

**THE CAUSES OF GIRL CHILD DROP OUT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KIBERA
SLUMS, SOWETO AREA OF NAIROBI COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

While enrollment is steadily declining in Kenya, dropout rate continues to be high, with over 50% of the children, both boys and girls dropping out before completing the primary cycle. Boys are marginally better than girls, with 46.3%, completing compared to 45.8% of girls. Statistics indicate that the enrollment and retention of girls have consistently lagged behind that of boys in all districts in Kenya. The purpose of this study therefore, was to identify factors causing girls to drop out of school in Kibera slums-Soweto area, Nairobi County.

The study focused on the entire primary school cycle. This was a descriptive and diagnostic study which analyzed the occurrence of dropping pattern of primary school girls within Kibera slums-Soweto area. The sample comprised of five primary schools of which: 100 primary school continuing girls, 5 primary school class teachers, 5 head teachers, 50 dropout girls, 30 parents/guardians of the dropouts and 10 education officers were sampled. This constituted a total of 200 respondents involved in the study. A questionnaire and four interview schedules were the main tools used in data collection.

The installments were refined during the pilot study. Descriptive statistics, especially percentages and frequencies, were used for the data analysis. Results showed that illiteracy, poverty, cultural practices and unwanted pregnancies contributed to girls dropping out of schools. It was concluded that if girls are not educated, the society will lose the economic and social benefits associated with the female literacy and schooling. The Kenyan Government should, therefore, introduce community education, especially in slums and rural areas, to educate the people on the importance of girl-child education. Viable and sustainable cost and financing mechanisms in education have to be instituted to stop dropouts from the system, thus enhancing completion rates.