

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT AND GIRL-CHILD ACADEMIC PARTICIPATION IN MIXED DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NDHIWA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

**Ndinda N.B., Dawo J.I. and Gogo J.O**

Department of Education Management and Foundations, Maseno University, Kenya

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**ABSTRACT**

Globally, the significance of parental involvement in accelerating girl-child education is a worldwide-accepted factor that influences their participation. In Ndhiwa Sub County, girl-child performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in mixed day secondary schools has been comparatively low over the years indicative of their low academic participation. Data available at the Ministry of Education offices in Ndhiwa Sub-county shows that consistently in the period 2014 to 2018 boy students performed better than girl students with an average Homa Bay county mean-score difference margin of a total of 4.4, more so in Ndhiwa Sub-county case lagging at a disadvantage of total 5.9 mean score difference. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between parental educational involvement and girl-child academic participation in mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County. The specific objectives were; to determine the relationship between parental provision of auxiliary educational needs and girl-child academic participation in the mixed day secondary schools; and to determine relationship between parental academic involvement and monitoring, and girl-child academic participation in mixed secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-county, Kenya. The Rational Choice Theory guided the study. The population of this study was the 32 principals, 132 class teachers and 3340 girl-students in the 32 mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-County from which 11 principals and 20 girl students were interviewed, and 40 class teachers and 334 girl-students were sampled randomly for questionnaire. Face validity and content validities were tested using expert judgment while Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was used to test for the instrument reliability. The data collected was analysed descriptively while Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to establish the relationship. Results showed that parental provision of girl-child auxiliary needs is positively and significantly correlated with girl-child academic participation ( $R = 0.769, p < 0.01$ ), and that there is a positive significant relationship between parental academic involvement and progress monitoring and girl-child academic participation ( $R = 0.786, p < 0.01$ ). It is concluded that parental provision of girl-child auxiliary needs could significantly lead to improved girl-child academic participation; and that parental academic involvement and progress monitoring could significantly lead to improved girl-child academic participation. It is recommended that exclusive ways of managing schools should be adjusted to create a space for active parental involvement. The findings of this study will provide reference material for policy makers, educational administrators and researchers in addressing girl-child educational participation.

**Key Words:** Parental involvement, Participation, Girl-child, Ndhiwa, Auxiliary needs.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, the contribution of basic education to human capital development cannot be underscored (Echaune, Ndiku & Sang, 2015). Moreover, a positive link between basic education and the learner's ability to participate effectively in nation building has been established empirically by planners and economists. It is therefore not for granted that most modern nations in the world invest heavily in this sector as a pillar for social and political development (Amadi, Role & Makewa(2013). Besides, many other benefits that come with investing in human capital through education have been identified. These include improved community health care and nutrition, low fertility and infant mortality rates (World Bank, 2018). In recognition of this importance, most governments have heavily invested in the sector hence pushing high their budgetary allocations.

Research has shown that improving partnership between schools and homes has a positive impact on the educational achievement of young children at all stages in their education. Traditionally, parental involvement has been conceptualized to entail activities that parents do at home to involvement children's learning (Gonzalez, Wilhems &Holbein., 2005). However, a more comprehensive conception of parental involvement is provided by Epstein (2015), which encompasses both home and school-based activities. On the home front, it has been conceptualized that involvement includes guiding the child do homework and other curriculum-related activities. School-based involvement includes talking regularly with teachers about children's progress, volunteering at school and participating in relevant school decision-making activities. According to Dawo and Simatwa (2010) parental involvement could include activities such as reducing domestic chores to create study time for school-going children, pay fees on time, offering guidance and counseling, and following-up on drop out cases and be roles models to them. The No Child Left behind Act of 2001 recognizes parents' involvement and empowerment in determining the quality of teaching and learning processes in schools (Echaune, Ndiku & Sang, 2015).

In Kenya too, successive governments all along have recognized the need to improve learning environment by involving parents. Most recently, the Basic Education Act of Kenya (2013) was enacted requiring the school Boards of Management to assess school needs with full participation of parents. The role of parental educational involvement has received considerable attention empirically. According to Amadi, et al (2013) in a study carried out in America, reported that parental provision of auxiliary needs was conversely connected to the contact between the parent and the teacher. Jones (2013) studied parents' involvement to their lower grade pupils and reported that parents with higher income levels are highly involved in their children's education as compared to those of low-income levels because they were able to provide auxiliary needs with ease. In Kenya, Macharia (2014) in a study in Nakuru County on primary school parental involvement to their children's performance by provision of auxiliary items, it was found that families with high income levels often succeed in preparing children for schooling because they have access to wider range of resources to promote children's mental and physical development as compared to poverty-stricken families who hopelessly struggle to make their ends meet in life than children's schooling. The study only studied primary school parental involvement to their children's performance and was based on lower grade children.

Ndhiwa Sub-County is one of the eight sub-counties in Homa Bay County. The Sub-County lies in the former Nyanza Province. Statistics indicate that while Homa Bay County in general has continuously posted poor results in reveal that in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exam, Ndhiwa Sub-County has continuously posted poor results in the national examinations in the whole of the County for the last ten years (Ministry of Education, Homa Bay County, 2018) Table 1.

**Table 1. KCSE Performance of Mixed Day Secondary Schools in HomaBay County**

Sub-county	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Total Deviation 2014-18	Mean
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G		
<b>Homabay</b>	7.0	6.1	6.8	5.9	5.5	4.8	5.7	4.6	5.8	4.9	<b>4.5</b>	
<b>Ra. East</b>	6.6	5.4	6.7	5.5	5.2	4.6	5.0	4.5	5.1	4.6	<b>5.3</b>	
<b>Mbita</b>	6.1	5.4	6.3	5.3	5.0	4.4	4.91	4.3	5.0	4.3	<b>4.2</b>	
<b>Ra. South</b>	6.0	5.3	6.0	5.1	4.9	4.2	4.9	4.3	5.0	4.3	<b>3.8</b>	
<b>Ra. North</b>	5.8	4.9	5.9	5.1	4.8	4.2	4.7	4.1	5.0	4.1	<b>3.8</b>	
<b>Rangwe</b>	5.4	4.7	5.8	5.0	4.7	4.0	4.5	4.1	4.9	4.1	<b>4.0</b>	
<b>Suba</b>	5.2	4.4	5.6	4.9	4.4	3.9	4.3	3.8	4.9	4.0	<b>3.4</b>	
<b>Ndhiwa</b>	5.3	4.1	5.1	4.0	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1	4.8	3.1	<b>5.9</b>	
<b>County Mean Difference</b>	0.9		0.7		0.5		0.6		0.8		<b>4.4</b>	

Source: Ministry of Education, Homa bay County, 2019

**Key:** Ra. – Rachuonyo; B-Boys students; G-Girl students

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is noted poor girl-child performance in mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-county in Kenya, evidently posting poor results in the national examinations in the whole of Homa Bay County for the years 2014 to 2018. A comparison of same-sex and one-sex schools' day and boarding schools showed that mixed day secondary schools in the Sub-county performed poorer than any other class of schools during the same period. Table 1. in the period 2014 to 2018 boy students performed better than girl students with an average county mean-score difference margin of a total of 4.4, this was more so in Ndhiwa's case lagging at a disadvantage a total of 5.9 mean score difference. It can be noted that this was the result of consistent poorer performance of girls in mixed day secondary schools in Homabay County ( Mean difference as at 2014, 0.9; 2015,0.7;2016,0.5; 2017,0.6;2018,0.8 Table 1.) Literature reveals that parental involvement may reverse the trend hence the need to investigate this aspect as regards participation of girl-child in education.

### **Research Objectives**

The study sought to determine:

- i. The relationship between parental provision of auxiliary educational needs and girl-child academic participation in mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-county, Kenya
- ii. The relationship between parental academic progress monitoring and girl-child academic participation in mixed secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-county, Kenya.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study only focused on three variables of parental involvement; parental provision of auxiliary educational needs, and parental academic involvement and monitoring only.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study may be of significance to various stakeholders (Ministry of Education, Education planners, teachers, parents) involved in the campaign for the promotion of girl-child participation to education in that they may get to know the main problems facing the girl-child education hence prepare to face the challenges.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The study was conducted assuming that the target population from the targeted mixed secondary schools have complete data that reflects the actual parental educational involvement.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Questionnaires may not have exhausted the sourcing of information, however, interview was used to triangulate.

## **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Kothari (2009), the theoretical review is somehow related to abstract ideas that give the researcher an opportunity to have a philosophical stand. Theoretical framework affects the decisions made in the process of research. Rational Choice Theory (RCT) by Coleman (1993) guided the present study. RCT is an approach used by social scientists to understand human behavior. The approach has long been the dominant paradigm in economics, but in recent decades it has become more widely used in other disciplines such as educational studies. The basic idea behind rational choice theory is that people do their best under prevailing circumstances (Coleman, 1993). In Education, RCT is based on the fundamental tenets, which hold that people freely choose their behavior and are motivated by pursuit of success and the avoidance of pain or loss. The theory states that individuals evaluate their choice of actions in accordance with each option's ability to produce advantage, pleasure and happiness. RCT is premised on a utilitarian belief that actions are based on a conscious evaluation of the utility of acting in a certain way, hence parental choice to be involved in girl-child education.

### Research Design

According to Hoy and Miskel(2013) research designs vary with regard to how much structure the researcher imposes on the research situation and how much flexibility is allowed once the study is under way. This qualitative and quantitative study employed a cross sectional survey design and correlational research design.

### Area of Study

Ndhiwa Sub-County in Homa Bay County lies within Latitudes 0<sup>0</sup>50' South & 1<sup>0</sup>50' South and Longitudes 34<sup>0</sup>35' East & 35<sup>0</sup>14' East. The county covers an area of 17,921.20 square kilometers with a population of 850,920 people (KNBS, 2019).

### Sample and Sampling Technique

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample of between 10% to 30% of the population is sufficient to form a sample for a population of over 100 but less than 10,000. For the present study, a population of 132 class teachers and 3340 girl students to whom questionnaire were administered gave forth a sample of 40 and 334 respectively; 11 principals and 20 girl students were randomly selected for interview schedule administration.

### Validity and Reliability of Instruments

According to Kothari (2009), face validity ensures that there is a logical link between research objectives and research questions, i.e., to test whether the content of the questionnaire appears suitable to its aims. Content validity and face validity was determined by expert judgment. In addition, test-re-test was used to ascertain reliability in terms of feasibility, readability, consistency of style and formatting and the clarity of the language used. Cronbach's alpha of above 0.7 showing that that there exist a high and realistic degree of internal consistency in the responses.

### Data Analysis Procedure

The purpose of data analysis is to process raw data for presentation and statistical inference. The Likert scales responses were analysed by using the weighted means and interpreted (**1**-SDi-Strongly Disagree/ *Very Unsatisfied*, **2**-D-Disagree/ *Unsatisfied*, **3**-SW-Somewhat Agree/ *Somewhat Satisfied*, **4**-A-Agree/ *Satisfied*, **5**-SA-Strongly Agree/*Very Satisfied*). In addition Pearson's Correlation strength of relationships were established for inferential statistics.

## 4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

### Girl-Child Academic Participation

The independent variable of the study was girl-child academic participation. The descriptive statistics for the variable are shown in Table 2 below, where the ratings were from very unsatisfied (VU), unsatisfied (V), somewhat satisfied (SS), satisfied (S) and very satisfied (VS).

**Table 2. Girl-Child Academic Participation**

Statement		VU	U	SS	S	VS	Mean	SD
1. Lesson attendance	N	38	63	58	49	50	3.038	1.343
	(%)	14.7	24.4	22.5	19.0	19.4		
2. Completion of homework/assignment	N	51	48	34	70	55	3.116	1.447
	(%)	19.8	18.6	13.2	27.1	21.3		
3. Completion of school work	N	33	67	29	72	57	3.205	1.378
	(%)	12.8	26.0	11.2	27.9	22.1		
4. Potential progression to the next class	N	22	48	29	103	56	3.476	1.254
	(%)	8.5	18.6	11.2	39.9	21.7		
5. Regular school attendance	N	28	56	24	93	57	3.368	1.329
	(%)	10.9	21.7	9.3	36.0	22.1		
6. Participation in answering questions in class	N	11	67	31	107	42	3.395	1.159
	(%)	4.3	26.0	12	41.5	16.3		
7. General likelihood in performance in KCSE	N	17	52	31	74	84	3.604	1.302
	(%)	6.6	20.2	12	28.7	32.6		
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>							<b>3.315</b>	

This implies that the extent of girl-child academic participation as generally shown by the weighted mean was satisfactory (Somewhat Satisfied).

**Relationship between Parental Provision of Auxiliary needs and Girl-Child Academic Participation**

The first objective of the study was to determine the relationship between parental provision of auxiliary educational needs and girl-child academic participation in mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-county, Kenya. Students’ responses (Table 3), Class teacher responses (Table 4), and correlational analysis (Table 5) are presented alongside interview outcomes.

**Table 3. Student Response on Provision of Auxiliary Needs**

Statement		SDi	D	SW	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. My parents/guardians are committed in providing me with enough sanitary towels	N	22	34	47	65	63	3.49	1.458
	(%)	9.5	14.7	20.3	28.1	27.4		
2. My parents/guardians are committed to paying for my lunch in time so that I don't miss my lunch in school.	N	31	30	42	62	66	3.44	1.434
	(%)	13.4	13.0	18.2	26.8	28.6		
3. My parents/guardians are committed to providing me with unique school requirements e.g., Bibles, calculators and Mathematical Tables	N	39	51	44	34	63	3.13	1.008
	(%)	16.9	22.1	19.0	14.7	27.3		
4. My parents/guardians are committed to giving me money for educational trips and tours when needed	N	44	59	43	66	19	2.81	1.201
	(%)	19.0	25.5	21.6	33.3	8.1		
5. The parents/guardians are committed in providing me with decent uniform.	N	26	66	44	73	22	3.00	1.112
	(%)	11.3	28.6	19.0	31.6	9.5		
6. When the school requires my parents to buy me extra reference materials, the parents/guardians do it with commitment	N	41	54	39	67	30	2.96	1.419
	(%)	17.7	23.4	16.9	29.0	13.0		
7. My parents have provided a secure and comfortable learning environment at home.	N	17	72	51	54	37	3.10	1.122
	(%)	7.3	31.2	22.1	23.4	16.0		
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>							3.13	

KEY: SDi-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, SW-Somewhat Agree, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree

The overall weighted mean of 3.13 generally show that the girl-children agreed to a satisfactory (Somewhat Agree) that the parents provided them with auxiliary educational needs.



**Table 4. Class Teachers Response to Provision of Auxiliary Needs**

Statement		SD	D	SW	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. Parents/guardians are committed in providing me with enough sanitary towels	N	3	5	8	7	4	3.15	1.057
	(%)	11.1	18.5	29.6	26.0	14.8		
2. Parents/guardians are committed to paying for my lunch in time so that they don't miss lunch in school.	N	2	3	9	7	6	3.44	1.131
	(%)	7.4	11.1	33.3	26.0	22.2		
3. Parents/guardians are committed to providing their girls with unique school requirements e.g., Bibles, calculators and Mathematical Tables	N	2	9	7	6	3	3.13	1.608
	(%)	7.4	33.3	26.0	22.2	11.1		
4. Parents/guardians are committed to giving their girls money for educational trips and tours when needed	N	3	5	8	7	4	3.15	1.350
	(%)	11.1	18.5	29.6	26.0	14.8		
5. Parents/guardians are committed in providing the girls with decent uniform.	N	2	9	7	6	3	3.13	1.208
	(%)	7.4	33.3	26.0	22.2	11.1		
6. When the school requires parents to buy extra reference materials for the girls, the parents/guardians do it with commitment	N	4	7	7	6	3	3.10	1.008
	(%)	14.8	26.0	26.0	22.2	11.1		
7. Parents have provided a secure and comfortable learning environment for their girls at home.	N	4	7	7	6	3	3.10	1.008
	(%)	14.8	26.0	26.0	22.2	11.1		
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>							<b>3.33</b>	

KEY: SDi-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, SW-Somewhat Agree, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree

Findings from the study on parents' provision of auxiliary needs show that the students and the teachers were in agreement that the parental commitment on the measure was satisfactory(Somewhat Agree).



**Correlation Analysis on Provision of Auxiliary Needs**

Pearson Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between the variables of parental provision of auxiliary, and girl-child academic participation and parental academic involvement and progress monitoring and girl-child academic participation and girl-child academic participation(Table5.). Correlation analysis shows the direction, strength and significance of the relationships among the variables of study (Sekaran, 2003).

Table 5 shows results on Provision of Auxiliary Needs and girl child academic participation.

**Table 4.6: Correlation on Provision of Auxiliary Needs and Academic Participation**

	Y	X <sub>I</sub>
Y	1	
X <sub>I</sub>	0.769***	1

Note: \* p < 0.10, \*\* p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01

Results from the results in Table 5 reveal that parental provision of girl-child auxiliary needs (X<sub>I</sub>) has a strong and positive significant correlation with girl-child academic participation in the mixed day secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-County.

Girl-child interview response: *“My parents are indeed willing to support me by buying me the items, but we have financial challenges at home that limit them. We are five in our family and each of us is in school and needs school levies”.*

Class teacher response: *“A majority of the parents and guardians in this region are poor financially to the extent of not being able to provide adequately for the needs of their girl-children even when the desire is there”.*

**Relationship between Parental Girl-Child Academic Involvement and Girl-child Academic Participation**

The third objective of the study was to determine relationship between parental academic involvement and progress monitoring and girl-child academic participation in mixed secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-county, Kenya. Students’ responses (Table 6), Class teacher responses (Table 7), and correlational analysis (Table 8) are presented alongside interview outcomes.

**Table 6. Student Response on Parental Girl-Child Academic Involvement**

Statement		SDi	D	SW	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. My parents/guardians are committed in giving enough time to me to study at home.	N	20	34	59	30	88	3.58	1.124
	(%)	8.7	14.7	25.5	13.0	38.1		
2. My parents/guardians are committed in attending all the academic days and clinics in school	N	23	49	40	39	40	2.58	1.119
	(%)	10.0	21.2	17.3	16.9	17.3		

3. My parents/guardians are committed to providing me with levies for remedial teaching and revision	N	28	65	40	53	45	3.10	1.231
	(%)	12.1	28.1	17.3	23.0	19.5		
4. My parents/guardian comes to school regularly to check on my performance and academic progress	N	31	64	38	68	30	2.96	1.419
	(%)	13.4	27.7	16.9	29.0	13.0		
5. There is a positive will from my parents/guardian in assisting me perform better in my academics.	N	25	60	40	53	22	3.21	1.390
	(%)	11.3	28.6	17.3	23.0	9.5		
6. My parents reward me when I perform well or when I improve in their academic performance.	N	40	54	39	67	30	2.96	1.419
	(%)	17.3	23.4	16.9	29.0	13.0		
7. My parents/guardians participate in setting academic standards for me.	N	38	50	45	33	63	3.14	1.214
	(%)	16.9	22.1	19.0	14.7	27.3		
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>							3.43	

KEY: SDi-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree,SW-Somewhat Agree, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree

Results in Table 6 shows descriptive results on parental academic involvement and progress monitoring based on responses from the students revealed that this was satisfactory (Somewhat Agreed).

**Table 7 Class Teachers’ Response on Parental Girl-Child Academic Involvement**

Statement		SDi	D	SW	A	SD	Mean	SD
1.Parents/ guardians are committed in giving enough time to their girls to study at home.	N	2	9	7	6	3	3.13	1.208
	(%)	7.4	33.3	26.0	22.2	11.1		
2. Parents/ guardians are committed in attending all the academic days and clinics in school	N	4	7	7	6	3	3.11	1.98
	(%)	14.8	26.0	26.0	22.2	11.1		
3.Parents/ guardians are committed to providing girl-student with levies for remedial teaching and revision	N	3	5	8	7	4	3.15	1.040
	(%)	11.1	18.5	29.6	26.0	14.8		
4. Parent comes to school regularly to check on the students’ performance and academic progress	N	3	5	8	7	4	3.15	1.350
	(%)	11.1	18.5	29.6	26.0	14.8		
5. There is a positive will from most parents in assisting the performance of their girl students.	N	2	8	8	6	3	3.13	1.608
	(%)	7.4	29.6	29.6	22.2	11.1		

6. The parents reward their girls when they perform well or when they improve in their academic performance.	N	4	7	7	6	3	3.10	1.008
	(%)	14.8	26.0	26.0	22.2	11.1		
7. The Parents/guardians participate in setting academic standards for their girl-children	N	2	3	9	7	6	3.44	1.191
	(%)	7.4	11.1	33.3	26.0	22.2		
<b>Overall Weighted Average</b>							3.33	

KEY: SDi-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree,SW-Somewhat Agree, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree

The class teachers’ responses to statements regarding Parental Girl-Child Academic Involvement shown in Table 7 indicates that the teachers were agreed satisfactory (Somewhat agree).

**Table 8. Correlation on Parental Girl-Child Academic Involvement and Academic Participation**

	Y	X <sub>2</sub>
Y	1	
X <sub>2</sub>	0.786***	1

Note: \* p < 0.10, \*\* p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01

The second objective of the study was to determine relationship between parental academic involvement and progress monitoring and girl-child academic participation in mixed secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub-county, Kenya. The correlation analysis on Table 8 shows that there is a strong positive significant relationship between parental academic involvement and progress monitoring (X<sub>3</sub>) and girl-child academic participation ( $R = 0.786, p < 0.01$ ). This seems to imply that if there is parental academic involvement and progress monitoring among the parents, girl-child academic participation will increase.

From the principals’ interviews, it was apparent that quite a large proportion of parents did not adequately involve themselves in the education of their girl-children. For example, to a number of them, parent’s expectations on the academic performance of their daughters were never communicated to their children. The principals testified that children whose parents showed interest in their school activities displayed positive attitude towards school, showed better attendance and showed positive behaviour hence likelihood of high achievement.

**5. CONCLUSION**

It was apparent from the learners (girl students) that their parents contributed minimally in supporting their being in school in terms of provision of auxiliary needs and in monitoring their academic progress. This was also the position of the class teachers, which was re-enforced by headteacher interview responses. This could point directly to the results whereby their academic outcomes in Table 1 show that they are disadvantaged at KCSE.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION

- i. Education stakeholders should sensitize parents to understand their roles in girl-child education.
- ii. In cases whereby parents are not able to meet the expected girl-child education involvement needs, other stakeholders should support by offering necessary finance, guidance and counseling, and auxiliary requirements.

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