
INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL PRACTICE ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN MAKUENI COUNTY, KIBWEZI SUB- COUNTY.



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Abstract

This study is an investigation of how cultural practices can militate against the education of a child in Makueni County, Kibwezi sub-county with a focus on the Kamba tribe. Different methods were employed over a period of three months in Mtito Andei Area. Data were collected through participant observation, focus group and in-depth interviews, narratives, and documents. A total of 60 participants comprised the sample.

Evidence in this research demonstrates that cultural practices have influenced the education of children in Makueni Evidence demonstrates that cultural practices like child labour were parent allow children to work to help support the family for example girls stay at home cooking, washing utensils and fetching water and boys go out looking after their father's cattle, early and forced marriage in girls among others have interfered with school-based education of children in the County. The children are active social agents as well as passive learners who will not allow some traditional practices that are oppressive and directly cause them to fail to complete their schooling successfully.

The strong hold that the cultural practices have on the locals has further resulted in conflicts with modern schooling, which is viewed as disseminating „white“ man“s culture and values. Established in this research is the fear and suspicion that the locals have on the outcome of their children learning these values that they see as alien to their own. The modern education provided in school is perceived as a force that undermines cultural values. It is viewed as presenting an inherent challenge to the cultural practices control measures that are in place.

Arguably, while ethnic traditions and culture should be respected and sustained because they define one's identity, aspects of culture which are discriminatory, restrictive and tend to devalue child's physical, emotional and psychological development should be eliminated because they are retrogressive. Therefore the argument that deep seated socio-cultural practices play a significant role in encumbering a child's education is proven.