

On the aspect of school related factors one of the principal confirmed that :

*“Majority of the school aged boys are indiscipline cases. This forces the teachers to be very strict on them and as a result they become defiant and sneak out of school. Eventually they face disciplinary committee who in some situations are forced to suspend them after consultations with the PA. This has seen most boys drop out of school.”(P<sub>7</sub>)*

When the question was posed to the DQASOs they said the following:

*“Corporal punishment in form of cutting tree logs or digging rubbish pits although it is abolished scares away majority of the boys from school due to indiscipline cases leading to dropping out of school.”(Q<sub>1</sub>)*

On the same aspect the second DQASO said that:

*“Despite the free public day secondary education most principals send s away students for lunch levies leading to dropping out because the majority of the students are from poor back grounds” (Q<sub>2</sub>)*

In one of the focussed group discussions one of the chair persons when responding to this question said that:

*“Wazazi wengine wanataka serikali iwalishie wanafunzi hata kuwanunulia sare za shule.”*Other parents think that the government should pay for lunch and school uniforms.(C<sub>9</sub>)

In the same meeting one member confessed that:

*“Okoiroria abana riokarioka chisukuru nabo gokogera ‘amamura’ atige esukuru ekiagera bagoteire esukuru.”* {Frequent repetition cases in schools have made majority of the boys to drop out of school because they shy off because they are overgrown in their levels}. (C<sub>23</sub>)

In their response on school based factors facing the boy child’s in retention in secondary education in NyamiraSub County the class teachers gave their response in the table below:

During the discussion with the chair persons PA one of them said that:

*“Wanafunzi wengi wana hama hama mashule kila muhula na mwishowe wanaacha, kwa sababu wazazi hawajui madhara yake.”*Most students have dropped out of school because they move from school to school due to lack of fees and ignorant parents. (C<sub>7</sub>)

Another one added quickly that:

*“Wazazi wengi ni maskini sana mpaka hawana uwezo wa kulipa ‘lunch’ fees mpaka watoto wanafukuzwa kila wakati hadi wanaacha shule.”*Most parents are below the poverty level therefore cannot afford to pay for lunch levies and this makes the learners to stay at home most of the days and eventually drop out of school.(C<sub>24</sub>)

## 5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Household factors that influence boy child retention to secondary education:

The following are some of the household factors that were identified to influence the retention of the boy child to secondary education.

**Family income:** education. this because there are hidden charges that are met by the level of income of the family influences greatly retention of the boy child in secondary parents and guardians to retain the boy child in secondary education and when it is insufficient the boy child misses classes and eventually drops out of school leading to low retention.

**Paid labour:** some school going aged boys engage in brick making ,stone carving ,tea picking and selling among others to generate income to support their family and even pay for their lunch frees and other levies. This eventually forces those to be absent from school and in return influences mass dropping out of school.

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**The other factors include:** Sickness, domestic work, caring for siblings, monthly income and family level of education also influence the retention of the boy child in one way or another. Parents who are educated also value education for their children and encourage them to work harder.

### 5.2. School related factors that influence the retention of the boy child to secondary education:

The following are some of the school related factors that were identified to influence the retention of the boy child to secondary education.

**Teacher's punishment:** most boys are involved in indiscipline cases and face severe punishments. This scares them away and eventually drop out of school.

**Un conducive school environment:** some schools create an un-conducive environment for the boy childlike strict rules and unfriendly school cultures. This causes the dropping out of schools for the boy child.

**Repetition:** the routine of repetition in most schools has made most boys to drop out of school because of age and defeat from their siblings in the family.

**Distance to school:** most schools in the sub county are located in the remote areas and this poses a challenge to travel to school sometimes they are forced to use transport means and due to insufficient resources they are forced to be absent from school.

**Poor academic achievement:** from the research it was realized that most students perform poorly in class and this discourages them and makes them to drop out of school.

**Lack of ability:** from the research the boy child in most schools was found to lack ability. In fact teachers admitted that in mixed classes boys shy off from responding to questions in classes and even participating in co-curricular activities that are academic oriented which are excelled by girls like science and engineering fair.

**The other factors include:** teacher's perception, frequent sent away for lunch levies and cost of education.

### 5.3 Recommendations of the study:

The following were the recommendations made for this study in light of the findings:

#### 5.3.1: In light of Household factors that influence boy child retention to secondary education this study recommends that:

Firstly all the parents should be involved in the affairs of their children and fathers specifically and take up responsibility of educating their children. This should be done through sensitization in chief barazas and other social gatherings.

Secondly the parents should be responsible to pay for lunch levies sin time so that the boy child is not involved in paid labour. They are also urged to work in the farm and allow the boy child to go to school.

Advocate for boys education among communities/parents and other stakeholders. Sensitize parents against negative social cultural practices and encourage the re-entry of boys just like girls counterpart who drop out of schools.

Parents should be sensitized on importance of sending children to secondary school level so that they can actively participate fully in the society.

#### 5.3.2. In light of School related factors that influence the retention of the boy child to secondary education this study recommends that:

The ministry of education and the school management has given through a government policy alternative ways to corporal punishment which scares most of the boys away from school.

In case of distant schools the management should look for alternative ways for the students and accommodate them if possible to ensure that they are always in school for proper learning and retention in school.

For lunch fees parents should commit themselves with the school administration and find alternative ways to pay to reduce frequent sent away for fees. The government should also provide full free day secondary education.

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Guidance and Counselling in schools should be embraced.

Establish centres of excellence ‘Starehe Boys Centre Model’ in each County for boys

Ensure gender balance in School Board of Management (B.O.M) and Parents association (PA).

Teachers/society and stakeholders at large should shield boy child from harmful practices such as drug abuse, alcohol and other deviant behaviours.

There is need to identify and recognize successful professional men within the District who can act as role models or mentors to the boys.

A series of gender sensitization and awareness campaign workshops and seminars and affirmative action are needed to improve boy child retention and participation in education.

### 5.4 Suggestions for further research:

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions for future research were made: A Study should be carried out on:

- i) The role of the parents, community elders and other leaders in the boy child’s completion of secondary education.
- ii) The role of guidance and counseling department in schools to see to it that the boy child is well guided and they complete their secondary education and proceed to tertiary and higher education.

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