

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY LOCATION AND ACCESS OF CHILDREN TO PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SAMBURU COUNTY, KENYA

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### Cite this article in APA

Lanyasunya, A. R. (2022). The relationship between family location and access of children to primary school in Samburu County, Kenya. *Journal of history and cultural studies*, 1(1), 25-31. <https://doi.org/10.51317/jhcs.v1i1.457>



A publication of Editon Consortium Publishing (online)

### Article history

Received: 10.06.2022

Accepted: 12.08.2022

Published: 15.09.2022

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### Abstract

This study sought to determine the relationship between family location and children's access to primary school 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 recommends that for the government and/or non-governmental organisations undertaking interviews and programmes to improve the well-being of nomadic pastoralists (like the provision of schools), there is a need to take the various zones into consideration. More significantly, this study found that agro-ecological zones have a significant influence on access to basic formal education in Samburu District.

**Key terms:** Access of children to primary school, agro-ecological zones, basic formal education, family, location.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The introduction of formal education among the nomadic pastoralists has been a slow process. As mentioned earlier, the nomadic pastoralists were pushed into semi-arid so-called native reserves, and interaction with other communities was restricted. They had marginal contact with the missionaries and the government (Kinyanjui, 1977), and therefore had nothing to respond to, as they remained closed in the reserves (de Hoop et al., 2019). Most of the nomadic districts were referred to as "closed districts". They remained outside the sphere of influence of the settlers, missionaries and the colonial government. In other words, the colonialists did not see the need to spread education to these districts. The settlers did not aspire to their land because these people occupied low-potential land. According to Kinyanjui (1977), the missionaries, too, did not see it necessary to occupy their attention on them since these people were widely scattered. The Local Authorities were later established in all these districts to oversee education and other issues in their respective areas. They were, nonetheless, the poorest in the colony. Their contribution to the development of education was not only limited to lack of resources but also sometimes due to their negative attitude and lack of interest in Western education.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Otiende et al. (1992) argue that the development of cultural nationalist movements in the early 1930s (such as the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association) and Local Government Authorities for African Reserves (known as Local Native Councils –L.N.Cs) in 1925 helped speed up the development of education. The Africans seized this opportunity to tax themselves to finance primary education. This, however, intensified educational inaccessibility as relatively rich and informed districts could raise more money to finance educational development. Districts such as Baringo, Samburu, Narok, Kajiado, West Pokot, and those in the North Eastern province had real problems getting their educational programmes off the ground due to limited resources. By 1945 and 1951, there were 2133 and 2860 elementary and primary schools, respectively, in the country in the context of the 4-4-4 system of education.

The policy of delegating responsibility for financing and promoting basic education to local governments lasted until the 1950s when African District Councils (ADCs) were founded to replace L.N.Cs. In 1960, they were named County Councils. Through the District Educational Boards (DEBs), which were established in 1934 but were ineffective until 1951, the ADCs assumed financial control and responsibility for primary education (Nkinyangi, 1980).

Further, in the 1960s, many Local Authorities suffered financial crises, and their revenue sources could not provide the resources that were needed for the expansion and maintenance of primary education. Accordingly, this prompted the Central Government to take over the running of schools from the County Councils in 1969, after which the need also arose to transform the aims, structure and content of education in post-independence. At independence, in 1963, the primary school enrollment as a percentage of the school-age population for Africans was 34.7 per cent, with 6058 primary schools. A commission was appointed in 1963, chaired by Prof. Drundred, to survey Kenya's existing educational resources and advise the government on the creation and execution of national educational policies. The commission made one hundred and sixty policy recommendations.

# Journal of History and Cultural Studies

There was a tremendous increase in school enrolment after independence. The primary school enrolment quadrupled between 1963 and 1983. The Presidential Working Party appointed in 1981 recommended major changes in the structure of the country's educational system. The number of subjects and years increased. Cost sharing was introduced, as well as technical subjects. This saw the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1984 to replace the 7-4-2-3 system. In 1987, primary school enrolment was 5,031,340 pupils in 13,849 schools Otiende et al. (1992).

In their quest to provide education to the Africans, regional disparities occurred. Indeed, regional differentiation ensued as a result of uneven capitalist development in Kenya between 1900 and 1952. The core region was the large-scale farming estates and urban commercial sector. This comprised the towns of Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru Eldoret and other European-settled areas. More so, schooling opportunities were provided for the Europeans and Asians by the colonial state (Kinyanjui, 1977).

By then, the second region was predominantly a pastoral economy comprising Kiambu, Muranga, Nyeri, Bungoma, Kakamega, Kisumu, Kisii, and Machakos. Africans in these areas provided labour for the Europeans, and through missionary activities, they also gained influence on education.

The third region is comprised mostly of pastoral areas, which include Kajiado, Narok, Samburu, Baringo, West Pokot, Turkana, and Elgeyo-Marakwet. These areas were refused participation in the colonial labour market. In this case, they could not compete with European ranchers and livestock breeders who had taken a great part of their rangeland (Kinyangi, 1980). The colonial state also maintained this situation by demarcating reserves for the pastoral people, putting their areas under permanent quarantine regulation and strictly restricting the movement of the livestock and people in these districts. Africans from the other districts, such as Nakuru, Kisii, and Kakamega, were not even allowed to enter into these districts unless they had authorisation and a pass from the colonial administration.

## 3.0 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. Further, Multi-stage sampling was used with random sampling to select from each cluster, one division, one location, one sub-location, and all households from all the villages in the sub-location.

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 & Creswell, 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).

## 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Distribution of Respondents into Regions

Two hundred Respondents were interviewed – 58 from Urban, 50 from Highland Rural, and 92 from Lowland Rural. One hundred thirty of the respondents were female, while 70 were male. In view of the fact that the data was collected in the three mentioned regions in order to show variations, presentation is consequently done on a regional basis.

### Presentation of Agro-Ecological/Region Variable

One of the main objectives of this research was to find out the existence and extent of differential access to basic formal education in the Samburu District. The findings, therefore, show that the GER for Urban is 62.6 per cent and 59 per cent for Highland-Rural, while for the Lowland-Rural, it is 14 per cent. These figures show some variations. Urban is leading, followed by Highland-Rural closely, while the Lowland-Rural figure is unproportionately too low. The findings, therefore, already affirm the existence of regional differences in access to basic formal education in Samburu District. Further statistical analysis will be done in the next chapter.

### Agro-ecological Zones/regions Impact Access to Basic Formal Education Differently in Samburu District

The analysis of the relationship between the various agro-ecological zones and access to basic formal education is captured aptly in Table 1 below:-

**Table 1: Association between Regions and Access to Basic Formal Education**

ACCESS	REGIONS			Row Total
	Highland-Rural	Lowland-Rural	Urban	
Accessible	30(60.0)	13(14.1)	37(63.8)	80(40.0)
Not Accessible	20(40.0)	79(85.9)	21(36.2)	120(60.0)
Column Total	50(100.0)	92(100.0)	58(100.0)	200(100.0)

- Contingency coefficient 0.44
- $X^2 = 47.66835$
- $df = 2$
- Significance 0.0000

# Journal of History and Cultural Studies

Table 1 shows that only 14.1 per cent of those who came from the Lowland-Rural revealed that basic formal education is accessible. This leaves an overwhelming majority (85.9%) of respondents across all the regions who reported that basic formal education is not accessible. The latter is explained by the fact that this region is predominantly engaged in livestock keeping. Given the nomadic way of life of moving from one area to another looking for pasture, the family finds itself very far away from the schools where the children attend.

Of the 50 respondents from the Highland-Rural, only 40 per cent acknowledged that basic formal education is not accessible. Simply put, over half (60%) of the interviewees in this region alleged that basic formal education is accessible. This can probably be explained by the fact that this region is agricultural, and hence, people are relatively settled on a permanent and semi-permanent basis. As a result, the available schools are always in close proximity to children – this explains the findings on accessibility of basic formal education.

As expected, only 36.2 per cent of the respondents in the urban area reported that basic formal education is not accessible. This can probably be due to the high cost of urban schools or competition for places in the few schools available. More importantly, however, is the fact that over half of the respondents in the urban area revealed that basic formal education is accessible. This outcome is not surprising and can be explained by the level of awareness people living in urban areas have of the importance of formal education. The findings can also be explained by the fact that we have more schools in urban areas than in rural areas due to what scholars call Urban bias. As a consequence, households live in close proximity to the facilities, hence boosting access.

The relationship between the region and access to basic formal education was found to be significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. Meaning that the region influences accessibility to basic formal education. However, the association between region and access to basic formal education is weak, as indicated by the value of the contingency coefficient (0.44). This implies that the region is significantly related to access to basic formal education, but the relationship is weak. The latter suggests that other factors exist that can explain accessibility to basic formal education in Samburu District.

## **Agro-ecological Zones Impact Access to Basic Formal Education in Samburu District**

As a result, a linear regression model was employed to test this hypothesis. The results of the analysis are aptly reflected in Table 2.

**Table 2: Linear Regression Analysis of Agro-ecological Zones and Access to Basic Formal Education**

Independent variable	Multiple R	R squared (R <sup>2</sup> )	B	Beta
Region	0.45191	0.20423	0.260713	0.451913
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant 1.034253</li> <li>• Value of F=50.81406</li> <li>• Significance F=0.0000</li> <li>• N =200</li> </ul>				

From Table 2, it is evident that the region explains 20 per cent of the variation in accessibility to basic formal education in Samburu. As indicated by the R squared (R<sup>2</sup>). The Beta weight shows that region is a good predictor of accessibility to basic formal education. Indeed, Table 5.10 reveals that an overwhelming majority of the respondents, 85.9 per cent, were from the Lowland-Rural area and had reputed that basic formal education was not accessible. This implies that the households from the Lowland-Rural region are disadvantaged in terms of access to basic formal education. This is partially the case because of their mode of production. More specifically, these people are predominantly pastoralists and hence keep on moving with their livestock from one area to another. As a consequence, this movement puts their children at a disadvantage in accessing formal education, as discussed elsewhere in this dissertation.

The above observation is strongly supported by the fact that of the 50 respondents interviewed in the Highland-Rural area, where people are relatively settled, over half (60%) revealed that basic formal education is accessible. The latter finding is adequately grounded by those respondents in the urban area. Of the 58 urban households included in this study, 63.8 per cent revealed that basic formal education is accessible; thus, we can argue that regional differences have an impact on access to basic formal education. Simply put a household in the urban region, and Highland-Rural zone has a higher probability of accessing basic formal education than a household in the Lowland-Rural zone.

In sum, the 'F' test for the Linear Regression equation suggests that the model is significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis of no relationship between region and access to basic formal education in favour of the alternative hypothesis for the study. The equation capturing access to basic education is as: -  $A = 1.03 + 0.26 (X1)$ .

### **Agro-Ecological Zones and Access to Basic Formal Education**

The study was conducted inter alia in three ecological zones. More precisely, these zones include Highland-Rural, Lowland-Rural and Urban. Since the study hypothesised that agro-ecological zones impact access to basic formal education, it was decided to test this theory in the light of the data collected from Samburu 200 households.

The results of the analysis showed that region explained 20 per cent of the variation in access to basic formal education, as indicated by the value of R square (R<sup>2</sup>) in the linear regression model developed for this hypothesis. Indeed, the Beta weight revealed that region is a good predictor of access to basic formal education in Samburu District.

Likewise, the chi-square analysis (X<sup>2</sup>) depicted that the association between regions and access to basic formal education was significant at the study's 95 per cent confidence level. To be specific, the relationship was significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. Meaning that region significantly influences access to basic formal education in the district. In addition, correlation analysis revealed (with a coefficient of .4519) that there is a relatively strong association between access to basic education and agro-ecological zones. This implies that the provision of basic formal education facilities by the government and /or non-governmental organisations in Samburu should be taken into consideration in agro-ecological zones. As the latter have a significant influence on access to basic formal education.

In conclusion, the 'F' test for the linear regression equation suggested that the model was significant at a 100 per cent confidence level, which is far more acceptable at the study's 95 per cent confidence level. For that reason, the null hypothesis of no relationship between region and access to basic formal education was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis for the study.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Drawing from the results of the study on the ecological zones, we strongly recommend that for the government and/or Non-governmental Organizations undertaking interviews and programmes to improve the well-being of nomadic pastoralists (like the provision of schools), there is a need for putting the various zones into consideration. More significantly, this study found that agro-ecological zones have a significant influence on access to basic formal education in Samburu District.

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