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Relationship between Household Mobility and Primary School Enrolment in Samburu County, Kenya

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Abstract
This study sought to investigate the relationship between household mobility and primary school enrolment in Samburu County, Kenya. Three agro-ecological zones and regions (Highland-Rural, Lowland-Rural, and Urban) impact differently on access to basic formal education among the nomadic pastoral Samburu. To facilitate the data collection, Samburu District was stratified into three clusters – Highland-Rural, Lowland-Rural and Urban. Multi-stage and random sampling were used to select from each cluster, one division, one location, one sub-location and then 200 household heads from all the villages in the sub-location. That is moving from the division down to the villages using random sampling. Data were collected and analysed using Excel and SPSS computer packages and further presented using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that mobility is a critical factor, especially in the Lowland-Rural region, affecting access to basic formal education. For this reason, schools are needed in such areas. The above can be accomplished by having mobile and /or more boarding schools.

Key terms: Boarding schools, enrolment, formal education, household mobility, primary school.

INTRODUCTION

Kinyanjui (1981) stated that education is one of the basic human necessities in addition to shelter, food, clothing, and health services. It is also a basic human right as well as a cornerstone of economic and social development. More importantly, education improves the productive capacity of societies and their political, economic and scientific institutions. More so, it helps reduce poverty by mitigating its effects on population, health and nutrition (Lockheed et al., 1991).

In a report by Kenya Pastoralists Forum (1995), nearly two-thirds of the children in pastoral areas- Turkana, Maasai, Samburu, Somali, and Oromo-speaking areas do not know the inside of a classroom. In that case, the uneducated are progressively less able to enhance and shape their economic and social development. This process constrains regional and even international competitiveness (of a country) and confines a large proportion of the world's population to poverty (Lockheed et al., 1991). Therefore, this study will investigate the relationship between household mobility and primary school enrolment in Samburu County, Kenya.

Because of the arguments advanced earlier, the acquisition of formal education is a must in today's world. It is important and necessary in its own right and is also a basic human right. There could be no sustainable development of the nomadic pastoral people without increased and sustained education of their children. Kenya's government's policy is to make basic education universal, and some efforts have been made to provide access to it to the disadvantaged (those living in ASAL and in slum areas). However, despite Kenya's policies, plans, and efforts to make education universal, its access to nomadic pastoralists and slum dwellers is still limited. Kenya, therefore, faces a problem in the elimination of illiteracy and the realisation of education for all.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vogel et al. (2017) examined the effects of mobility on the school performance of children aged 7-12 years in the U.S.A. The variables were the number and frequency of movements the family makes. The outcomes of the multiple logistic regression analysis showed that movements involving longer distances caused dissatisfaction with schooling among children. Nawose (2016) attributed low access to basic formal education among nomadic pastoral peoples to distance, diseases, and lack of food and clothing. This, by implication, means that children may not attend school due to fear of wild animals as they pass through bushes and areas far from the settlements. Similarly, where basic human needs, such as medical care, food, and clothing, are not adequately met, children may not enrol in school, and those enrolled may drop out.

METHODOLOGY

The study got its data from secondary and primary avenues. The secondary sources were literature materials from local libraries and records/reports in education offices and schools in the Samburu District. Primary sources were based on interviews and direct observations. An interview schedule with 9 main areas was used. Proportional Stratified sampling was used to divide the area into three clusters, namely;- Highland-Rural, Lowland-Rural and Urban. The study adopted the Survey Research method. This method of data collection was used because it is the most appropriate for generating data and describing a population too large to observe directly (Creswell & Cresswell, 2022). For this reason, structured interviews and questionnaires were applied. Direct observations were used to assess the nature of the regions studied and capture relevant 'off-the-cuff' remarks of the respondents. Among the issues that were observed were the climate, water sources, activities done by the people, terrain, and settlements, among other things. In this study, the analysis of the data was done using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to aid data analysis, organisation, interpretation and presentation. According to Yellapu (2018), descriptive statistics involves methods concerned with arranging, summarising and conveying the characteristics of a range of numbers. Descriptive statistics used in these items include percentages, proportions and frequency distributions. On the other hand, inferential statistics involves making generalisations, predictions and conclusions about the characteristics of parameters based on the characteristics of the samples (Guetterman, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mobility of the Household

Of the 200 respondents who represented the households, 50.5 per cent have changed residence over the last eight years, while 49.5 per cent have not. According to the table below, very few of the Urban (5.2%) and Highland-Rural (12%) have changed residence. However, 100 per cent of the Lowland-Rural households have changed residence. This, among other factors, could probably explain the low enrolment in the Lowland-rural region. The highland-rural respondents were relatively settled.

Table 1: Change of Residence

	Highland Rural		Lowland Rural		Urban		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Yes	6	12	92	100	3	5.2	101	50.5
No	44	88	-	-	55	94.8	99	49.5
Total	50	100	92	100	58	100	200	100

Further, the livestock movement was ascertained as per the following table.

Table 2: Livestock Movements

Resp -onse	Highland Rural		Urban		Lowland Rural		Total	
	f(n=17)	%	f(n=17)	%	f(n=71)	%	f	%
Yes	45	95.7	10	58.8	71	100	126	93.3
No	2	4.3	7	41.2	0	0	6	6.7
Total	47	100	17	100	71	100	135	100

In total, 93.3 per cent of the respondents who had livestock cited livestock movements out of their homes for long periods to seek pastures and water, but 6.7 per cent said that their livestock did not move. Of the Lowland-Rural respondents, 100 per cent and 95.7 per cent of the Highland-Rural affirmed livestock movements. A significant number of urban respondents (41.2% (n=7) asserted that their livestock did not move out, and so did 4.3 per cent of the Highland Rural. The reason given by them as to why there were no livestock movements was that they had very few, and it was uneconomical for them to move out. Further, it was also asked whether livestock movements affect the schooling of children. On enrolment, all (100%) of the Lowland-Rural respondents said that movements of livestock negatively affect the enrolment of children in school- since parents need the children to help look after the animals. With the Highland-Rural, 86 per cent said it does not affect, while 14 per cent said it affects. The majority (92%) of the Urban respondents said it does not, while 8 per cent said it did.

When interrogated further as to why livestock movements did not affect the enrolment of children in school, the Urban respondents said that livestock movements were not important, while the Highland Rural respondents cited the use of hired labour in order for the children to go to school. Regarding children already in school, the respondents were further asked whether the livestock movements affected the children already in school. The results are shown in the following table.

Table 3: Does livestock movement affect children in school?

	Highland Rural		Lowland Rural		Urban		Total	
	f n=47	%	f n=71	%	f n=17	%	f n=135	%
Yes	9	19.2	36	50.7	1	5.9	46	34.1
No	38	80.8	35	49.3	16	94.1	89	65.9

Total	47	100	71	100	17	100	135	100

Generally, 65.9 per cent of the respondents said that livestock movements did not affect children already in school, while 34.1 per cent said that it did affect them. There are no major variations in this respect except that one could see the trend between regions. That is, most Urban respondents said 'No' (94.1%), followed by Highland-Rural (80.8%) and then Lowland-Rural (74.6%). The Lowland-Rural respondents said that once parents decide to send children to school, they ensure that the child gets somewhere to stay near the school (with relatives or friends). It is only when the child misses somewhere to stay that his or her schooling is affected.

Some of the studies listed in the literature review support the above-mentioned scenario. Gorham (1978) argued that one of the socio-economic constraints to pastoralists' accessibility to formal education was their mobility in search of water and pasture for their livestock. This is a correct view in Samburu district if taken generally. However, our study reveals that the problem of mobility is particular to the Lowland-Rural region, as cited by 100 per cent of its respondents. It did not affect school enrolment for Urban and Highland-Rural. What can explain this variation is that the Urban and highland rural people are more settled than those of the Lowland Rural. More so, the Lowland-Rural country is arid and semi-arid, forcing the inhabitants to continually be on the move after pasture and water.

Table 4 below reveals the association between mobility and access to basic formal education in Samburu District. As alluded to earlier, mobility is the independent variable, and access to basic formal education is the dependent variable.

Table 4: Association between Mobility and Access to Basic Formal Education

	MOBILITY		
ACCESS	High Mobility	Low Mobility	Row Totals
Accessible	11(10.9)	69(69.7)	80(40.0)
Not Accessible	90(89.1)	30(30.3)	120(60.0)
Column Total	101(100.0)	99(100.0)	200(100.0)

- Contingency coefficient 0.52
- Significance 0.0000
- X2 = 72.03720
- df =1

Overall, only 40 per cent of the sample reported that basic formal education is accessible, while the majority (60%) acknowledged that basic formal education is not accessible. The latter results can probably be explained by the influence of Structural Adjustment Programmes, which have had a very negative impact on social spending and have led to the introduction of cost-sharing even in education.

Table 4 also shows that out of 101 respondents who reported high mobility, only 10.9 per cent revealed that basic formal education is accessible. To put it differently, 89.1 per cent of those who alluded that they have high mobility also reported that basic formal education is not accessible. This can probably be explained by their nomadic way of life. To be sure, households move from one region to another in pursuit of pastures for their livestock. In so doing, they move with their children who are in school and hence increase the distance to which the child has to commute to reach the nearest school.

Indeed, the association between mobility and access to basic formal education was found to be very significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. Hence, we concluded that the mobility of the household significantly determines access to basic formal education in Samburu District. The contingency coefficient value (0.52), however, suggests that the relationship is weak. In fact, the small value of the contingency coefficient (0.52) indicates that other

factors exist that can strongly explain the accessibility of basic formal education in Samburu District.

Discussion

The study also revealed that the relationship between mobility and access to basic formal education was very significant at the study's confidence level of 95 per cent. To be sure, the association was significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. The net regression coefficient showed that access to basic formal education is –0.54 units for each unit increase in mobility. In addition, the correlation analysis showed a strong inverse relationship of coefficient -.515 between access to basic education and mobility. This suggested that mobility reduces access to basic formal education among the Samburu. This can probably be explained by the fact that households that move from one area to another tend to increase the distance from the nearest school – hence making this facility inaccessible. This is particularly the case in Samburu, where households mainly from the Lowland-Rural that are purely nomadic migrate from one area to another, looking for water and pasture for their animals.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study found that mobility is a critical factor, especially in the Lowland-Rural region, affecting access to basic formal education. For this reason, schools are needed in such areas. The above can be accomplished by having mobile and/or more boarding schools.

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