

Management of School Environmental Factors on Drop out Rates in Public Primary Schools in Kuresoi South Sub- County, Kenya

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Abstract— Kenya has made tremendous progress towards the achievement of universal primary education since independence. It has experienced an impressive increase in the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools. Despite the tremendous gains in enrolment, some Sub Counties such as Kuresoi South have challenges ensuring that those enrolled, complete the 8 year primary school cycle due to dropouts among other reasons. This study intends to examine the influence of management of school environmental factors on pupil dropout rates in public primary schools in Kuresoi South Sub County. The objective of the study is to investigate how the management of the physical, social, learning, teaching and the instructional environments influence the dropout rates in public primary schools in Kuresoi South Sub County. This study was guided by the institutional theory whose data focus includes individual and institutional perspectives. It utilized descriptive survey research design and the accessible population comprise of 93 head teachers and 744 teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select schools from each of the zones to be studied in the Sub County. Stratified random sampling was then used to select a sample of 28 head teachers and 224 teachers who were involved in the study. The target population included Head Teachers' Interview guide and Teachers Questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was at using Cronbach Alpha method. Data was analyzed with the aid of the IBM's Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 24) that includes Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, Qualitative and Quantitative analysis. The study concludes that management of school physical environment influences the pupil drop out as it was evident that most of schools had inadequate classrooms, furniture, latrines, The study concludes that social factors influence the pupil drop out in schools this was evident due to Peer pressure as it had made most pupils to quit. The study concludes that Learning and teaching influence the pupil drop out in schools. It was evident that some of the pupils were receiving negative attitude from the teachers this made them feel unwanted and hence they opted to drop out. The study concluded that evaluated Instructional factors influence the pupil dropout rate in Schools; this was evident as some schools had shortage of teachers. The study recommends that the school physical environment should be bettered through building of school infrastructure so that pupils would have a conducive learning environment. The study recommends that pupils should be counseled whenever possible to avert the danger of peer pressure which was majorly making them to drop out of school. The study recommends that the teachers should be trained on how to manage the students and treat them equally regardless of their capability in class. The study recommends that the schools should look for alternatives in having more teachers in class such as recruitment of interns to curb the teacher shortage which was also a course of pupils

drop out. The study creates a gap that other researchers or academic students can address through concentrating on effect of management of school physical environment on pupils drop out. The results are also expected to assist school administrators and the ministry of education in formulating policies that discourage drop outs and promoting access to primary school education, retention and completion rates.

Index Terms— Management of school, environmental factors, Dropout rates.

I. INTRODUCTION

School management refers to the administration of the education system in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategize, and implement structures to execute an education system. Education is the equipping of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, habits, and attitudes with learning experiences. The education system is an ecosystem of professionals in educational institutions, such as government ministries, unions, statutory boards, agencies, and schools. The education system consists of political heads, principals, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, administrative personnel and other educational professionals working together to enrich and enhance.

Globally, at all levels of the educational ecosystem, management is required; management involves the planning, organizing, implementation, review, evaluation, and integration of an institution. Education is not only a human right, but also a means of empowering society socially and economically. In the United Kingdom According to Education and Development Report of European Union (2013), it enhances the ability to preserve and utilize the environment for productive gain and sustainable livelihood. According to the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization, the role of Education is not just to impart knowledge and skills that enable the beneficiaries to function as agents of economic and social change, but also to impart values, ideas, attitudes and aspirations that are necessary for national development (UNESCO, 2013). In Africa, the number of children who enroll in primary school is greater than ever before (UNESCO, 2010). However, although primary school enrolment in many African countries has increased, high dropouts and low completion rates is still reported as a challenge.

Regionally like in most African countries, schools need leaders with a vision for improving the school's learning environment within a well-functioning school-based

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management (SBM) system. SBM involves setting school directions concerning students, teacher development, and allocation of material and financial resources. Effective SBM impacts motivation, commitment, and student and teacher success by: facilitating school leadership that is both appropriate to the unique context and needs of the school community, developing and implementing school improvement plans, establishing fair and effective teacher appraisal systems, structuring classrooms and schools according to school needs, building partnerships with the community, and ensuring that frameworks exist to support the functions of other school departments and personnel. Poor management of most school has led to high dropout rates are indicated to be significant and this leads to low levels of primary school completions in many countries. For example, in Benin, the primary school completion rate increased steadily from 38% in the year 2000 to 62% in 2005. In Madagascar, 14% of primary age children have no access to school but 30 % of those who enroll finally drop out. The UNESCO report further reveal that in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the primary school completion rate in 2007 was 51%, which is the same as of those of early 1990s.

In the sub-Saharan, According to (World bank, 2010), School managers can positively contribute to school effectiveness when they are prepared and able to use extensive leadership knowledge to solve complex school-based problems, and to build trust through working relationships with school staff, parents, students, and the community. Managers can have different and overlapping management styles including instructional, transformational, and distributed leadership, with each style having an influence on student outcomes and how teachers respond to leadership. However, it is important that school managers lead in a way that is appropriate to the school culture and context, that they be given opportunities for management support training, and that their performance be appraised by school inspectors, municipalities, or other boards that provide oversight on school management quality. School managers who model strong instructional leadership focus on planning, evaluation, coordination, and improvement of teaching in order to achieve positive student learning outcomes, finally School managers need to assess student and teacher performance and lead in a way that is culturally and pedagogically responsive to student' and teacher' strengths and needs. For this to be accomplished all the stake holders need to be involved, ((Ministry Of Education, 2008).

Locally According to, (Africa-America Institute, 2015).Uganda has the highest school dropout rates among East African countries while in Tanzania, survival to Grade 7, the final year of primary education, increased from 72.8% in 2007 to 82.1% in 2007, all this is attributed to poor management of school environmental factors. School managers can avert this through preparations of school development plans which are strategic and based on a scanning of the school environment and the conditions that are faced. School improvement plans should prioritize goals and objectives, identify strategic actions to achieve school goals, and include a set of methods for monitoring,

implementing, and evaluating the strategies. In particular, they may outline strategies for improving student performance in targeted subject areas, recommend particular types of assessments for teachers to measure student performance over time, and indicate when and for how long strategies should be implemented. The development of school plans is a collaborative process between school professionals and councils, parents, and other community stakeholders, and the results should be made accessible (in hard copy or online) to the public as a form of accountability. (Uganda National Bureau of Statistics 2015).

Based on a Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2009) document, the government of Kenya has placed a lot of emphasis on management of school environmental factors to the success of its development strategy. The ever increasing budgetary allocation by the government of Kenya as indicated from the 2011 to 2014 Republic of Kenya budgetary documents along with the number of policy documents since independence are clear indicators of the government's commitment to Universal Primary Education (Ministry Of Education, 2008). Free Primary Education (FPE) program was introduced in 1970s and reintroduced in 2003 with the aim of attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE) and actualizing the provision of basic education as a right to every citizen as stated by the Basic Education Act (2013) of the Republic of Kenya. However, dropping out of primary school has been observed as a problem that has affected boys and girls in Kenya as shown by data on the cohorts proceeding to class 8 enrolled from 2005 to 2012 for the Kenya Primary Certificate of Education (KCPE).

At the end of the 8-year Primary course cycle, out of the 1,207,235 learners who joined class 1 in 2005, only 811,940 pupils sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination in the year 2012, while 395,295 either dropped out of school or repeated. The records in Kuresoi Sub –County Director of Education (2018) indicate that dropout rates between 2013 and 2017 affected enrolment which reflects the national pattern.

School environmental factors such as available structures in school like learning materials are reported to affect dropouts as they influence how children access education (MOE, 2008). According to UNESCO (2011) economic factors influence the demand for schooling as it affects the ability of a household to pay school fees and other costs associated with education. Factors such as unemployment and poverty deny children's access to education by forcing them to look for employment to supplement incomes of their families. In addition, cultural beliefs and traditions are reported to play a significant role in decisions to withdraw learners from school and finally the decision to drop out school (Wagachira, 2015).

School environment is one of the factors that have been linked with dropouts as per the findings of Hussain Salfi and Khan (2011). Byoung-suk (2012) indicate that school environment comprises of classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, sanitation facilities (physical environment), school management (instructional factor), teaching methods (learning and teaching) and the social climate. This indicate that the physical environment, the

instructional factors, learning and teaching factors and the social climate. Arul and Vimala (2012) found out that School environment plays a vital role in learner participation in schooling and development of their personality. Spaul (2013) asserts that a comfortable and caring environment among other treatments attract pupils to school thus reducing dropouts.

In the case of Kuresoi Sub-County, the records available from the Sub County Director of Education (2018) indicate that while there has been a steady progression in the number of children enrolled, the dropout rates reported between 2013 to 2017 suggest that there are problems affecting enrolments perhaps this is due to poor school environment management put in place.

This study therefore seeks to examine how the management of school environmental factors influences pupil dropout rates in the sub county. School environment has been selected because a caring and comfortable environment discourages dropouts as it makes schooling attractive (Suleman & Hassan, 2014).

Primary school education is a worthy initiative as it forms the basis of education despite the challenge of dropout which is associated with environmental factors which has become a menace in most rural schools. Dropping out school is a serious problem because it denies individual students their fundamental human right to education. There is general consensus that the school dropout problem has reached epidemic proportions internationally and has become a global problem confronting the education sector round the world (Wotherspoon, 2009). This has been attributed by factors such as school physical environment, social factors, School instructional factors and learning and teaching factors. Based on this variables as compared to other related research such Studies in India, Rani (2011) found financial difficulties, children not interested in studies, parents not interested in studies, lack of education facilities in the nearby villages and lack of quality education as reasons cited for dropping out. In almost all developing countries school dropout or low completion rates have been a subject of interest to researchers and policy makers for a long time. According to the Poverty Status Report of 2005, the phenomenon of high dropout rates continues to pose a big challenge to the successful implementation of national policies. Save the Child Fund (2002) in their study of Child poverty in Uganda focused on school dropout and highlighted deep rooted culture, lack of investment in education, carrying out domestic chores and working to supplement family income as the major causes of dropout. The measures such as 100% roll out of students in primary schools and secondary have not born fruits as most Schools do not provide learning materials as would have been expected. Students, are left to purchase the learning materials, in the event that they don't afford they drop out of school. (Ministry of Education, 2014). School environmental factors, such as physical environment, social factors, instructional factors and learning and teaching factors have been known to influence dropout of students from schools. This study, seek to investigate the influence of management of school environmental factors on dropout rates in public primary schools in Kuresoi South, this will help ascertain whether

management of school environmental factors plays a role in drop outs. The Kenyan government is still grappling with how to mitigate dropout rates in the counties, Kuresoi South Sub-county being one of them this forms the basis for this study as majority of the studies which have been done has not adequately addressed school drop out in public primary schools in Kuresoi Sub County. It is from this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of management of school environmental factors on dropout rates in public primary schools in Kuresoi South Sub-County, Kenya in order to fill the research gap on existing literature.

School Physical Environment and Pupil Dropout

A well-maintained and safe physical environment fosters students' ability to learn, to show improved achievement scores, and to exhibit appropriate behavior. The physical environment of the school speaks to the contribution that safe, clean, and comfortable surroundings make to a positive school climate in which students can learn. Creating a positive environment is necessary in order for teachers to teach effectively and for pupils to be receptive to learning. Facilities in good condition, including low noise levels, cleanliness, access to clean air and water, and absence of overcrowding are not only conducive to learning, but essential for student and staff overall health and well-being. Schools with poor infrastructure contribute to teacher despair and frustration, while building renovations can lead teachers to feel a renewed sense of hope and commitment. Overcrowding and heavy teacher workloads create stressful working conditions for teachers and lead to higher teacher absenteeism. Crowded classroom conditions limit the amount of time teachers can spend on innovative teaching methods and result in a constant struggle to simply maintain order. Thus the likelihood increases that teachers will suffer from burnout earlier than might otherwise be the case. While the condition of school buildings and grounds is important, the neighborhoods surrounding our schools are not isolated from exerting influence. The condition of a school's neighborhood exerts a substantial influence on the school as well as the students it serves. Thus, schools often inherit the difficulties present in their surrounding neighborhoods. The condition of a school often reflects the surrounding neighborhood's condition. For example, schools with trash on the floors are more likely to be located in neighborhoods where litter and trash are prevalent; schools in which graffiti is evident are more likely to be in neighborhoods with graffiti; and schools with broken windows are more likely to be located in neighborhoods in poor condition.

The United Nation International Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2000) and the Government of Pakistan, define drop out as a learner who has left his/her education before the completion of a specific level for which he/she enrolled as a result of push out factors within the learning environment.

According to the OECD (2013) report that reviewed policies to improve the effectiveness of resources in schools, it shows that students tend to perform better in schools that provide an environment conducive to learning and those socio-economically disadvantaged students are less likely to be in orderly classrooms than advantaged ones. Further, it

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indicates that schools with fewer incidents of student truancy or better disciplinary climate tend to perform better.

A framework developed by four UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and The World Bank) identifies four essential health components required in all schools in order to ensure child-friendliness. These include health related policies that help ensure a safe, secure and a positive physical environment. Such an environment should have a positive psychosocial nature by addressing all types of school violence such as abuse of students, sexual harassment, bullying, and that help maintain the education system in the face of HIV and AIDS. Secondly, provision of safe water and sanitation facilities as the first steps in creating healthy school environment that reinforces hygienic skills and behaviors, providing separate sanitation facilities and privacy for girls as an important contributing factor to dropout during and before menses. Thirdly, skills-based health education that focuses on the development of knowledge, attitude, values and life skills needed to make appropriate positive decision to establish lifelong healthy practices and to reduce vulnerability to substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. Fourthly, school –based health and nutrition services that are simple, safe and familiar and that address problems that are prevalent and recognized as important in the community, including the provision of counselling to cope with the AIDS epidemic.

Dropout rate is highest in grade 8 (21%) and lowest in grade 1 in primary school. School dropout is one of the issues that have gained a lot of attention from scholars because it has serious consequences on learner's pursuit of education goals. According to Jamil et al (2010), school dropout is not only an issue in developing countries but a major problem in many countries in the world. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO, 2002) report on the state of the World's Children, points out that about 130 million children in developing world are denied their right to education through dropping out. In half the countries in South and West Asia and Sub-Sahara Africa, one of every three children who start school, drops out before completion as per report of UNESCO (2009). Griffin (2002) in his study on dropouts in United States indicate that students who experience academic difficulties are more prone to drop out of school.

According to (UNESCO, 2016). Poor infrastructure and low quality of education have been identified as important barriers for schooling and learning. Class size is a key factor affecting learning outcomes especially where classes are very large or cover several grades. Textbooks are one of the educational inputs that have the greatest influence on learning environment. The report further indicate that there are more than 80 pupils per class in the first 3 grades of primary in Central African Republic and about 50 pupils in the first 2 classes in Uganda, Guinea and Togo. The availability of sanitation facilities improves the learning environment, pupils' health, boost school attendance and achievement and promote gender equality. Lack of fresh water and sanitation is one of the reasons why pupil and especially girls in many developing countries opt out of school. It indicates that 70% or more in Mauritania, Comoros and Chad do not have toilets and about half of existing toilets in Mali, Madagascar and

Burundi are functional. UNICEF (2003) observed that poor learning environment has always been identified as key factor that lead to poor performance in public primary school in developing countries. For instance, in Uganda, it is established that physical characteristics of the schools have a variety of effects on the teacher, pupils and learning processes. School environment plays a vital role in learners' participation in schooling and development of their personality because children spend most of their time in school as observed by Arul and Vimala (2012). A study by Spaul (2013) in South Africa concurs that a caring and comfortable environment among other treatments attracts pupils to school and reduce school dropouts and thus retain children in school. School environmental factors have been linked with school dropout as observed by Wagachira (2015) in Murang'a County and Wabuti (2014) in Kakamega County, Kenya.

In Kenya, Article 53 of the Kenya Constitution safeguards the right of all children against all forms of inhuman treatment and punishment. This is amplified in the Section 4 of the TSC Act 2012 which provides that the commission in the performance of its functions and services, has powers at all times to take into account the best interests of the learner. According to Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (2002) the objectives of primary school education are to provide the learner with opportunities to acquire literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills, appreciate and respect the dignity of work, develop desirable social standards, moral and religious values and also develop awareness and appreciation of neighbors, the environment, respect and love own country, other nations and international.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive research design was appropriate as the study involved fact finding and documenting the findings. Descriptive research design was effective for this study as it was used to solicit the desired information through an adoption of a questionnaire (Kothari, 2004). It utilized descriptive survey research design and the accessible population comprise of 93 head teachers and 744 teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select schools from each of the zones to be studied in the Sub County. Stratified random sampling was then used to select a sample of 28 head teachers and 224 teachers who were involved in the study. The target population included Head Teachers' Interview guide and Teachers Questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was at using Cronbach Alpha method. Data was analyzed with the aid of the IBM's Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 24) that includes Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, Qualitative and Quantitative analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research sought to evaluate management of school physical environment as used to measure pupil drop outs in schools. The findings are as shown in the table 1

Table 1:Management of school physical environment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Inadequate instruction materials (stationary, textbooks, chalk)	161	3	4	3.01	.079
Inadequate classrooms, furniture, latrines, libraries	161	4	4	4.00	.000
Lack of sanitary towels and water	161	4	5	4.02	.156
Valid N (listwise)	161				

The findings in table 4.7 provided evidence that management of school physical environment affects the pupil drop out in schools. This is revealed by (M=4.00; SD= 0.000) which suggests that Inadequate classrooms, furniture, latrines, libraries discouraged learners from coming school. (M=4.02; SD=0.156) which indicated that Lack of sanitary towels and

water, finally the study also suggests that Inadequate instruction materials such as stationary, textbooks, chalk indicated by (M=3.01; SD=0.079) was also the reasons why pupils opted out of classes and finally dropping out. This is shown in table 2

Table 2:Social factors influence pupil dropout rates in public primary

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sexual harassment (pupils),	161	2	4	2.01	.158
Peer pressure	161	3	3	3.00	.000
Discourage/ridicule over age pupils	161	2	4	2.14	.506
Low levels of discipline	161	5	5	5.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	161				

The findings in table 4.8 provided evidence that social factors influence the pupil drop out in schools. This is revealed by (M=5.00; SD= 0.000) which suggests that Low levels of discipline normally leads to pupils dropping out of school as some of them cannot cope up with the punishment being given to them for being undisciplined. (M=3.00; SD=0.000) which indicated that peer pressure was also a major, cause of pupils drop out as some were being tempted to drop out just

like their peers, it was also evident that some of the pupils were discouraged/ridiculed about being over age by their fellow pupils this was indicated by (M=2.01; SD=0.158) finally the study also suggests that sexual harassment from other pupils was also a major cause of dropping out of school. This is indicated by (M=3.01; SD=0.079) was also the reasons why pupils opted out of classes and finally dropping out.

Table 3:evaluate Learning and teaching

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
a) Inappropriate teaching methods	161	3	3	3.00	.000
b) Negative attitude of teachers	160	2	3	2.62	.487
c) Gender bias	161	4	4	4.00	.000
d) Sexual harassment (teacher	161	1	1	1.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	160				

The findings in table 4.9 provided evidence that evaluate Learning and teaching influence the pupil drop out in schools. This is revealed by (M=4.00; SD= 0.000) which suggests that gender bias normally leads to pupils dropping out of school as some of them are treated better than the others, for instances it was indicated that girls are normally sidelined as compare to their male counter parts. (M=3.00; SD=0.000) which indicated that inappropriate teaching methods was also a

major, cause of pupils drop out as some of them felt that there were being taught irrelevant things as compared to what they expected, it was also evident that some of the pupils were receiving negative attitudes from the teachers this made them feel unwanted and hence they opted to drop out as indicated by (M=2.62; SD=0.487), finally the study also found out that there were sexual harassment from the teachers which might have also caused drop out of pupils out of the school this is indicated by (M=1.00; SD=0.000) was also the reasons why

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pupils opted out of classes and finally dropping out in small extent. The findings are as shown in the table 5

Table 4:Instructional factors

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Shortage of teachers	161	4	4	4.00	.000
Examination grading	161	2	2	2.00	.000
Repeating a class	161	2	3	2.02	.136
Curricular which does not articulate vocational and intellectual needs of the learner	161	2	3	2.06	.230
Tendency to discourage/ridicule over age pupils	161	3	3	3.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	161				

The findings in table 4.10 provided evidence that evaluate Instructional factors influence the pupil drop out in schools. This is revealed by (M=4.00; SD= 0.000) which suggests that shortage of teachers normally leads to pupils dropping out of school as some of them go to school and there are no teachers to teach them. (M=3.00; SD=0.000) which indicated that Tendency to discourage/ridicule over age pupils was also a major, cause of pupils drop out as some of them felt that there were being laughed at because of their age, it was also evident that some of the pupils were being taught Curricular which

does not have vocational and intellectual needs of the learner (M=2.06; SD=0.230), the study also suggests that repeating a class also was making pupils to drop out of school as some of them were being forced to repeat class this was indicate by (M=2.02; SD=0.136) finally the study also suggests that examination grading was also a major cause of dropping out of school as most pupils who did not perform well were embarrassed and hence they opted to drop out this is indicated by (M=2.00; SD=0.000) was also the reasons why pupils opted out of classes and finally dropping out.

The findings are as shown in the table 6

Table 5:Management

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Head teacher management style affects school drop out	159	2	3	2.99	.112
We have a good manager in our school	161	1	2	1.01	.079
We are normally given directions by the head teacher	161	1	2	1.01	.112
We belief that management should do more in order to curb drop outs.	161	3	3	3.00	.000
Valid N (list wise)	161				

The findings in table 4.11 provided evidence that evaluates School management influence on the pupil drop out in schools. This is revealed by (M=3.00; SD= 0.000) which suggests that management should do more in terms of counseling the pupils ,listening to the pupils and try to create a conducive learning environment in order to curb school dropping. (M=2.99; SD=0.112) which indicated that Head teacher management style affects school dropout this shows that the head teacher were not doing enough to avert the situations, it was also evident that majority of the schools lacked a good manger as most head teacher were clueless on the managerial aspect of the school this is indicated by (M=1.01; SD=0.079), the study also suggests that the respondents were not being given enough directions and coordination by the head teacher this was indicate by (M=1.01; SD=0.112) .

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