

**ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICES ON GIRL-CHILD
PERFORMANCE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION
EXAMINATION: THE CASE OF NAVAKHOLO SUB- COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of socio cultural practices on girl child KCPE performance in primary schools in Navakholo Sub-County. Poor KCPE performance is a hindrance to placement of girls in National Schools, quality extra County schools and by extension, admission for good professional careers. It is still not clear why there is a gender disparity in KCPE performance in primary schools in Navakholo sub-county yet boys and girls learn under the same environment. Specifically, the study sought to assess KCPE performance trends for the girl child over the past five years; analyze influence of socio-cultural practices on girl child KCPE performance; to determine the challenges for the performance of the girl child in KCPE performance in Navakholo Sub-County and, to establish strategies that could be used to enhance girl child KCPE performance. The study was grounded in the Social Cultural and Product Input Function theories. The study used a mixed method approach and adopted descriptive survey design. Stratified random sampling was used to select 360 standard eight girl pupils; purposive sampling was used to select 15 Key informants including Education officers, Teachers, administrators and other selected stakeholders. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were used in the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 360 standard eight pupils randomly selected from different primary Schools; interview guides were used to collect data from 15 Key informants and 6 Focus Groups. Observation check lists and document analysis were also used to collect additional data on schools performances in KCPE. The validity and reliability of the instruments was determined by piloting of the instruments; an alpha Cronbach threshold value of 0.7 was used to ascertain validity and reliability of the instruments. For the qualitative data, findings across the key variables was verified to ascertain the validity. Quantitative data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-Square tests with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software programme. Qualitative data obtained was analyzed using content analysis and Spearman's rank order correlations. Analyzed data has been presented in form of figures, tables, charts, graphs and narratives. Trends in Girl child KCPE performance revealed that there is poor performance particularly in mathematics and Science and there is need for an intervention. The study established that stereotypic gender role dispositions are the major socio cultural practices that lead to girls' underperformance in KCPE. Among the challenges faced by girls was parents' failure to buy certain basic items. The major strategies suggested pointed at breaking the cultural prejudice in the communities to overcome the challenges faced by girls for better academic achievement. The study recommends that parents be encouraged to minimize domestic chores for girls, so that they can concentrate on their studies and the Ministry of Education should increase Free Primary Education Funds to cater for basic needs of girls adequately so that they concentrate on their studies.