

Perception of Early Marriages on Internal Efficiency in Public Secondary Schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya

James Njuguna, Prof Chageiywo J., Dr Wamukuru D.

Abstract— Internal efficiency is a major concern to many countries desire to provide secondary education to their citizens. However internal inefficiency has been experienced in many countries which is characterised by drop-out rates, repetition and low transition rates. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of Early Marriages on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The selected indicators of internal efficiency in the study included dropouts' rates, repetition rates and transition rates. According to Basic Education Statistics Data, Ministry of Education (MOE, 2015) early marriages is a major cultural factor influencing girl's dropout rates, repetition rates and low transition rates in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The study adopted correlational research design. The theoretical framework was the production function theory which bases on the efficiency of a firm. The total target population was 177 of which 34 were principals and 133 class secretaries. The researcher sampled 155 respondents which comprised of 31 principals and 124 class secretaries in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub County. Purposive sampling was used to select the principals while stratified sampling to select the class secretaries according to the classes. Data was collected using interview schedule for principals and questionnaire for the class secretaries. Data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study found out that early marriages had a P-value of 0.01. This indicates a significant perception on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The researcher recommended that the government and other stakeholders should enhance internal efficiency by creating awareness to parents on the retrogressive cultural practices in Narok South Sub-County. The ministry of education to increase the number of boarding secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County in order to help students to continue with education without internal inefficiency.

Index Terms— Perception, Early Marriages and Internal Efficiency.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background to the Study

Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development and reduce social inequality (World

Bank, 2008). A country's educational level is one of the key indicators of its level of development (UNESCO, 2008). Narok South Sub-County has been reported as having internal inefficiency as a result of early marriages. Internal efficiency is measured in terms of dropout rates, repetition rates and transition rates. Ngware (2000) observed that internal efficiency refers to whether an education system is able to achieve its internally set objectives. According to Ombongi (2008) the notion of internal efficiency can be derived considering the relationship between inputs and outputs when pupils flow through the grade structure of an educational system. Some of the major factors behind internal inefficiency in public schools have been highlighted as education and institutional policies, school-based factors, household and community based factors (Malenya, 2008).

Education systems in many countries have been noted to have high levels of inefficiency (Verspour, 2008). This is evidenced by high wastage rate in form of repetition and dropout (Brown, 2012). Despite heavy investments in the 8:4:4 system of education, high wastage as a result of dropouts, low promotion and retention rates are still experienced. According to RoK (2012) some cultural practices exposes the girl child to early marriage in exchange of a bride price before completing secondary school which leads to dropouts.

Dropping out is the worst form of inefficiency because when learners drop out of school, resources already invested in them go to waste. Grade repetition and low transition also lowers efficiency as it lowers the school capacity to admit new students and increase opportunity costs to the individuals and their families in terms of delayed income. According to Levine, Green and Caren (2008) some students fail to continue with their education due to cultural factors such as early marriages after circumcision. They can therefore marry on their own will or be married off by their parents without their consent after undergoing the rite of passage. Investment in education is based on the assumption that schools will be efficient in their operations to yield desired outcomes. However, this may not be the case given the low internal efficiency levels occasioned by levels of dropouts, transition and retention rates in many public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. From the background of the study, it is evident that low internal efficiency exists in public secondary schools in Narok South-Sub County.

James Njuguna, Department of Educational Management of Egerton University

Prof Chageiywo Department of Educational Management of Egerton University

Dr Wamukuru Department of Educational Management of Egerton University

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Huefher (2011) organizational efficiency is the organization's ability to implement its plans using the smallest possible expenditure of resources. He defined it as the means through which an organization produces the desired results with a minimum expenditure of energy, time, money, human and material resources. The internal efficiency of an educational system concerns the optimal use of resources (inputs) in producing its outputs (UNESCO, 2012). All those who invest in education (parents, learners and society at large) legitimately ask whether they get the highest possible value from their investment.

According to Dyer (2009) a system of education is judged to be internally efficient if there is optimal enrolment, no wastages in terms of dropouts, repetition rates and low transition rates.

A study conducted in USA by Khazanov (2014) identified that many student dropped out of schools while others failed to progress with education because they found their classes boring, absence from school for long time, being unable to manage their work, consuming time with those who are not interested in school, unnecessary freedom to do everything and failure in class as the main reasons.

Inefficiency in Kenyan secondary schools is a serious educational and social problem since it has both negative individual and social consequences (Ombongi, 2008). According to the Institute of Economic Affairs, despite the introduction of free education in Kenyan primary schools in the year 2003 and free tuition in Kenyan secondary schools in 2008, the dropout rates in Kenyan schools are still high. The literature reviewed pointed out a number of factors as reasons for repetition. Such factors included constant absenteeism from school and continuous poor performance in examination. This study therefore was aimed at investigating on the perception of selected Maasai cultural practices on internal efficiency in Narok South Sub County. Studies carried out in various parts in Kenya, reveal that forced marriage is a major determinant of dropouts among girls (Dyer, 2009). According to Kampicha (2013) in his study on educational statistics in Coast province, he reported that, early marriage was one of the major contributors to massive dropout of girls in both primary and secondary schools. Some communities like the Maasai regard the girl education as of low priority than that of the boys and therefore giving more preference to boys than girls.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study used correlational research design. The sample size of the study was 155 respondents comprising of 31 principals and 124 class secretaries in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub County. Purposive sampling was used to select the principals while Stratified sampling was used to select the class secretaries. Data was collected using interview schedule for principals and questionnaire for the class secretaries. Descriptive statistics were used in describing the results of the data obtained through their

exploratory nature and presented using tables and pie charts. Inferential statistics specifically Chi-square was used to analyze data for the hypotheses. The internal efficiency model was developed based on Poisson Regression. The projections were based on simulations of the most significant selected Maasai cultural practices on early marriages.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Majority of the respondents (53.7%) were males while (46.3%) were females. It is clear that more boys participated in the study than girls. This could be probably attributed to the cultural factors existing in the area of the study.

The study results indicated that majority of students who participated in the study (87.7%) were enrolled in boarding schools, while 12.3% were enrolled in day schools. Specifically, about 34.4% of the respondents (who were the majority) were in boys' boarding schools while 30.3% and 23.0% were in mixed and girls' boarding schools, respectively. The enrolment of students in boarding school is a strategy of the government in pastoral areas to reduce drop-out rates as a result of early marriages which is a cultural practice that still exist among the Maasai community. Unlike in many other places of the country, the study area has a heightened effort by the County Government of Narok Constituency Development Funds (CDF) as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in conducting various developmental programs to build hostels for all secondary schools in the County. This is aimed at ensuring high retention of learners in secondary schools in the Maasai pastoral community who are transhumance (Oluoch, 2006).

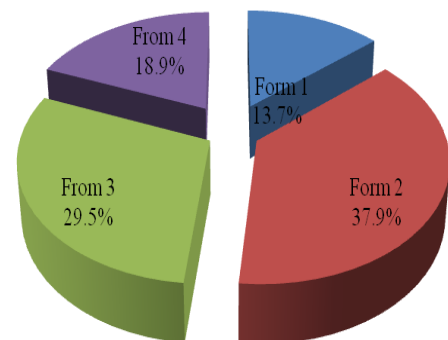


Figure 1. Students Drop-out Rates by Class Level.

Source: Field data, 2016

From figure 4.2, it's explicitly clear that students mostly drop out of school between Form two (2) and three (3) in the study area as represented by 37.9% and 29.5%, respectively.

Perception of Early Marriages on Internal Efficiency

This section presents the result findings that answer the hypothesis on perception of early marriages on internal efficiency using Poisson Regression. The results of the Poisson regression are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Perception of Early Marriages on Internal Efficiency

Internal Efficiency	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	P> z
Repetition rates	.178	.066	2.677	0.0141
Transition rates	.214	.072	2.947	0.0080
Dropout rates	.273	.085	2.054	0.0018

N= 31, LR Chi-square = 18.92, P-value = 0.00, R2 =0.45, Critical T-value = 2.0595

Critical values (2.677, 2.947, 2.054)

Calculated values (0.0141, 0.0080, 0.0018)

The results showed that the model on the perception of early marriages on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County was fitting (LR Chi-square = 18.92, P-value = 0.000). This implies that the independent variables affected the change in dependent variable significantly. The results of the Poisson Regression shows internal efficiency was significantly affected by the perception of early marriages in Narok South Sub-County. Specifically, perception on early marriages on repetition rates (P-value = 0.0141), transition rates (P-value = 0.0080) and dropout rates (P-value = 0.0018). All internal efficiency factors were affected by perception on early marriages as a selected Maasai cultural practice. This could be attributed to the fact that early marriages as a practice is carried out mainly when learners go for midterm and during school holidays. Those involved may never return back to school so as to take care of their new family. Those who wish to return back after marriage ends up repeating in the same class they were before marriage which affects the transition rate. Some girls who are married off in other sub counties which are far from their previous schools do not get a chance to enrol back to their

former school hence drop out of school.

UNICEF (2010) argues that early marriages deny the girl-child the right to education. According to Jagero and Ayodo (2009) early marriages have led to regional and gender disparities and of concern are the low transition and high dropout rates of girls in the pastoralist communities. According to Lee (2008) most of the pastoralist communities in Kenya are marginalized groups and girls are not given the same opportunity as boys to attend school as a result of cultural prejudice of the boy child.

In determining the perception of early marriage on internal efficiency, items were constructed on a scale of 1 to 5 point likert-type survey instrument. That is: strongly disagree=1 Disagree=2, Undecided=3, Agree=4 and Strongly agree=5 and the results summarized in table 2.

Table 2 Perception of Early Marriages on Dropout

Factors	Disagree	Agree	Me an	Std. Dev
Perception of Early marriages affects repetition	31 (25.4)	91 (74.6%)	3.9 2	0.88
Perception on Early marriages affects transition	26 (21.3%)	96 (78.7%)	4.1 4	0.77
Early marriages affects dropout in school	34(27.9%)	88 (72.1%)	4.1 5	0.76
Early marriages affects performance of learners	25 (20.5%)	97 (79.5%)	4.1 8	0.81
Early marriages is highly cherished by the society	20 (16.4%)	102 (83.6%)	4.1 8	0.87
Early marriages affects school attendance	19 (15.6%)	103 (84.4%)	4.4 5	0.77

Source: Field data, 2016

From the study, it can be noted that majority of the respondents agreed that perception on early marriages affects repetition (74.6%), transition from one level to another (78.7%), dropout in school (72.1%) and performance of learners (79.5%). Similarly, majority of the respondents indicated that early marriages is highly cherished by the society (83.6%) and affects school attendance (84.4%).

Girls drop out of school each year due to pregnancy. A study by Migosi et al., (2012) shows that teenage pregnancy and its subsequent cultural interpretation help to keep most of

the affected girls at home. Oluoch (2006) asserted that girls often fail to get someone to take care of the new-born even if they get re-admission to school and therefore there is a possibility that she may miss classes frequently. Besides, parents and the community view her as a grown-up who is ready to take up household duties independently. A girl who is a victim of early pregnancy often finds it hard to juggle the pressure of young motherhood and school. If she is not given any assistance by her parents or society, then dropping out of school becomes the only option.

V. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

From the study results it was noted that perception on early marriages had a significant effect on internal efficiency (repetition, transition and dropout) rates. This could be explained by the fact that it is difficult for most of the nomadic families to educate all their children and as such, a choice has to be made of either educating a girl or a boy. Prevailing cultural values dictate that parents should educate their boys as they are not likely to be married off after schooling. As a result of poverty, girls are likely to be married off in order to generate dowry in form of cows. Given the dominance of the view that girls are supposed to be prepared for marriage, educating a girl is seen as a waste of time and money. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriages are common among the girls who are in secondary schools especially those in form one and two. There is statistically significant relationship between early marriages and internal efficiency in the study area. Soon after FGM, majority of the girls drop out of school and get married to old rich men as second or third wives. The leaders who are expected to enforce the legislations are part of participants in the cultural practices. Majority of women are not aware of their rights and the few who are aware are suppressed by outlawed cultural practices. The findings indicate that most girls are affected by this practice leading to internal inefficiency.

VI. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

Perceptions on early marriages have a significant effect on internal efficiency in public secondary schools. From the study it mostly occurs during the months of September to December when there's high peer pressure and more interaction with young men who are out of school. During the months of November and December, most of the girls are prone to peer pressure and parental influence at home as the economic activities are few. This makes the girls engage in sexual activities that lead to early pregnancies and consequently early marriages.

A. Implications of the Study

This study found out that, perceptions on early marriages negatively affected the success of internal efficiency in public secondary schools in the study area. The government should strengthen the policy of re-enrolling girls back to school after giving birth in order to curb the high cases of repetition, dropout and low retention rates in the study area. This could be through imposing stiff penalties on the part of parents and principals who fail to uphold the rule.

B. Recommendations

Early marriages among young girls have a negative effect on realization of their school dreams which affects internal efficiency and mostly lead to student dropout. This could be addressed by reinforcing the policy of re-enrolling back of the girl child after pregnancy and delivery which was initiated by the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education, in order to encourage girls who would have dropped out of school as a result of early marriages among the Maasai community to give them a second chance to continue with their education.

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