

The Impact of Home-Based Factors on Gender Dropout in Public Secondary Education: A Case of Rongo Sub-County in Migori County

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Abstract: Dropout rate in secondary school education is a critical issue not only in Kenya but in all countries of the world. Learners who drop out of secondary school face a lot of challenges as individuals, families and the immediate society. In Kenya, the government counts its losses arising from expenditure incurred in supporting learners through bursaries and Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) funds. In Rongo Sub-County, Kenya, in the year 2010 7,946 boys (31.2 percent) and 5,344 girls (24.27 percent) were enrolled in secondary schools against the sub-county census data where the 15-19 age group has 21,603 boys and 22,017 girls. This research study investigated impact of Home-Based Factors of student's dropout rate by gender in secondary schools in Rongo Sub-County. The study was guided by the objectives that established the impact of home-based factors on dropout by gender in the Sub-County. The study adopted descriptive survey design within the target population of 24 principals (24 public secondary schools), 183 teachers and 8083 learners. Purposive sampling was used to get the principals and teachers; while learners were sampled using stratified random sampling method. This study realized respondents of 11 principals, 100 teachers and 382 learners. Data was collected by use of specific questionnaire prepared by the researcher. Validity of questionnaires was tested during the pilot study. Also, split-half technique of reliability testing was employed. All pre-testing procedure for validity of instruments was based on coefficient of +0.79 indexes. The data collected was summarized and analyzed quantitatively. The study established that both boys and girls do drop out from the Kenyan secondary schools. Among the notable Home-Based factors that influenced dropout were, lack of fees, sibling factor, friends, death of parents, pregnancy, and poor health; lack of food, marriage, employment, and child labour. In addition, government policies that could counter dropout by gender were not articulated to learners. Furthermore the study discovered that there was high correlation (+0.92) between male student respondents and female student respondents view on the issues that make them drop out of secondary schools. Therefore, the government should use the proffered recommendations and generate policies that will counter dropout and enhance Education for All (EFA).

Keywords: Public Secondary Education, Case of Rongo Sub-County in Migori County.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dropout from secondary school education is a worldwide problem. In recent studies reported by United States Department of Education (USDOE) revealed that nearly 1.2 million students drop out of school between ages of 16-24 years every year whereby boys dropout stand at 54 percent and girls at 46 percent (USDOE, 2009). Further, USDOE statistical findings suggest that in every five students, one will drop out of the education system. In the United Kingdom dropout is evidenced in higher institutions where high levels of dropout persisted as revealed by the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) Report entitled *Student completion rates* (2006), but also indicated that overall 13 percent of students had withdrawn within six months of enrolment in high school. Al-Qudsi (2002) admits that overall dropout in Arab countries shows the same scenario where cumulative dropout across gender is highest in Yemen at 52 percent and lowest in Gaza and Iraq at 28 percent.

Ongeri (2009) noted that in Sub Saharan Africa, 10 million school going students drop out of school every year. The breakdown shows that 49 percent and 51 percent of the 10 million dropouts are boys and girls respectively. Sub Saharan Africa countries account for more than 45 percent of the 69 million school age children who are out of school worldwide. In the same breadth, a report by UNICEF (2004) for fourteen African countries noted that there is evidence of large variation in secondary school dropout rates across countries.

In Kenya, a survey by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1993 found variations in dropout rates by gender in the four provinces under survey that is Nyanza, Western, North Eastern and Coast. In a report released by The Centre for the Study of Adolescents (CSA) which assessed the cost of teenage pregnancy and school dropout in Kenya, it was estimated that 35 percent of girls between ages 16-20 years are in school compared to about 50 percent of boys in the same age range. Kenya with 1.1 million children out of school is ranked seventh globally behind Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Niger. Furthermore, Global Monitoring Report (GMR, 2012) rates Kenya at number 9 globally where Nigeria is still top with 10.5 million dropouts against Kenya's 1 million student dropouts. The evidence is a clear indicator that educational wastage through dropout is a global issue.

A glance at the 2003-2006 national cohorts in Kenyan secondary schools indicated that 142,887 boys and 134,935 girls joined secondary schools. By form II (year 2) they had reduced to 124,585 boys and 112,053 girls. In 2005, the cohort in form III (year 3) had a reduced enrolment to 120,912 boys and 107,770 girls. In the last year of the circle (2006), the cohort had increased to 131,472 boys and 111,615 girls arising from several repeaters. In Rongo Sub-County, The sub-county Statistics Office estimates dropout rate to be 29.1 percent. The actual enrolment in secondary school for the year 2010 was 7,946 boys and 5,344 girls in a Sub-County where secondary school age learners are 79,109 boys and 67,232 girls (Census Report, 2009). The same census report of 2009 indicated that in Rongo Sub-County 51,884 boys and 64,000 girls who were supposed to be in school were not.

In addition, only 49.9 percent of schools going age children were in school in Rongo Sub-County. Thus, in the secondary schools, there were only 6,748 boys and 4,159 girls in secondary schools in 2009; 7,946 boys (31.2 percent) and 5,344 girls (24.27 percent) enrolled in 2010. The above data when put into perspective of the census report for the Sub-County where the 15-19 age group has 21,603 boys and 22,017 girls clearly indicated that only 36.8 percent of boys in the age group were in school, and only 24.27 percent of girls were in school. However, the sub-county data for 2012 is lower because Rongo District was sub-divided into Awendo Sub-County and Rongo Sub-County in the year 2010.

Geographically, Rongo Sub-County is situated on Latitude -0.7667° and latitude 34.6000° . It borders Kisii County and Homa-Bay County and has favorable climate for farming. It lies in the Sony Sugar sugar-belt and many families are small scale sugarcane growers. Rongo Sub-County Statistics Office records do not attribute dropout in secondary schools to poverty. Students lack mentoring to be able to realize long term gains from education as some boys dropout to join motorcycle transport (*bodaboda*) business. Girls suffer from socio-cultural beliefs that boys should get education while girls prepare for motherhood.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Determine the Learner-based factors that influenced dropout by gender at home in Rongo Sub-county.
- ii. Assess how parental-based factors impact on dropout by gender in secondary education.
- iii. Assess the extent of government's policy's influence on home-based factors on dropout by gender in secondary education.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study population:

The target population for this study involved principals from public secondary schools, Teachers and learners in the schools within Rongo Sub-County. The total target population comprised 24 secondary schools. The target population was 8288, which included the 24 principals in 24 public secondary schools, 183 Teachers and 8083 students. Table 3.1 below indicates the population of students by gender.

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Table 1 Enrolment by gender in public secondary schools in Rongo Sub-County.

	Enrolment	Percentage
Girls	2352	29.1%
Boys	5731	70.9%
Total	8083	100%

N=8083

Sampling and Sampling Technique:

In this study, there was a total target population of 8,083 as attained from Rongo Sub-County Statistics office. The sample population for the study was to be a maximum of 420 respondents. The following formula advanced by Yamane, (1967) and Supported by Morgan, (1970), was used to calculate sample size for teachers and students.

n is the required sample size.

N is the population size.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N [e]^2}$$

e is the level of precision i.e. 0.05.

In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling, simple random sampling and stratified random sampling techniques in arriving at the sample size for the study. A total of 12 principals (12 schools) participated in the study drawing one principal from each of the schools sampled for the study. Also, random sampling was used to sample 126 teachers in Rongo Sub-County. Since there are 8,083 learners in secondary schools in the sub-county, stratified random sampling was used to acquire the desired sample as projected in Table 3.2.

Table 2 Teachers and students sample size for the study

Principals	Teachers	Students	Total Participants
11	100	382	493

N=558

Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework was based on home-based factors that influence dropout rate by gender in secondary education in the area of study. Also, The government policy were considered while the extent of dropout by gender in public secondary school education were considered as the dependent variable. However, peer-pressure, cultural factors, personality, and resources were noted as intervening variables. The conceptual framework was used to investigate the Home-Based Factors influencing dropout rate of students by gender in public secondary school education in Rongo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya.

The researcher realized that there are intervening variables that had to be controlled. The first intervening variable was culture. Since the study was conducted in an area where most respondents were exposed to one predominant cultural disposition, the effect of culture was across board. Further, resources as intervening variable was equally controlled because the schools in the Sub-County were basically in the same geographical setting and shared a lot in resources

3. RESULTS

The rates for questionnaires return was 91.7 percent of administrators (principals or deputy principals) In addition, 79.4 percent of teachers returned their questionnaires and three hundred eighty two (382), that is (90.9 percent) of the students returned their observations in the form of questionnaire reactions.

Gender Respondents:

Table 3: Sample size

	PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS		STUDENTS	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	8	72.7%	66	66%	206	53.9%
Female	3	27.3%	34	34%	176	46.1%
cccTotal	11	100%	100	100%	382	100%

N=493

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Respondents were purposed to reveal the level of dropout by gender in public secondary schools. From the above data it was clear that respondents were sourced right from student’s level to principal’s level.

Gender of respondents:

Out of the 11 principals 8(72.7%) were male and 3 (23.7%) were female. Further, out of 382 students 206(53.9%) were male and 176 (46.1%) were female which indicated that there was gender balance.

Age of Learner Respondents:

Table 4: Age of learner respondents

		Respondents gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Resp	14 yrs-15yrs	23	34	57
onde	16 yrs-17yrs	117	109	226
nts	18 yrs-19yrs	62	27	79
Ages	20 yrs & above	4	4	8
Total		206	174	380
		54.2%	45.8%	100%

N=380

Further, age distribution of respondents as indicated in table 4.3 shows that only 17.4 percent and 8.2 percent for boys and girls respectively were above 17 years which is the legal age for individuals to be able to make mature and informed choices about their status particularly on whether to drop out or stay on to graduate despite hard socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions. However, lack of monitoring practices from parents (Rumberger & Lim 2008) where parents consider learners mature once they join secondary education could make them drop out. The data indicate that both male and female learners were affected.

Learner Home Based Issues:

Table 5: Home based issues

	Male				Female			
	Yes	No	Yes	NO	Yes	NO	Yes	NO
Reason	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
Employment	29	14.1	177	85.9	33	18.8	143	81.3
Death of parents	124	60.5	81	39.5	121	69.1	54	30.9
Lack of fees	183	88.8	23	11.2	170	96.6	6	3.4
Marriage	67	32.7	138	67.3	88	50	88	50
Siblings	149	72.3	59	27.7	134	76.1	42	23.9
Pregnancy	91	44.6	113	55.4	145	82.9	30	17.1
Poor health	90	43.9	115	56.1	145	49.1	30	50.9
Lack of food	80	38.8	126	61.2	79	44.9	97	55.1
Child Labour	55	26.8	150	73.2	76	43.2	100	56.8
Friends	135	65.9	128	34.1	128	72.7	48	27.3

N=382

The data indicated that there was high correlation (+0.92) between male respondent and female respondent views on issues that make them leave school. This view supports the view advanced by proponents of gender identity who argues using contemporary socialism theory that postulates the notion that when a child is first born, it has biological sex but no social genders. As the child grows, society provides a string of prescriptions, templates, and models of behaviors appropriate to the one sex or the other (Connell, 2007).

Parental Factors:

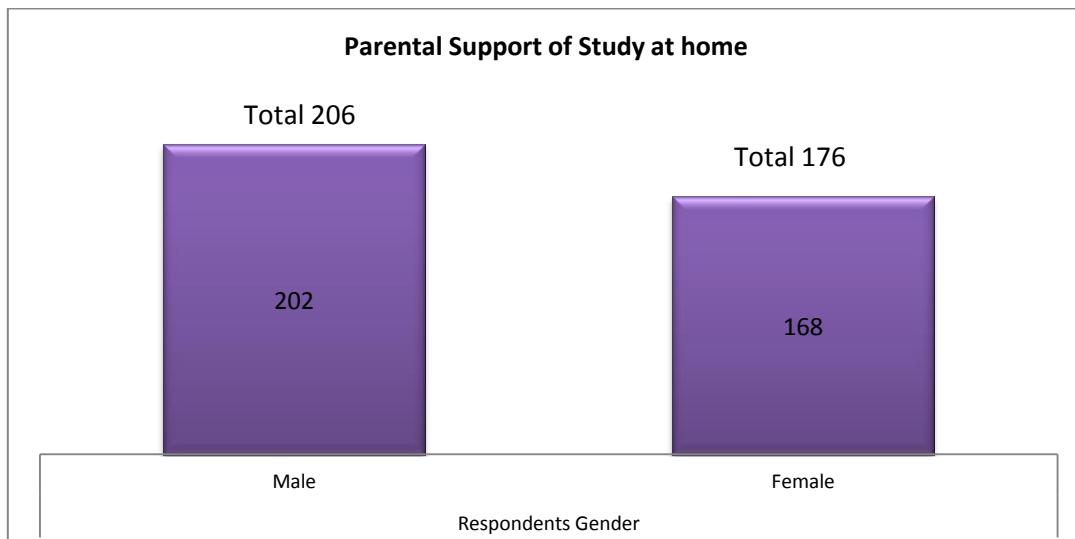
Table 6: Parenting rating of income

Parental rating on income versus Respondents gender				Respondents gender		Total
			Male	Female		
Parental rating on income	Rich	Freq	13	15	28	
		% of Total	3.4	4.0	7.4	
	Ave	Freq	137	118	255	
		% of Total	36.0	31.0	67	
	Poor	Freq	55	43	98	
		% of Total	14.5	11.3	25.8	
Total	Count	205	176	381		
	% of Total	53.8	46.2	100		

N=382

The table above indicated that 55 male student respondents (14.5 percent) had parents who were poor, 43 Female student respondents (11.3 percent) had parents who were poor. On overall, 255 respondents (67 percent) had parents whom they considered to be having average income, 28 respondents 7.4 percent had parents/guardians who were rich. There were only 3.4 percent male student respondents and 4 percent of female student respondents respectively who considered their parents as rich.

Parental support of study at home:



Parental Level of Education:

Table 7: Parental level of education

Level of Education of Parents		Male		Female	
		Frequency	%	frequency	%
Level of Education	None	7	1.8	9	2.4
	Pre Primary	6	1.6	3	0.8
	Primary	84	22.0	108	28.3
	Did not complete High School	55	14.4	80	20.9
	Adult Education	18	4.7	14	3.7
	Completed High School	133	34.8	120	31.4
	University	79	20.7	48	12.6
	Total	382	100	382	100

N=382

The data above indicated that 7 (1.8 percent) and 9 (2.4 percent) of respondent male parents/guardians and female respondent parents respectively had no education at all; 6 (1.6 percent) and 3 (0.8 percent) of male parents/guardians and female parents/guardians respectively had reached nursery level; 84 (22 percent) and 108 (28.3 percent) of respondent male parents/guardians and respondent female parents/guardians respectively had a minimum of primary certificate; 55 (14.4 percent) and 80 (20.9 percent) of respondent male parents and respondent female parents respectively had moved to secondary school and did not graduate. Cumulatively, 152 (39.8 percent) and 200 (52.4 percent) of respondent male parents and respondent female parents respectively did not hold an ordinary level certificate. The percentages clearly show that female guardians had a high dropout rate than their male counterparts.

This findings to the above research question indicated that majority of students were in homes where income was average or below average (84.6 percent). Since African families are big and have to cater for the extended family, the statistics point out that paying fee could be a challenge.

Further, Sessional Paper no. 1 (2005) attributes the decline in secondary enrolment on high cost (the average annual unit cost in secondary education being 5 times higher than primary education), with an estimated 30% dropout rate due to high cost. Where there is lack of fees, it is agreeable female and male learners are affected.

Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison (2006) advances that the children of dropouts are more likely to drop out of school and live in poverty if their parents are dropouts. Parents' education contributes positively to both school enrollment and retention of children in all levels of learning and particularly in the secondary school segment of education.

A higher education attainment improves ability to pay fees. Indeed, level of education of parents/guardians have effect on their lifetime earning hence improves the ability to provide education for children. This is the case in Rongo Sub-county where 39.8 percent and 52.4 percent of male student respondent and female student respondents' parent/guardians respectively did not hold ordinary level (high school) certificate. However, statistical inference shows that gender dropout rate is not different among male and female respondents because both parents have a role in affecting their offspring's education and thus their level of education affect dropout of both male and female learners.

Also, this finding showed that parents had started seeing the importance of studying at home. However, issues are raised on studies at home because educationists are questioning if such studies add value to students educational achievement (Ongeri, 2009).

Government-interventions:

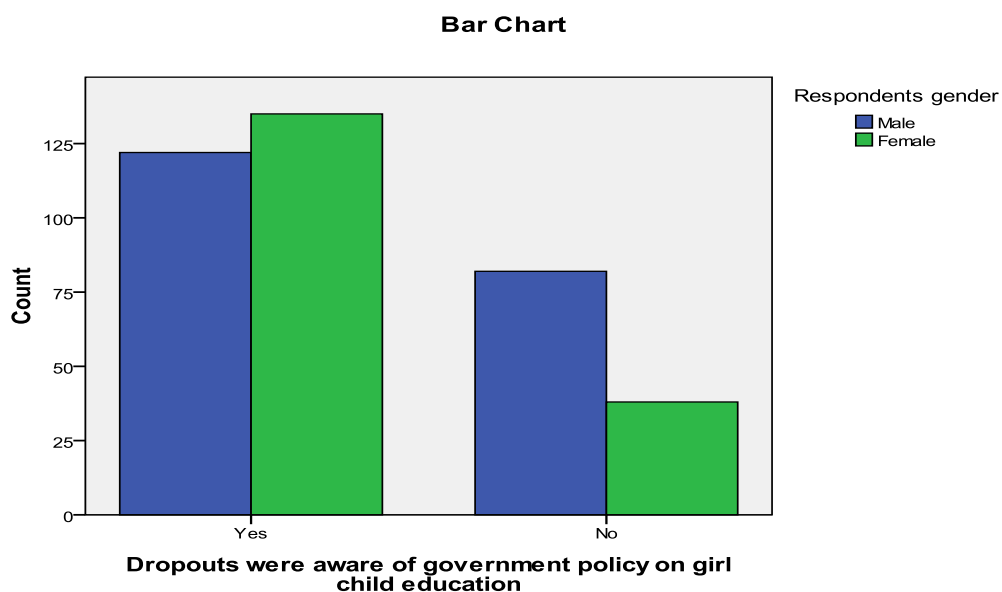
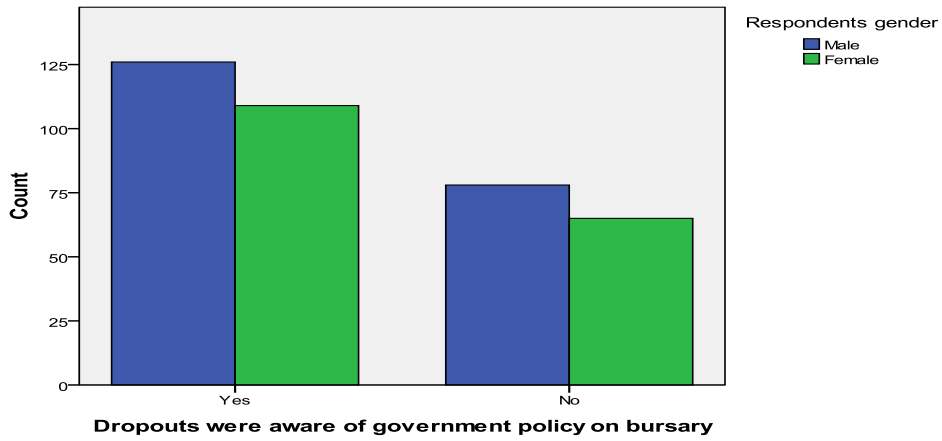
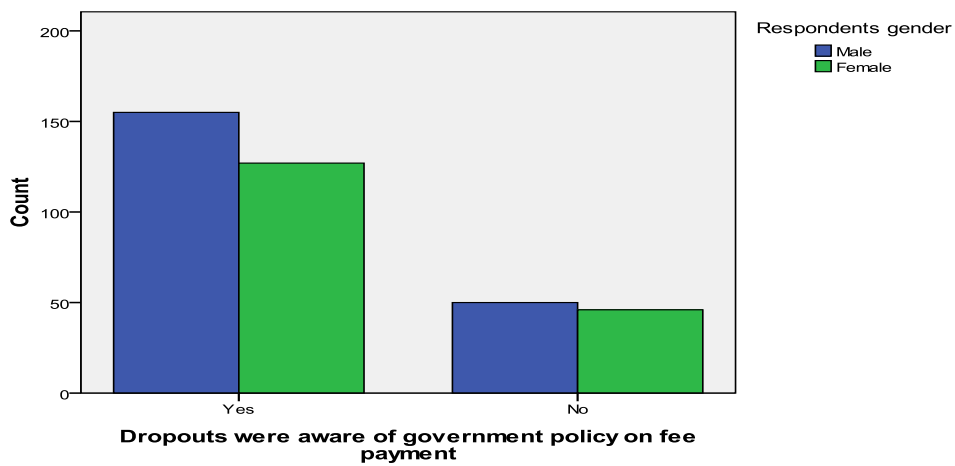


Figure 1: Student's awareness of government's policy on education

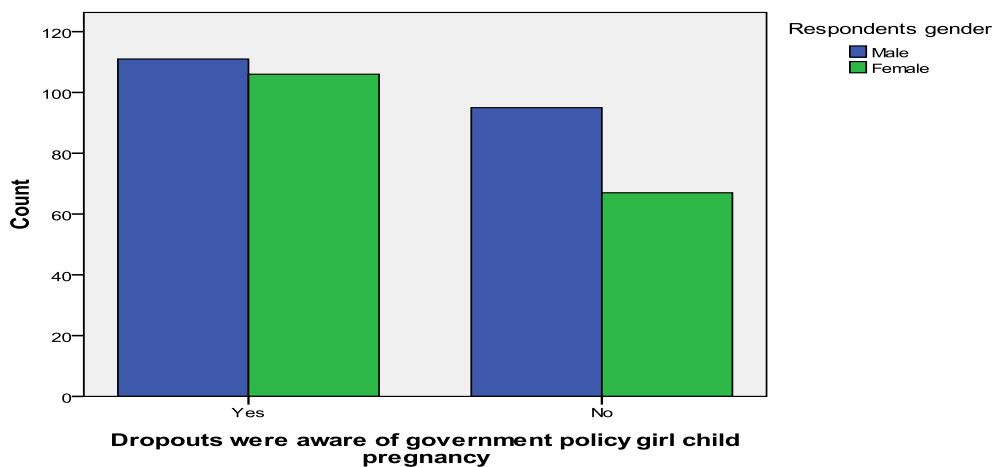
Bar Chart

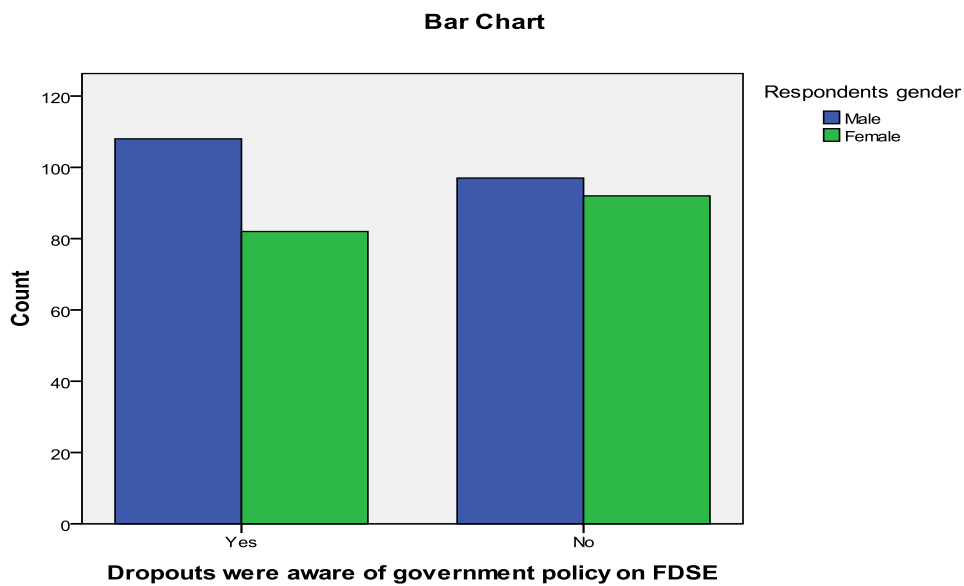
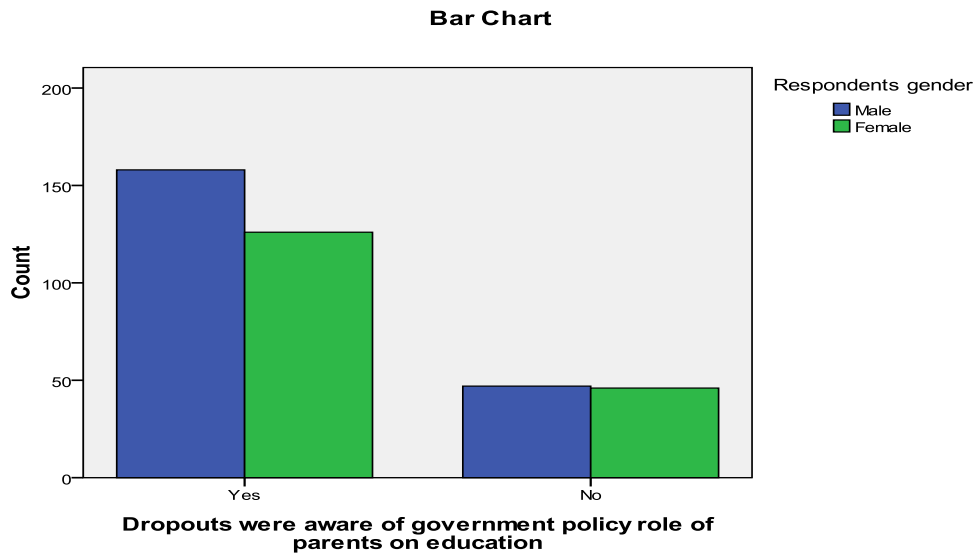


Bar Chart



Bar Chart





The study indicated that 51.1 percent of the respondents were not aware of government policy on Free Day Secondary Education followed by Policy on student pregnancy (43 percent), policy on Bursaries (37.6 percent), and policy on girl child education (32.2 percent) in that order. 25.7 percent of respondent student’s were not aware of government policy on payment of fees and 25.1 percent on role of parents in education. 73.8 percent and 74.9 percent were aware of government’s policy on role of parents on payment of fees and government policy on payment of fees respectively.

The Kenya Constitution (2010) does postulate that the government shall take measures to ensure that the youth access education and training with a vision to provide quality education and training for development. (Sessional Paper No. 1, 2005). The data above shows gaps on how government policy is articulated to the learners to be able to access and use them accordingly.

Therefore, the government needs to articulate through its agents the content of various policies consumed by students for their academic pursuits. In Rongo Sub-County, a number of respondents did not know the implication of policies that would govern their study programmes.

Research Objective 1: Determine the Learner-based factors that influenced dropout by gender at home in Rongo Sub-county.

From the finding the respondents indicated that there were several factors that made them leave secondary school education. The teachers and principals' reaction pointed to the same issues at a correlation level of +0.71.

Among the notable issues were as follows in chronological order (bar chart below).

The issues showed that 14.1 percent and 18.8 percent of boys and girls respectively left school to get employment. Lack of fees affected more girls (96.6 percent) than boys at 88.8 percent. Marriage affected girls at 50 percent. Respondents indicated that boys and girls were affected by class repetition at 72.3 percent and 76.1 percent respectively. If girls were not eating well, they were more likely to stay out at 44.9 percent and boys at 38.8 percent. Employment affected boys at 26.8 percent and girls at 43.2 percent. On siblings influence, girls were likely to stay out of school if 72.7 percent and boys at 65.9 percent.

Lack of Fees: Lack of fees was a major impediment to high school access. Boys and girls indicated that 88.8% and 96.6% of them were likely to be affected by lack of fees respectively. The girls were more affected because of societal templates.

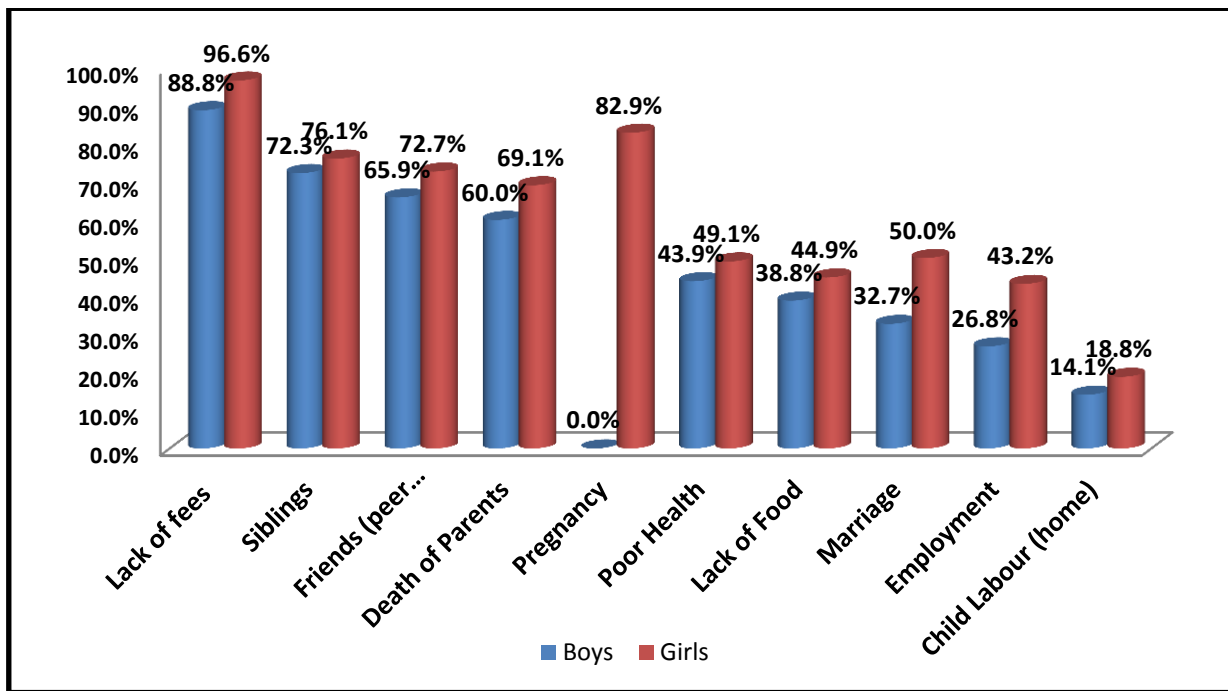


Figure 2: Bar chart on issues causing dropout

Siblings: Sibling factor was critical where 72.3% of boys were affected and 72.7% of girls showed that siblings were a player in their decision to leave school. If older siblings dropped out of school, then the younger siblings were likely to dropout.

Friends: The data indicated that 65.9% and 72.7% of boys and girls respectively dropped out of the system because of influence from friends. The kind of friends our sons and daughters ascribe to should be interrogated.

Death of Parents: The respondents indicated that dropout arising from death of parents was 60.0% for boys and 69.1% for girls.

Pregnancy: Boys don't get pregnant therefore pregnancy only affected girls at 82.9%. For girls pregnancy is only second to lack of fees at 96.6%.

Poor Health: Poor health was a Home-Based Factor that affected learners 43.9% and 49.1% for boys and girls respectively.

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Lack of Food: Lack of food (hunger) was also a player in dropout by gender in Rongo sub-county. Hunger forced 38.8% of boys and 44.9% of girls to opt out of secondary education.

Marriage: More girls than boys dropped out of secondary school to join marriage institution than boys at 50.0% and 32.7%.

Employment: Only 26.6% of boys and 43.2% of girls dropped out to seek employment. This percentage indicated that more girls seek employment than boys before they clear secondary education.

Child labour: Among the issues that were noted as home based factors that caused dropout from secondary schools was child labour. 14.1% boys left school because of child labour at home and 18.8% were attributed to girls.

Research Objective 2: Assess the Parental-based factors influence dropout by gender at home in Rongo Sub-county.

Income: Among the 205 (53.8%) male respondent and 176 (46.2%) girl respondents, thirteen (3.4%) male students and fifteen (4.0%) female learners considered their parents rich. This indicated a cumulative percentage of 7.4%. 137 (36.0%) of male students and 118 (31.0%) of girl learners considered their parents to be having average income. Further, only 55 (14.5%) boys and 43 (11.3%) girls were living in poor households. This was indicator that cumulatively over 90% learners had Parents whose earnings were either average or below.

Support of study at home: The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that parents supported them to do studies at home during the holidays. 202 male respondent out of 206 respondents (98%) and 168 female respondents out of 176 respondents (95.5%) agreed that parents wanted them studying at home.

Level of Education: 7 (1.8%) of male respondents and 9 (2.4%) of female learners were illiterate. 6 (1.6%) of male and 3 (0.8%) of female respondents had parents had not gone past pre-primary education. 84 (22.0%) of the male learners and 108 (28.3%) attended primary but did not move to secondary school. 55 (14.4%) of parents of male students and 80 (20.9%) parents of girl learners went to high school but did not graduate. 18 (4.7%) of male respondent parents and 14 (3.7%) of female respondent parents had parents who pursued adult literacy classes. Also, 133(34.8%) of male respondent parents and 120(31.4%) of female respondent parents had completed high school. 79(20.7%) of male respondent parents and 48(12.6%) of female respondent parents had moved to higher institutions of learning.

Research objective 3: Assess the extent of government's policy's influence on home-based factors on dropout by gender in secondary education.

Policy on payment of fees: 282 (73.8%) of learners had knowledge on policy on fee payment. This indicated that still a good number did not.

Policy on girl child education: 257 (67.8%) of learners had knowledge on girl child education. This indicated that still several girls could dropout because did they did not know what policies could enable them stay in school

Policy on girl child pregnancy: 217 (57%) of learners had knowledge on girl child pregnancy. This indicated that 43% girls could dropout because they did not know what policies could enable them stay in school

Policy on role of parents in education: 283 (74.9%) of learners had knowledge on role of parents in education.

Policy on FDSE: 190 (49.7%) of learners had knowledge on policy on FDSE. This indicated that 50.3% girls could dropout because they did not know what policies could enable them stay in school where access of FDSE funds was concerned.

4. DISCUSSION

The study was aimed at establishing home-based factors influence on dropout rate by gender in public secondary schools education. The study showed that several home-based factors impacted on dropout by gender in public secondary education. The home-based factors that influenced dropout rate by gender were Parental rating of income, Parental level of education, Parental school engagement strategies and student's sibling factor. The study realized that the home-based

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factors affected both male and female learners and influenced dropout rates. Awareness of government policies was also considered since such policies affect fabric of society.

This findings to the above research question indicated that majority of students were in homes where income was average or below average (84.6 percent). Since African families are big and have to cater for the extended family, the statistics point out that paying fee could be a challenge. Further, Sessional Paper no. 1 (2005) attributes the decline in secondary enrolment on high cost (the average annual unit cost in secondary education being 5 times higher than primary education), with an estimated 30% dropout rate due to high cost. Where there is lack of fees, it is agreeable female and male learners are affected.

Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison (2006) advances that the children of dropouts are more likely to drop out of school and live in poverty if their parents are dropouts. Parents' education contributes positively to both school enrollment and retention of children in all levels of learning and particularly in the secondary school segment of education. A higher education attainment improves ability to pay fees. Indeed, level of education of parents/guardians have effect on their lifetime earning hence improves the ability to provide education for children. This is the case in Rongo Sub-county where 39.8 percent and 52.4 percent of male student respondent and female student respondents' parent/guardians respectively did not hold ordinary level (high school) certificate. However, statistical inference shows that gender dropout rate is not different among male and female respondents because both parents have a role in affecting their offspring's education and thus their level of education affect dropout of both male and female learners.

The study found out that sibling factor has two roles in education. Muzi (2000) supports that if siblings are doing well in school they can act as role models, but, on the other hand, if they are performing poorly, they may negatively influence fellow siblings to drop out of the education system. This is supported by the statistics in the Rongo Sub-County Statistics Office where boys dropout to join motorcycle transport business thus inspiring fellow siblings to do so. In Rongo Sub-County, sibling influence is playing an active role in increasing dropout by gender.

The finding supports the findings of African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) which estimates that in Kenya there were 1,647,000 economically active children used as child laborers where 782,000 are girls and 865,000 are boys.

Also, this finding showed that parents had started seeing the importance of studying at home. However, issues are raised on studies at home because educationists are questioning if such studies add value to students educational achievement (Ongeri, 2009).

Further, the above finding is in agreement with finding of Henderson and Berla (2005) that advanced that only 23 percent of parents were aware of student's activities in school and 68 percent of them (the 23 percent) only got involved when they became aware that their child was on the verge of leaving school. The respondents believe that communication between schools and parents need to be strengthened. This in agreement with Harmacek (2002) who strongly argues that students perceived that schools did too little and parents did far much less.

This is the same scenario in the United Kingdom where 13 percent of students withdraw from school (HMI Report 2006). Also, this finding supports the Kenya National Cohort of 2003-2006 dropout tabulation which fixed dropout at 14 percent. High school dropouts on average are likely to earn less per year than high school graduates and are often unable to support themselves (Doland 2001). Therefore, there is need to counter the dropout problem particularly where female respondents dropout at 17.5 percent and masculine dropout at 14.7 percent as indicated by the data. Cumulatively, the dropout is 32.3 percent which is in agreement with the data in Rongo Sub-County statistics office.

On awareness of government policy, the research indicated that government's policy is not fully articulated to student learners on gender basis and hence a new approach should be taken to enable our well-crafted policies work for us in countering dropout by gender in secondary school education

Since the Kenya Constitution (2010) postulates that the government shall take measures to ensure that the youth access education and training with a vision to provide quality education and training for development. (Sessional Paper No. 1, 2005); the government needs to articulate through its agents the content of various policies consumed by students for their

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academic pursuits. In Rongo Sub-County, a number of respondents did not know the implication of policies that would govern their study programmes.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of the study the following conclusions were made:

The data gathered from respondents who participated in the study revealed that there were several home-based factors effects on dropout rate by gender in public secondary school education in Rongo Sub-County. Parents rating of income influenced their ability to pay school levies. Also, parents level of education influenced students to graduate when their parents were well educated or dropout because their parents were dropouts. Siblings who did well in school were a positive influence but the poor performing older siblings impacted negatively on their younger siblings. In addition, parents who consistently supported school programs influenced performance positively and enhanced graduation rates.

On learners' awareness of government's policy on education, the study concluded that critical policies that could have enabled students to stay on in secondary school education and graduate were not well articulated. Policy's on fee payment and girl child education were well known to students. Furthermore, other policies which were relevant were not well articulated to learners and could not be exploited by students to access secondary school education and graduate. The school administrators did not articulate the policies to enable students to internalize them for their own good.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should generate policies that can be used to give support to its populace to be empowered economically so that income does not become an impediment in secondary school education access. Parents should ensure that their children attend school irrespective of gender. Further, learners should be informed of their rights so that they do not dropout because of lack of knowledge of relevant policies. Since dropout (wastage) is multi-faceted, there is need for concerted effort between all education stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, society and government) to counter dropout rate in secondary school education system.

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