

**AN ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING TRANSITION OF
PUPILS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAISAMIS DISTRICT, MARSABIT
COUNTY, KENYA**

MERCY KAGWIRIA

**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational leadership and Management,
of Mount Kenya University.**

NOVEMBER 2014

ABSTRACT

Transition from one level of education to another is the most important means by which children are empowered to develop productive human capital for national development. In Laisamis District of Marsabit County, transition rate of pupils to secondary school has remained between 42.12% in 2007 and 54.48% in 2012 which was far below the national transition rate of between 59.6% in 2007 and 74% in 2012. This study sought to assess the social-cultural factors that affect transition of pupils to secondary school in Laisamis District in Marsabit County. The researcher used descriptive research survey design. The target population comprised 803 subjects. The study used stratified random sampling techniques in selecting students. Ten teachers and five head teachers from the five secondary schools were purposively selected. The DEO and two QASOs in Laisamis District were also purposively selected. From 750 forms one, two and three students 10% were picked to make a sample of 75 students. The tools for data collection in this study were questionnaires and interview schedules. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme version 17 was used to enhance efficiency in analysis and the results were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts. Content analysis of meanings and implications of respondents' information was done on the qualitative data and results were presented in form of descriptive narratives. The findings indicated that most respondents reported that early marriage mainly affected girl child transition to high school in Laisamis District. However, it was established that both girls and boys were forced by socio-cultural practices to get married at a tender age. The study further established that most parents marry off their girls for material gain at the expense of the girls' education. The study established that most circumcised boys were unwilling to join high school. The study also found out that practices such as moranism which accompany rite of passage rituals do deter transition of boys to high school. Practices such as FGM were also found to impact negatively on the transition of girls to high school. The study however established that undergoing alternative rite of passage provided by religious groups and non-governmental organization helped to increase transition rates to high school for both girls and boys. The study established that parents were likely to support boys' high school education than girls. The study found that transition of girls to high school was mainly deterred by gender based requisites that require the girl child to play different roles at home. On the other hand, gender based activities such as pastoralism also deterred boys to transit to high school. It also emerged from the study findings that many communities in the district discriminate girls during transition to high school. Study findings from teachers and students indicated that child labour was not a major contributory factor to low transition rates to high school for both girls and boys. However, head teachers, DEO and QASOs indicated that child labour was a major factor that affects transition rates to high school. It emerged from the study findings that in most cases girls fail to transit to high school because they were forced by parents to work as house helps for money. However, the study established that fewer boys failed to transit to high school because they were forced to work in order to support their families. It was concluded that early marriage, traditional rite of passage, and gender inequality were the main socio-cultural factors that affects transition of pupils to secondary school in Laisamis District in Marsabit County. It was also concluded child labour was not one of the main factors that contributes to low transition rates of girl child to secondary school in Laisamis District in Marsabit County. The study recommended that parents be sensitized on the value of education and to shun socio-cultural practices such as traditional rite of passage to adulthood, and early marriage. The study also recommended that parents need to be empowered economically to be able to grant equal opportunity to both girls and boys to acquire education.