

Examining the influence of guardian level of education and enrolment of children in primary school in Samburu County, Kenya

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the influence of guardian level of education and enrolment of children in primary school in Samburu County, Kenya. 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 specific tools used were frequencies and cross-tabulations. The study found out that guardian education plays a very important role in enhancing access to basic formal education. Indeed, the relationship between guardian education and access to basic formal education was very significant at the study's 95 per cent confidence level. In this regard, the children who did not get a chance to enrol in the formal school system can be reached through the Out of School Programme. Similarly, Adult literacy classes can boost the literacy levels of the household heads.

Key terms: Adult literacy, enrolment of children, guardian level of education, household heads, primary school.

INTRODUCTION

Education is conceptualised to mean "the individual and social development processes which cause a person's intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical abilities to mature, thus enabling him to fully participate in community affairs" (Otiende, 1992). As alluded to above, basic education entails teaching the human person basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). More precisely, primary education has two main purposes: First, to produce a literate and numerate population that can deal with challenges encountered at home, and second, to work and serve as a foundation upon which further education can be built. 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. Gakuru (1993) notes that one of the intractable aspects of the problem, inter-alia, is the "low enrolment and extremely high dropout rates among the pastoral peoples". Therefore, this study sought to examine the influence of the guardian level of education and enrolment of children in primary school in Samburu County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this connection, Tito (2013) studied education for Maasai girls with respect to their socio-economic background. He observed that the availability of schools is not the major index measuring education opportunities for Maasai girls but the ability to use the existing facilities. This, in turn, depends on the socio-economic variables of the girls. For the girls in school,

69 per cent had mothers who went to school, and 70.45 per cent were from Protestant churches. Other variables explaining access were found to be education level, occupation of other older family members, and ownership of land by the family. On an educational level, the guardians and other family members who have formal education tend to enrol more of their children in school than those without formal education.

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 & 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).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Data on the level of education shows that a large number (82.5%) of respondents had no formal education, with the highest number being in the Lowland Rural (94.5%) followed by Urban (77.6%) and 66.0 per cent in the Highland Rural. This scenario

sheds some light on the regional disparities in educational attainment, even among adults. Indeed, the latter finding reflects the education level of most of the Arid and Semi-Arid Kenyan population. The distribution of the respondents by their level of education is aptly captured in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Respondents Level of Education

Education level	Highland Rural		Lowland Rural		Urban		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
No education	33	66.0	87	94.5	45	77.6	165	82.5
Nursery	-	-	2	2.2	-	-	2	1
Primary	12	24.0	3	3.3	8	13.8	23	11.5
Secondary	3	6.0	-	-	3	5.2	6	3
College	2	4.0	-	-	2	3.4	4	2
Total	50	100	92	100	58	100	200	100

Level of Education of Guardian

To ascertain whether level of education influences access to basic formal education, respondents were

analysed within their own respective categories to ascertain the percentage of those with children in school.

Table 2: Education level of Guardians Versus Children in School

	No Education		Nursery		Primary		Secondary		College	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
With children in school	75	45.5	2	100	16	69.6	3	50	4	100
With no children in school	90	54.5	-	-	7	30.4	3	50	-	-
Total	165	100	2	100	23	100	6	100	4	100

According to the above table, the majority (54.5%) of those without formal education had no children in school. On the other hand, 100 per cent with nursery, 69.6 per cent with primary, 50 per cent with secondary and 100 per cent with college level of education had children in school.

In addition, of the 100 respondents with no children in school, 90% (n=90) had no formal education. This agrees with Wallace (1973), who found out that the education of parents influences their children's access to school. The study he carried out in Rural Buganda showed that 90% of pupils in secondary school, 86 per cent in primary 5-7 and 66-7% in primary 1-4 were of parents who had some form of basic formal education.

Yet 77.8 per cent of children who were not in school were of parents who had no basic formal education. These descriptive summaries, therefore, show that those respondents with formal education enrolled more of their children in school than those without formal education. In conclusion, those 50 per cent with secondary education and had no children in school were found to have children younger than school-going age.

Association between Guardian Education and Access to Basic Formal Education

Data in Table 3 depicts the relationship between the guardian's educational background and access to basic formal education in Samburu District. In other words,

an attempt is made to show whether guardian education has an influence on the children's access to basic formal education, especially among the nomadic pastoral Samburu. The association between these two variables is aptly captured in Table 3 below:-

Table 3: Association between Guardian Education and Access to Basic Formal Education

ACCESS	GUARDIAN EDUCATION		Row Total
	Formal Education	No Formal Education	
Accessible	29 (82.9)	51(30.9)	80(40.0)
Not Accessible	6(17.1)	114(69.1)	120(60.0)
Column Total	35(100.0)	165(100.0)	200(100.0)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contingency coefficient 0.83 $\chi^2 = 34.34959$ df=1 Significance 0.0000 			

The overwhelming majority of the respondents (82.5%) reported that they had no formal education, while only 17.5 per cent of the total number of respondents revealed that they had some formal education.

In addition, out of 16.5 per cent of respondents who had no formal education, only 30.9 per cent acknowledged that basic formal education is accessible. This leaves a relatively higher percentage (69.1%) of those who reported that they had no formal education, revealing that basic formal education is not accessible. This finding suggests that lack of formal education on the part of the guardian reduces access to basic formal education. It can thus be argued that guardian education is critical in enhancing access to basic formal education. Consequently, it can probably be inferred that the majority of those who had no formal education considered going to school to be less vital – compounding their view that these facilities are not accessible.

The relationship between guardian education and access to basic formal education was statistically significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. Hence, we conclude that Guardian education has a significant influence on the accessibility of basic formal education in a household. The policy implication here is that improving the level of education of the household

heads will go a long way to boost the accessibility of basic formal education among the Samburu.

However, the association between the two variables was found to be weak as measured by the value of the contingency coefficient (0.38). This suggests that Guardian education is significantly related but weakly associated. The implication here is that other factors exist that are strongly associated with accessibility to basic formal education.

Discussion

It was also found out that guardian education plays a very important role in enhancing access to basic formal education. Indeed, the relationship between guardian education and access to basic formal education was very significant at the study's 95 per cent confidence level. More so, the partial regression coefficient depicted that an increase in guardian formal education increases access to basic formal education by 0.21 units. The implication here is that an increase in the guardian level of education also increases access to basic formal education. This can probably be explained by the fact that education increases the individual's capacity to access the relevance of formal education and even new techniques. Accordingly, it can be argued that those with formal education are more likely to send their children to school – hence boosting access to basic

formal education through the enrolment of their children.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Guardian education plays a very important role in enhancing access to basic formal education. Other approaches that can help improve the literacy levels of the nomadic pastoralists. More importantly, this study

has found that guardian education significantly determines access to basic formal education. In this regard, the children who did not get a chance to enrol in the formal school system can be reached through the Out of School Programme. Similarly, Adult literacy classes can boost the literacy levels of the household heads.

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