

Determinants of Female Students' Performance in Primary Schools in Loitokitok District of Rift Valley Province, Kenya

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Abstract

The study looked at the factors that determine female students' performance in selected primary schools in Loitokitok District of Rift Valley Province, Kenya between 2009 and 2010. The study adopted the survey design of the ex post-facto type. The female students in the district have been victims of diverse and turbulent circumstances that have pushed them to academic oblivion for a long time. The sample size was determined using the Sloven's formula that was suitable for sampling finite population. Six public, mixed and day primary schools, three of whom were rural and three urban, were selected and one validated instrument was employed to gather data. Three research questions were answered. The data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis statistics. The results showed that cultural factors (i.e sexual experience ($r = 0.563$), early marriage ($r = 0.407$) and early pregnancy ($r = 0.489$)) had effect on the academic performance of female students. Also class size ($r = 0.488$), domestic factors ($r = 0.447$) had effect on the academic performance of female students in the district. There was a significant positive correlation among all the variables combined together and the dependent measure ($R = 0.692$; $F(8,29) = 2.412$; $p < 0.05$). The variables also accounted for 47.9% of the total variance in the dependent measure ($R^2 = 0.479$). It was recommended that guidance and counseling be intensified in the middle classes, more teachers be recruited to match the high students' population in public schools, the parental education be boosted, the community be sensitized on negative socio-cultural practices and that the government takes stern measures against perpetrators of sexual offences and ensure that the gender policy on education was implemented to the letter.

Keywords: Female students, Academic performance, Cultural factors, Domestic factors, Class size, Loitokitok district

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