Age and gender as determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums, Ruaraka Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish age and gender as determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums, Nairobi, Kenya. The study aimed to establish age and gender as determinants of school dropout and intervention measures. A descriptive research design was used. The target population was 1560. Purposive sampling was utilized to sample 9 teachers, 30 parents, 9 headteachers, and 120 pupils. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules, and focus group discussions (FGD). The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Chi-square (X^2) was used to analyze inferential statistics, where the correlation coefficient significance was 0.05 presented in tables. Based on the study findings, gender greatly influenced school dropout. The study concluded that boys frequently dropped out of school. The study recommended that parents be sensitized on the importance of early childhood education so that they can be involved in their children's education.

Keywords: Pupils age, gender, school dropout, Grade 3 pupils, Korogocho slums

Introduction

It appears that early-grade dropout rates are a worldwide crisis that governments have not been able to tackle. Despite the widespread promotion of basic education, a large percentage of pupils who enroll in such programs do not progress beyond their first year (Global Monitoring Report, 2005). About 262 million children and teenagers, primarily in low-income countries, were out of school as of 2018, according to research by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2019). Arnold (2005) found that in South Asia, Nepal, and Pakistan, 50% of first graders either repeat a grade or stop going to school altogether, while in Columbia and Brazil, 19% and 6% of enrolled children drop out before finishing grade 1. UNESCO (2019) reports that 56 million (45%), of the world's uneducated children live in Sub-Saharan Africa. More than 160 million children, including 97 million boys and 63 million girls between the ages of 5 and 11, have dropped out of school, according to research by the International Labour Organization (Smith 2021) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2021). The research also found that boys were 34 million more likely to drop out of school than girls. Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is focused on ensuring that all girls and boys receive and complete a primary education that is free, egalitarian, and of high quality (United Nations, 2015). However, this objective will be difficult to accomplish due to the high rates of early-grade dropouts. Therefore, it is essential to determine the means of accomplishing this objective and the level of success thus far.

Dropout in Kenyan schools is prevalent. Making matters worse, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the issue with school closures, economic crisis, and a shift to online learning making it more difficult for disadvantaged children to access education (UNESCO, 2020). Due to the many challenges that pupils in Korogocho face, most of them were not able to enroll in online classes thus they were silently excluded from education. The rate of enrolment in primary schools improved with a net enrolment of 87% in 2019 (World Bank, 2019). Research by the

Ministry of Education (MoE 2019) revealed an increased rate of school dropouts from 2.0% in 1999 to 6.5% in 2004. From 2005 to 2007, the trend slowed from 4.9% to 3.5%. In 2008, 3.7% of female students dropped out, whereas only 3.2% of male students dropped out. Boys dropped out more in lower primary classes while girls dropped out at a higher rate in upper primary classes (Orodho 2002). Many underprivileged pupils from Korogocho are unable to complete schooling due to many unresolved issues. Therefore, there is a need to examine whether age and gender are determinants of school dropout in early grades, which the current study sought to establish.

In Korogocho, the Grade 3 dropout rate was 40%, with several contributing factors including parental neglect, poverty, and limited educational opportunities stagnating education (African Population, Health and Resource Center (APHRC 2020). Moreover, dropout rates among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums are high, with approximately 50% of pupils dropping out before completing primary school (Njuki et al., 2019:12). A study by Kimani et al., (2020:8) stressed that poverty, lack of parental participation, and low quality of education are major factors leading to dropout rates among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho. Girls in the age range of five to eight typically stop attending school to take care of their siblings, especially after the death of a parent (Antoinette, 2018). Data on women and men in Kenya (2022) revealed that children found working in 2019 were aged 5 – 17 years. The present study focuses on Grade 3 pupils and the data on women and men in Kenya depict there is a challenge of school dropout during early grades. While there is a substantial body of literature on the topic of school dropout in Kenya, it is notably lacking in coverage of the early childhood and lower primary grades. The purpose of this research was to determine if third-grade pupils' dropout rates vary by gender and age and to find intervention strategies to reduce this trend.

Problem Statement

Globally and regionally, school dropout is early years is significant and more prevalent in Kenyan schools. Studies done established that boys drop out more in lower primary classes while girls drop out massively in upper classes (Orodho, 2002). It is also not surprising that the marginalized informal settlements of Korogocho and Kibera account for 48% of Grade 3 learners aged 5-8 years who are out of school (Daraja, 2016). With a population of over 200,000, Korogocho is one of Nairobi, Kenya's largest informal settlements (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2018), characterized by low quality of life indicators such as housing shortages, lack of access to potable water and lack of sanitary facilities, high levels of crime, violence (Mwenda, 2019) and poor quality of education. Korogocho is adjacent to the Dandora dumpsite which sprawls over 30 acres. This dumpsite is home to some children and those who live there do not have access to education. Children in Korogocho face significant challenges in accessing education and their parents or guardians lack employment opportunities (Ondari-Okemwa et al., 2020). Harsh economic times and rising prices have left parents without choice thus children are forced to drop out of school and work. It is important to establish which age and sex drop out frequently to examine the intervention measures to mitigate the situation.

In Korogocho, with the rising poverty driven by the pandemic, both boys and girls aged 5–17 years are compelled to abandon their studies in favour of employment (Smith, 2021). In the majority of cases, girls aged 5-8

years often quit school to take care of younger siblings especially when they lose their mothers (Antoinette, 2018). Boys who dropped out of school accounted for 97 million and girls 63 million, whereas boys outnumbered girls by 34 million. A large number of research have been conducted on the topic of youth school dropout in Kenya, but very few have examined the earliest years of schooling. Therefore, the present study sought to investigate whether age and gender were factors that lead to school dropouts and establish the intervention measures to mitigate school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums, Ruaraka sub-county, Nairobi County Kenya.

Objective

The objectives of the study were:

(i)   To investigate pupils age and gender as determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils

(ii)   To establish the intervention measures influencing school dropout among Grade 3 pupils

Research Questions

(i)   How are age and gender determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils?

(ii)   What are the intervention measures that were used to mitigate school dropout among Grade 3 pupils?

Literature Review

Age and gender as determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 Pupils

As a potent means of rescuing socially marginalized children and adults from poverty, education is a primary statutory human right to which all children must have access (Africa Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect, 2018). Early childhood is a key to sustainable development and an important drive in helping attain sustainability and success in life (UNESCO 2019). Foundational classes give pupils knowledge and real-world skills that can be used to improve lives. As a result, it is crucial to understand how this goal can be achieved and what progress has already been made in this regard.

Globally, countries have come up with general and specific policies to enhance education rights. For instance, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 11), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Constitution of Kenya (Article 53 (1) b), state that education is a legal right, free and compulsory with equal opportunities and guarantees education for all. Many governments worldwide have heavily invested in education to make these policies a reality. For instance, in Kenya, there are policies like 100 % transition to secondary and Junior secondary school, free primary and secondary education, education for all, and gender equity. However, these policies are not attainable since pupils drop out of school at a tender age. In harsh economic times, lack of employment, and rising standards, families have turned to child labour as a coping mechanism denying their children education. The age and gender that frequently drop out to join the labour force have not been established thus the current paper sought to establish the age and gender as determinants of school dropout among grade 3.

In Kenya, gender differences are particularly noticeable in arid and low-income areas, particularly in urban slums (Langat 2016). About 160 million children, 63 million girls, and 97 million boys aged 5 to 11 were out of school and boys outnumbered girls by 34 million depicting gender inequality in education (Smith, 2021 & UNDP

2021). According to the study, boys are the most affected by the dropout. Hence it is important to establish at which age and gender the school dropouts are prevalent so that age-appropriate intervention measures can be established to mitigate the challenge.

While children from 5 years old should be in school learning essential life skills, children between the ages of five and seven are often entrusted with the care of younger siblings, the watchful care of livestock, the fending off of wild animals from their gardens, or crop fields, and the gathering of water and firewood (Wanjiru, 2008). Nevertheless, children who are older than their peers and who are enrolled in school later are more likely to drop out (Smith & Johnson 2020, Smith 2021). This is because these students may be "silently excluded" (Lewin, 2019) and feel pressured to support their families financially (Education Policy Data Center, 2009). For instance, Vavrus (2022) and Tuwor and Antoinette (2018) point to the burden of many household responsibilities as a reason why girls drop out of school before boys. Occasionally, they seek employment as domestic servants to support their siblings' education costs (Wanjiru, 2008). However, boys are accustomed to doing these jobs because girls typically opt out of school to provide care for ailing parents or siblings, especially after the death of the mother. In Korogocho, high absenteeism and excessive grade reputation were reported. About 14 out of 45 pupils drop out of school for familial reasons, such as caring for ailing family members, younger siblings, domestic duties, or even death within the family, and orphans are left to fend for themselves (African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC 2017). This study emphasised the reasons for school dropout but the age and gender of the pupils who dropped out were not established which the current study sought to establish.

Boys are more likely to drop out of school in areas where they have more options to make money. Because of the pressure to provide for their families, 44% of boys drop out of school (Sattar & Chowdhury, 2018), a statistic that is far less common for girls. This indicates gender difference in that, boys only help in their homes if there are no girls, which hinders girls' education due to chronic absenteeism (Wanjiru 2008). In addition, the pandemic has contributed to an increase in early-grade dropouts since it has led to a projected 142 million more children living in income-poor homes (UNICEF, 2021). These children often end up in child labour because their parents have no other option. These pupils lose out on education since they have to leave school at a young age to help support their families. However, early childhood school dropout has been largely ignored by the international community's education agenda. The factors that cause students in this demographic to stop attending school must be identified and addressed. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine whether or not third-grade dropout rates vary by gender and age in the Korogocho slums of Nairobi County, Kenya.

Intervention strategy for school dropouts

Mitigation measures against school dropouts help pupils to remain in school. The dropout rate can be reduced through various interventions, such as school-wide reform initiatives designed to increase student engagement, individualized support for pupils with a likelihood of dropping out, guidance through shifts, and the use of evaluation monitoring tools (Dynarski et al., 2018). Although longitudinal monitoring techniques are important, there is presently inadequate empirical backing for their development. Professionals therefore urge governments,

educational institutions, and school districts to establish and uphold local data platforms to help in identifying possible dropouts (Dynarski et al., 2018; Kennelly & Monrad, 2017). However, these measures might be empirically difficult to achieve in a Kenyan context because the TPR is 1:80, thus proving it is difficult to handle every child in class. For this reason, it would be easier to use guidance and counseling to reach each child in class. The research was set out to establish the best intervention measures to mitigate school dropout among Grade 3.

In middle and high school settings, initiatives that use professional advocates to assist specific children have moderate empirical backing (Dynarski et al., 2018). Mature advocates are required to offer extensive assistance to at-risk adolescents beyond just mentoring them. This support includes aligning resources for dealing with behavioural and academic difficulties, connecting with parents and educational administrators, meeting regularly with the pupil, and lobbying on their behalf. These interventions are focused on the high school but the study's focus is on lower primary school.

Another strategy to decrease the number of dropouts is to use effective ways to improve students' academic performance and engage them (Dynarski et al., 2018). Tutoring, homework help initiatives, or more rigorous academic assistance during school hours, after school, on evenings and weekends, or over the summer break are all examples of remedies that could be put in place to improve students' performance in school. Cognitive growth, skill learning, and involvement among pupils could all see an uptick with the help of these tactics (Dynarski et al., 2018). These programs may require extra money for the child to benefit from them. However, many underprivileged families may not afford to place a child under these programs due to the economic crisis in the household. Therefore, the current study sought to investigate the best program where all underprivileged pupils may fit.

Dynarski et al. (2018) suggest helping students work on their social skills by providing them with tools for effective communication, problem-solving, emotion regulation, goal-setting, and dispute resolution. Dropout rates are higher among students who exhibit disruptive behaviors in the classroom (Kiambati, 2020). Other studies indicate dropout rates higher for pupils with behavioural problems which frequently affect older pupils (Hermande, 2018). It is important to establish whether pupils in lower grades are also affected by behavioural problems to enhance age-appropriate measures. While many studies have examined the phenomenon of school abandonment in Kenya, little attention has been paid to the early grades or lower grade levels. Therefore, the current study sought to address intervention measures for school dropouts in early grades.

To decrease dropout rates and improve student success, schools ought to establish diagnostic monitoring procedures to find students in danger of dropping out. Those students should then receive aimed academic, interpersonal, and transitional assistance. Learning, setting reasonable and high standards for every student, and tracking their development at every stage should be the center of school-wide initiatives (UNESCO, 2020). To better monitor and detect possible attrition, it is critical to establish and sustain local data infrastructure. Nevertheless, accurately predicting which students will drop out is not feasible. Therefore, the current study sought

to establish age-appropriate intervention strategies to mitigate school dropout even before identification is accomplished.

Significance

This study aims to investigate age and gender as determinants of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils and to seek solutions. The results of this study will help the Kenyan government allocate funds more effectively by taking into account the needs analysis of the students. The results of this study can also help Grade 3 teachers advise and counsel students who are thinking about dropping out of school, and they can improve retention rates by providing realistic alternatives. Furthermore, the study can provide parents with intentional and actionable intervention strategies that will help them advise their children and increase school retention. Pupils will also gain from this research because it tackles many of the issues that they encounter in the classroom that lead to pupil dropout. The researcher acknowledges that this work does not claim to have solved all of the challenges, but rather that it should serve as a springboard for future research. Moreover, students stand to gain from this research because it discusses real-world issues that pupils confront, which in turn increases the likelihood that they will drop out of school. The study also suggests potential solutions, such as expanding access to free healthcare, free education, and free food.

Theoretical Framework

The concepts of structural strain and Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs (1943) were utilized in the investigation. The desire for physiological necessities like food, housing, and safety is at the bottom of the hierarchy of human wants, according to needs theory. After these fundamental needs, those for social belongingness, self-esteem, and affection and belonging. According to the theory, Johnson (2019) states that these needs must be satisfied before people can concentrate on higher-level wants. Those who lack these needs may be more prone to become disengaged from their studies and finally drop out of school. Structural strain theory proposes that individuals may experience strain or stress due to structural constraints or limitations in society, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of opportunities. Learners who are experiencing strains may engage in deviant behaviors such as quitting school as a coping mechanism.

This reference served as the theoretical underpinning and framework for the investigation of school drop out. The researcher was able to clarify how some fundamental wants, such as hunger, lack of safety, and social isolation, may contribute to academic disengagement and ultimately result in school dropout by referring to Maslow's needs theory. The researcher was able to expound on what happens when a child is structurally strained or has limitations. Poverty and inequality may force pupils to drop out of school and engage in deviant behaviors such as dropping out of school as a coping mechanism for the strain. The two theories were appropriate because they showed the interrelation of theories and the existing phenomenon in the study locale.

Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework illustrates the interdependence of the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables include Grade 3 pupils' demographic factors influence and school dropout was the dependent variable in this study. The two were intervened by some measures as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables   **Dependant Variable**

Demographic Factors
- Age
- Gender

School Dropout
Grade 3 pupils Absenteeism
(More than three 3 weeks)

Intervention Measures
- Guidance and Counselling
- Income-generating projects for the community
- Alternative forms of education provision
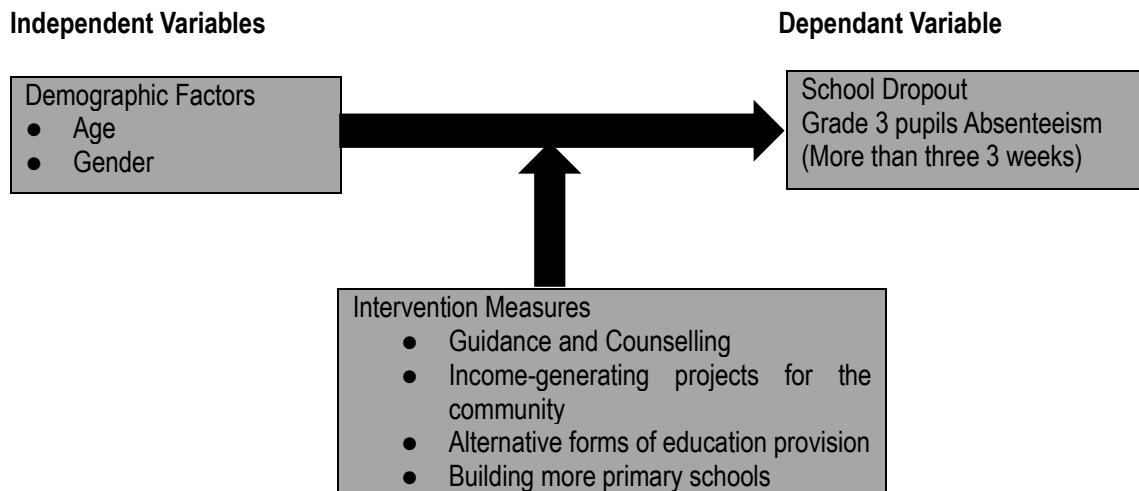- Building more primary schools

Figure 1, demographic factors were operationalized into gender and age. The dependent variable was captured by grade 3 pupils' absenteeism in at least three weeks. Intervention factors were as shown in the figure. The framework portrays how grade 3 pupil dropout could have been influenced by age and gender.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methods. A descriptive research design was used to test attitudes and opinions about events, individuals, or procedures (Gay, 2013). The design was concerned with describing, recording, and reporting the existing conditions of school dropouts in their natural environment (Kothari, 2018) Korogocho slums. In order to gain a better understanding of the phenomena of school dropout among grade 3 pupils, this qualitative study utilized a document analysis guide, a focus group discussion, and an interview schedule to gather data. The quantitative method sought to understand the correlation between the pupil's age, gender, and school dropout among Grade 3 pupils through answering research questions. The targeted population was 1560 consisting of 30 schools, 1200 pupils, 30 teachers, 30 headteachers, and 300 parents. Pupils were selected because they were the main respondents, teachers gave information about pupils who were on the verge of quitting school, parents offered more information about pupil's school dropouts and headteachers had documents related to pupils who were in danger of abandoning school like registers. A researcher chooses units to examine from a population with the aid of purposive sampling. (Creswell, 2014). According to Kothari (2003), a sample size of between 10% to 30% is appropriate for descriptive studies since it is not practical to research an entire population (Saunders et al., 2012). Therefore, Purposive sampling

was used to sample 9 schools, 9 headteachers, 9 class teachers, and 120 pupils 30 parents were purposively selected.

Table 1

Sample and Sampling Techniques Matrix Table

	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Schools	30	9	Purposive
Headteachers	30	9	Purposive
Teachers	30	9	Purposive
Pupils	1200	120	Purposive
Parents	300	30	Simple Random

Qualitative data were analyzed using themes where data were coded and closely examined to identify broad subject matter and patterns. On the contrary, quantitative data were summed up using descriptive statistics mainly frequencies, and percentages. Inferential data were analyzed using the Chi-Square (X^2) test, correlation coefficient at a 0.05 significance level. The qualitative data obtained was used to complement and expound on the meaning of quantitative data from the questionnaires. The study was approved by Kenyatta University Postgraduate and National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI). Consent was acquired from parents of pupils who were at risk of dropping out of school, from the headteachers and teachers. The confidentiality and identity of the participants were ensured. The rights of the participants were not violated by investigating something different from the objectives of this study.

Findings and Discussion

Age and gender as determinants of school dropout

The first objective was to investigate pupils' age as a determinant of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums Ruaraka, sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya.

Age

The researcher wanted to establish whether age was a determinant of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils

 Table 2

Pupils' Age by School Dropout

	School Dropout		
Age	Drop out	Non-drop out	Total
6	25.0%	4.20%	25%
7	42.5%	6.10%	42.50%
8	32.5%	6.90%	32.50%
Total	82.80%	17.20%	100%

Results indicate that older children aged 7 – 8 years were the majority (42.5% and 32.5% respectively) and at high risk of dropping out of school which concurs with reviewed studies by Hermandez, Smith & Johnson (2021) which state that children who are over age and enroll in school late are at risk of dropping out. The studies also reviewed that dropout rates are higher for pupils with behavioral problems which frequently affects older pupils. However,

the current study findings revealed that age was not a determinant of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums, Ruaraka sub-county, Nairobi, Kenya.

Gender

Learners' gender was analyzed to learner dropout and results were displayed in Table 3

Table 3

Pupil's Gender by School Dropout

	School Dropout		
Gender	**Drop out**	**Non-drop out**	**Total**
Female	34.70%	10.80%	45.60%
Male	48.10%	6.40%	54.40%
Total	82.80%	17.20%	100%

The majority of the dropouts were boys who were about 48.1 % and girls were about 34.7%. The percentage of girls who were in school was 10.8% as compared to boys which stood at 6.4%. The results revealed that boys in Grade 3 in Korogocho slums were at higher risk of dropping out of school as opposed to girls. The current study differed from a study conducted by Vavrus, (2022), and Tuwor and Antoinette, (2018) which state that girls have multiple household duties which are some of the reasons behind them leaving the educational system before boys. However, the study concurred with a study conducted by Sattar and Chowdhury (2018) and UNESCO (2019), which states that boys drop out more frequently where there are income-earning opportunities. They absent themselves where there are income earnings for their families. An inferential statistical test was carried out using chi-square as well as correlation co-efficiency and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Age and Gender as Determinants of School Dropout

	Df	P-value	Chi-square	Correlation
Age	2	0.317	2.297	0.022
Gender	1	0.003	9.088	-0.231

The results revealed that gender had a positive significant relationship (r=-0.231) influence on Grade 3 dropouts at P-value <0.05 and age had a negative insignificant relationship (r=0.022) at P-value >0.05 on Grade 3 dropouts. This is in agreement with a study by UNESCO (2019) which established that gender influences school dropout. They argue that boys drop out more frequently where there are income-earning opportunities and absent themselves from school. Similarly, Orodho (2002) found out that boys dropped out more in grade 3 as opposed to girls who dropped out massively in upper classes. On the contrary, Wanjiru (2007) in her study established that girls drop out of school early to work as house help so that they can raise money for their brothers' education though the researcher did not mention the grade where girls dropped out massively. The key informant interviews (KII) supported the results regarding pupils' demographic variables of age and gender. The majority 7 (70%) of the parents agreed that boys dropped out more in lower primary as opposed to girls who dropped out frequently in upper primary.

Parents: *Boys drop out more frequently than girls because they are strong. They can carry a 20-liter jerrican of water with ease with low pay that's why people love them.*

Parents: *Boys are forced to drop out of school due to peer pressure. Most of the boys are enticed by those dropouts who are already in the dumpsite. They earn ksh. 50-150 per day.*

The majority of the teachers 6 (56.3%) agreed that boys drop out frequently in Grade 3. The FGD at Boma Rescue Rehabilitation Center (BRRC) had ten boys and one girl an indication that boys dropped out massively in lower primary. This clearly established that gender was a determinant of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums.

KII: *Most of the children whom we rescued from the dumpsite were boys mostly 7 years old. Boys drop out frequently when there are opportunities to earn. In the dumpsite, they collect goods that can fetch them money.*

Pupils also shared their experiences as below:

Most of our friends drop out in order to get money to feed their siblings. When my friend earns Ksh.10 or 20, they buy chapati and share it with their siblings.

Most parents encourage their children to go to the dumpsite because they get money to support their families. Others find their children are already dropouts.

When our friends drop out of school and start earning, some of them feel that the money they are earning is not enough and therefore they join gangs. They are frequently at loggerheads with police due to cases of drugs.

Despite education being free and a right for every Kenyan child, all the incentives and education policies put in place, school dropout among Grade 3, pupils is significant. Basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing come first in every human being and they must be fulfilled before the next level of wants according to Abraham Maslow. In Korogocho, Grade 3 pupils drop out of school to substitute for the family's income. Most families live on a dollar per day proving it hard for them to afford even the basic needs. Due to this strain, children are forced to join gangs to earn more to sustain their families. They carry out crimes like stealing, violence, drug peddling, and other unlawful activities.

Headteachers

Table 5

Headteachers by School Dropout

YEAR	DROPOUTS			NON-DROPOUTS			
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	CUMULATIVE T0TAL %
2008	4.1%	1.9%	**6.0%**	3.55%	5.25%	**8.8%**	**14.8%**
2009	5.0%	3.1%	**8.1%**	2.17%	4.4%	**6.57%**	**14.67%**
2010	5.15%	3.6%	**8.75%**	1.5%	2.1%	**3.6%**	**12.35%**
2011	10.2%	7.8%	**18.0%**	2.64%	6.8%	**9.44%**	**27.44%**
2012	14.0%	8.2%	**22.2%**	3.5%	5.04%	**8.54%**	**30.74%**
TOTAL	**38.45%**	**24.6%**	**63.05%**	**13.36%**	**23.55**	**36.95**	**100%**

The majority of the headteachers 7 (80%) agreed that dropout among grade 3 pupils is significant, especially with boys. However, the five-year analysis depicts the rate of school dropout among Grade 3 learners at 38.45% as compared to girls at (24.6%). When the headteachers were asked why there was a high rate of dropout, especially for boys, the majority of them responded that parents in Korogocho are not involved in their children's learning thus pupils conform to peer pressure and drop out of school. Another respondent reported that pupils who have already dropped out of school threaten those in school to drop out of school.

Boys drop out frequently to go work in the dumpsite because most of the families live on a dollar per day and therefore, most of these children lack basic needs. Parents encourage them to drop out to earn and substitute for the family income. Moreover, most families do not care about their children's well-being and therefore, they do not care about the life they are leading. Since these children are neglected by their parents, they drop out and join gangs where they are assured of getting a lot of money.

Children in Korogocho have many challenges that derail their efforts to enroll and continue being in school. Most of them sleep hungry or just get only one meal a day. Girls even though they do not drop out of school as frequently as boys, they also have challenges that accelerate their dropping out of school. Most of them are sexually abused as they fend for meals for their siblings.

The majority of the headteachers agreed that dropout is frequent in boys because they act as breadwinners in the families. They also added that being a norm in the area, children model their parents and relatives who have already dropped out of school. They added that most of the cases are due to indiscipline.

Leaving school early denies children a good life. In Korogocho, life is difficult since earning in the dumpsite is very low. Children drop out of school to earn a living of Ksh. 50 – 150 a day which denies them better earnings in the future. This is very low compared to the standard of living. Pupils in Korogocho are denied access to quality education and a strong foundation. They are exposed to violence, gangs, and drugs. Girls get raped, and the devastating life turns children into crime at a very tender age. This clearly shows that dropout in Korogocho slums is numerous, especially among boys, and girls too are suffering in silence. Most of the parents in Korogocho are not involved in their children's education thus denying them a decent life. It is important therefore to address the issue of school dropout among Grade 3 pupils by investigating the intervention measures.

(ii) Intervention Measures

The second objective was on intervention measures influencing school dropout among Grade 3 pupils.

Table 6

Intervention Measures By School Dropout

	School Dropout		
Intervention Measures	**Drop out (%)**	**Non-drop out (%)**	**Total (%)**
Guidance & Counseling	37.5	2.2	39.7
Income generating activities	15	8.6	23.6
Alternative forms of education	25.3	5.0	30.3
Building primary schools	5	1.4	6.4

Total	82.80%	17.20%	100%

Table 4 shows the total percentage of the intervention measures that were used to mitigate the school dropout among grade 3 pupils. The majority of the people reported that guidance and counseling (39.7%) then alternative forms of education (25.3%), income-generating activities to most affected families (23.6%), and finally building primary schools to offer free education (6.4%) to enable children at risk of dropping out stay in school. The results aligned with the research conducted by Kiambati (2020), which demonstrates a link between disruptive classroom behaviors and dropout rates. When guidance and counseling are done to pupils in a strategic and systematic manner, behavior chances and focus are established to enable learning to take place.

The majority of the respondents reported that guidance and counseling have improved the situation since pupils were very unruly and got into crime at a very tender age. Pupils are now focused and engaged in studies more often than before.
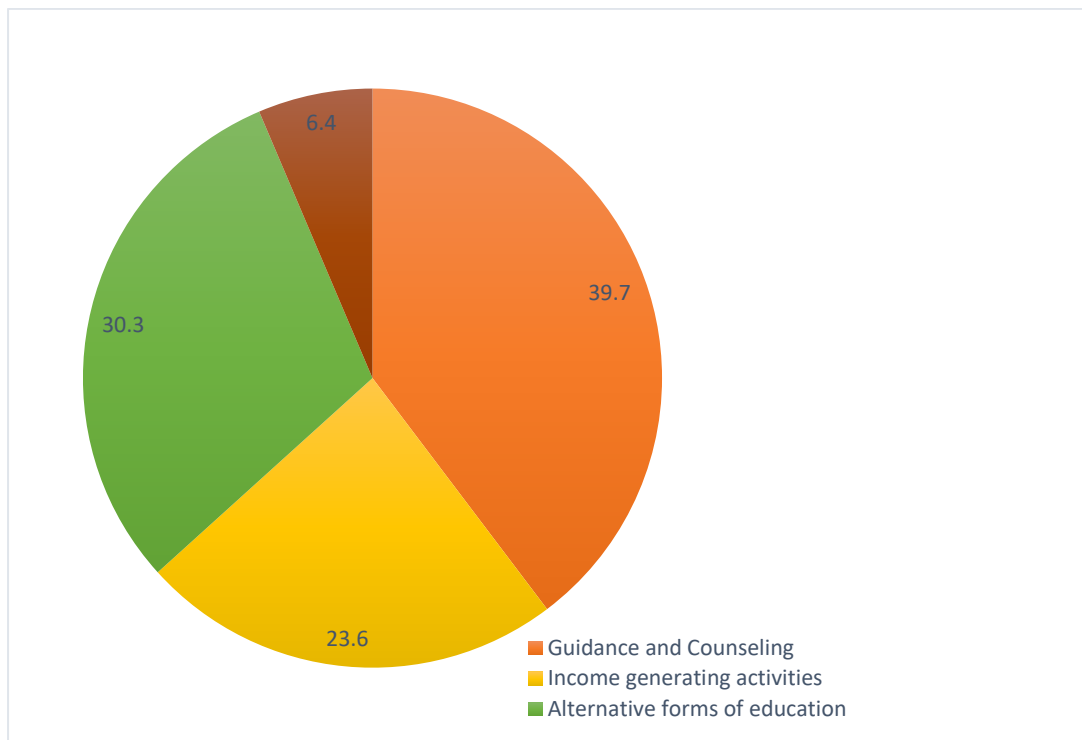
Figure 2

Intervention Measures

Figure 2 shows the percentage of the interventions used to mitigate school dropout among grade 3 pupils in Korogocho slums. Guidance and counseling are highly used in schools at (39%), followed by alternative forms of education at (30.3%), income-generating activities at (23.6%) and finally building primary schools at (6.4%). According to this report, teachers engage pupils in most sessions to guide them on what to do and to counsel them in case of an issue that needs to be addressed. The findings concur with Hermandez (2018) and Kiambati (2020) report that there is a connection between disruptive classroom behaviour and pupils dropping out of school mostly

affecting older pupils and therefore guidance and counseling are essential to mitigate disruptive classroom behaviour.

From the findings above, it is evident that schools are trying to put in place interventions to curb or mitigate school dropout among grade 3 pupils. The government and other education stakeholders need to join hands to help address challenges in order to realize the benefits of early childhood education and bring to realization all the policies put in place.

Conclusion

The study sought to investigate age and gender as determinants of school dropout among grade 3 pupils and establish intervention measures to mitigate school dropout. Results indicate that older children aged 7 – 8 years were the majority (42.5% and 32.5% respectively) and at high risk of dropping out of school. The majority of the dropouts were boys who were about 48.1% and girls were about 34.7%. The percentage of girls who were in school was 10.8% as compared to boys which stood at 6.4%. The results revealed that boys in Grade 3 in Korogocho slums were at higher risk of dropping out of school as opposed to girls. The results revealed that gender had a positive significant relationship (r=-0.231) influence on Grade 3 dropouts at P-value <0.05 and age had a negative insignificant relationship (r=0.022) at P-value >0.05 on Grade 3 dropouts.

The second objective was on intervention measures influencing school dropout among Grade 3 pupils. The study had four interventions namely guidance and counseling, income-generating activities, alternative forms of education, and building primary schools. Guidance and counseling are highly used in schools at (39%), followed by alternative forms of education at (30.3%), income-generating activities at (23.6%) and finally building primary schools at (6.4%). According to this report, teachers engage pupils in most sessions to guide them on what to do and to counsel them in case of an issue that needs to be addressed.

The implication of the study was that gender influenced school dropout as opposed to sex and that teachers engage pupils in many sessions of guidance and counseling as an intervention measure to curb or mitigate school dropout. In order to show greater interest and involvement in their children's life and academic achievement, parents must be made aware of the significance of education.

Recommendations

In light of the results, the study suggested raising parents' awareness of the value of early childhood education so they can participate in the educational journey of their children. Offer alternative forms of education like provision of academic support and enrichment tutoring, homework assistance program, more intensive academic support, offer free education, make learning relevant, government to add capitation to pupils in schools which are in slum areas like Korogocho slums. Pupils will benefit more from education.

The study's conclusions led to the presentation of the subsequent research suggestions:

i. The empirical investigation did not cover all the factors impacting school dropout among third-graders in the Korogocho informal settlement; additional research is necessary to address other elements that emerged from the study, such as the engagement of parents in their child's education and the boy child's life in crime.

ii. Since this study only examined one informal settlement, more thorough research including a sizable population in a range of informal settlements is necessary to determine whether or not the issue of inadequate student access to education due to demographic considerations extends to other informal settlements.

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