

**GENDER PARITY DILEMMA; ATTAINMENT OF GENDER PARITY IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS EDUCATION IN KANDARA SUB-COUNTY OF MURANG'A
COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess attainment of gender parity in secondary schools education in Kandara sub-county, of Murang'a County. This was done with the knowledge that a lot of effort has been put in place to empower and improve women and girls roles and gender policy is being emphasized in all areas of development in this country. Despite the fact that Kenya is a signatory of major international agreements and Conventions on human rights and gender parity fighting for improved gender balance, the problem still exists. Various factors that contribute to the attainment of Gender parity have not been investigated and properly documented hence hindering the total attainment of gender parity in Kandara Sub-County. The study considered all the 52 public secondary schools in the sub-county with emphasis of mixed day secondary schools being given, since 35 of them are mixed day secondary schools. The research objectives were to establish causes of gender disparity, factors that hinder gender parity in secondary education and to assess the effectiveness of mechanisms used to alleviate gender disparity in education. The study adopted the feminism theory of Nancy Chodorow which is the extension of feminism to theoretical or philosophical discourse and aims to understand the nature of gender inequalities. The research methodology was quantitative but adopting a non-experimental descriptive design where descriptive and exploration was applied. 370 respondents (132 girls and 132 boys) from 22 schools were sampled from the total population of 17691 in the 52 secondary schools in the sub-county. The study used stratified random sampling technique whereby all the subgroups of the population were well represented. The study also interviewed the Principals of the sampled schools as well as their Deputies and BOM/PTA chairpersons. Part of the population involved the school going age boys and girls who are currently not in school and a sample of 18 of them were also interviewed. Two questionnaires were used one for students and the other for the school going-age who are currently not in school. An interview guide was used to collect information from the Principals, deputies and BOM/PTA chairpersons. The data collected was then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. This was followed by a stepwise analysis to explain the relationship among the variables where computer package SPSS version 21 was used. The analysis was presented using tables, charts and graphs. The study established that the root cause of gender disparity in schools were domestic chores, community attitude towards girls' education, early marriages in the community and dislike of Mathematics and Science subjects in school. The major factors leading to these disparities were parental level of income and family size. Other factors which emerged to influence gender parity in the school were poverty, parental ignorance and cultural beliefs towards girl-child education. The major effects of negative culture and stereotyping practices were poor academic performance, low enrollment in schools among girls and early marriages. However, the study established that measures such as educating community through media and offering guidance and counseling sessions in the churches and schools were effective in curbing gender disparity in schools. The study recommends that: government through Ministry of Education should enhance sensitization of community members on the significance of girl child education through the village elders and chief baraza's and other forums; all the school stakeholders should work together in promotion of both girl and boy-child education in order to ensure equal opportunities in all economic sectors; among other recommendations.