

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Gender factor in performance of pupils in Kenya certificate of primary education examination in Kenya: a case study of Kombewa division, Kisumu district**

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It has been realized that investment in the girl child education at primary school level improves nutritional practices, proper hygiene, management of households and quality of life in developing nations. In Kenya, the government has articulated its commitment to providing primary education to all children of school going age. Female illiteracy remains a drawback to realizing an ideal quality universal primary education. Though the government is committed to providing basic education to all children of school going age, Kombewa Division still lags behind. This study investigated Gender factor in performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Examinations in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya. The study involved a sample of 200 pupils (100 males and 100 females) from class eight, 20 class teachers and 20 head teachers. Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews schedules administered to pupils, class teachers and head teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 20 head teachers, 20 class teachers and 200 pupils. The questionnaire administered to head teachers collected information on school-based, community, family and individual factors that affect pupils' performance in schools. The interview with teachers gathered information on factors that affect pupils' performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. Pupils' questionnaires collected information on community, school and family factors that affect boy and girl child's performance in schools. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data in form of frequency counts, means and percentages. The study established that there was a significant difference in performance between boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. The study also revealed that family, community, school and individual factors affect negatively the performance of girls more than that of boys at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. The study recommended that there was need for awareness campaigns using community leaders, local administration, teachers, parents, pupils and members of the community on the benefits of education, especially of the girl-child through religious preaching in churches, public pronouncements in barazas and seminars.

**Keywords:** Gender Factor, Performance, Pupil, Examination, Kombewa Division, Kenya.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Investment in education is a key element in the development process in all countries of the world. Its importance is reflected in the growing recognition since the early 1960's that investment in formal education and training provides and enhances the skills, knowledge, attitudes and motivation necessary for social and economic development. Research has shown that education of women improves nutritional practices,

proper hygiene and management of their households (World Bank, 1998). Female literacy leads to better health and education, reduces infant mortality, better earnings, reduced fertility, better earnings, reduced fertility rates and improves quality of life for nations (King and Hill, 1993). The strive towards Universal Primary Education has led to increase in enrollment of girls in most countries over the recent years, but still nearly 3 out of 10 girls aged 6 to 11 years are not in school, compared to one out of 10 boys globally (FAWE, 1997). In Africa, the figures are much higher particularly in Somalia, Mali, Liberia and Ethiopia, where 7 out of 10 girls are out of

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school (FAWE, 1995). This clearly shows distinct gender disparities in education as it is clearly reiterated that gender discrimination and vulnerability are major reasons for low participation of girls in schools. In most developing countries, more boys are educated than girls (UNICEF, 1998). Education changes women's attitude towards their own role in the household and in the workplace (Mincer, 1962). Primary education being the only education accessible to majority of children was pointed out as a major factor in bringing about changes in the economic roles and status of girls by affecting both the rate and type of labour force participation. By providing literacy, numeracy and cognitive skills, primary education enhances women's ability to perform multitude of roles and even tasks that contribute to economic development and well being of their families. Benefits of education accrue to individuals, families and societies. Individuals can expand their interests and skills and earn more income. The broader social benefit of education relate to aspects such as lower fertility, better health and more education for the next generation (Hertz, 1991). Many economic and sociological theories predict that education increases women's participation in the labour force. This prediction is based on the notion that education favorably affects women's willingness and ability to enter the labour market. It provides them with the necessary credentials for employment and therefore it is a strong inducement to enter the labour market (Floro and Wolf, 1991). There is evidence that the role of the government in the provision of education has been rising (Republic of Kenya, 2009). This is clearly indicated by the high number of public primary schools and the high expenditure on education since independence. Private primary schools in Kenya represent 15% of the country's, over 16,000 primary schools. The remaining 85% are public schools. This is an indication of the governments' dedication to expansion of primary schools. In 2003, the government articulated its concern on providing free and compulsory primary education to all school going age children this has led to an increase in the enrolment at primary level. The Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 1999) noted that gender inequality exists in certain areas and that there were persistent constraints that continued to hinder girls from effective participation in education to all levels. Girls in Arid and Semi-Arid areas and those with special educational needs remained disadvantaged. In addition, drop out for girls was higher than for boys in most areas. Girls' poor performance at primary level hindered their entry and effective participation in tertiary institutions. The attention of the commission was also drawn to gender stereotypes in the attitudes, behavior and teaching practices that have a direct bearing on girls' performance, persistence and achievement in education. Education provided by the Government needs to be cost effective. This is because of the rising costs and fast expansions in education hence need for quality. In order to improve student performance in primary schools, there will be

need to establish how gender factor affect performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Examinations. This formed the basis of this study.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study involved a sample of 200 pupils (100 males and 100 females) from class eight 20 class teachers and 20 head teachers. The data was collected through questionnaires, and interviews administered to pupils, teachers and head teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used in the selection of 20 head teachers, 20 class teachers and 200 pupils. The questionnaire administered to head teachers to collect information on school-based, community, family and individual factors that affect boy and girl child's performance in schools. The interview to teachers gathered information on factors that affect boy and girl child's performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. Pupils' questionnaires collected information on community, school and family factors that affect boy and girl child's performance in schools. Descriptive statistics in form of means, frequency counts and percentages was used to analyze the data. The following were the research questions used in the study:-

1. To what extent do family based factors affect the performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

2. To what extent do community base factors affect the performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

3. To what extend does the school environment affect the performance of boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

4. To what extent do individual based factors affect performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

5. Is there a difference in performance between boys and girls in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

## RESULTS

### **Research Question 1: To what extent do family based factors affect the performance of boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya**

The responses to this research Questions were as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

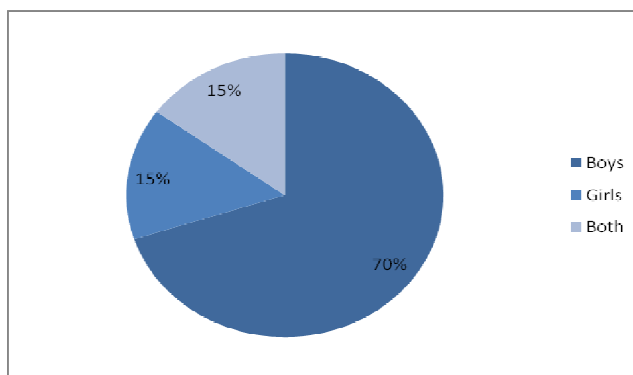
From Table 1, it can be noted that only 162 (40.5%) of the parents had attained primary school education. However, the population of mothers 95 (47.5%) exceeded that of fathers 67 (33.5%).

**Table 1:** Parental Level of Education as indicated by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100)

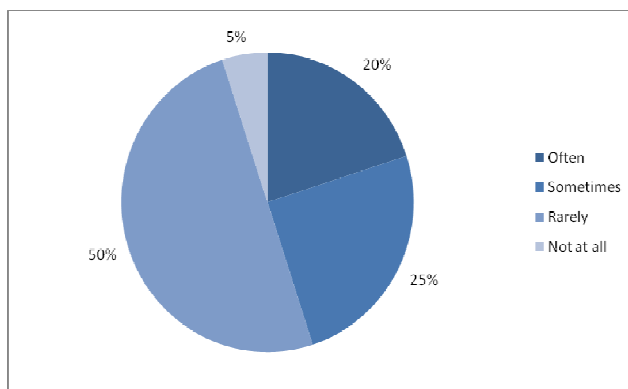
Level of Education	Father		Mother		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Primary	67	33.5	95	47.50	162	40.50
Secondary	56	28.0	52	26.00	108	27.00
Diploma	39	19.5	17	8.50	56	14.00
University	16	8.0	9	4.50	25	6.25
Post graduate /Diploma	22	11.0	27	13.50	49	12.25

**Table 2:** Parental Assistance to Pupils with Their Homework as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100)

Option	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Never	20	20.0	30	30.0	50	25
Sometimes	40	40.0	45	45.0	85	42.5
Always	40	40.0	25	25.0	65	32.5



**Figure 1:** Sex Preference on Fee Payment in Event of insufficient Funds



**Figure 2:** Headteachers' responses to the extent parents consult about their children's education

With regard to Secondary, Diploma, University and Post-Graduate education, fathers exceeded mothers.

From Table 2, it can be noted that boys received more parental assistance in school homework than girls. In

some cases, neither boys nor girls received parental assistance in school homework.

In Figure 1 and 2, the study shows that 70% of the parents would prefer to pay fees for the boys in contrast

**Table 3:** Activities that Interfere with Studies at Home as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100).

Activities	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Fetching firewood	63	63	100	100	163	81.5
Taking care of children	29	29	65	65	94	47.0
Looking after cattle	78	78	11	11	89	44.5
Preparing the farm	81	81	85	85	166	83.0
Preparing meals	43	43	80	80	123	61.5
Going to the market	32	32	93	93	125	62.5
Domestic work	60	60	100	100	160	80.0

**Table 4:** Number of Siblings Who Have Completed Primary School education as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100).

Number of Siblings	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
None	37	37.0	43	43.0	80	40.00
One	24	24.0	25	25.0	49	24.50
Two	16	16.0	10	10.0	26	13.00
Three	13	13.0	11	11.0	24	12.00
Four	7	7.0	4	4.0	11	5.50
Five	3	3.0	3	3.0	06	3.00
Six	-	-	3	3.0	03	1.50
seven	-	-	1	1.0	01	0.50

**Table 5:** Number of Siblings Who Have Completed Secondary School Education as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100).

Number of Siblings	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
None	58	58.0	65	65.0	123	61.5
One	30	30.0	19	19.0	49	24.5
Two	9	9.0	11	11.0	20	10.0
Three	2	2.0	3	3.0	05	2.5
Four	1	1.0	2	2.0	03	1.5

to 15% for the girls in case of insufficient amount of money. Few parents (15%) would prefer to pay fees for the girls first and equally parents (15%) would share the little fee there is to both genders.

**Research question 2: To what extent do community based factors affect the performance of boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa division, Kisumu District, Kenya?**

The responses to these research questions were as shown in Table 3.

From Table 3, it was revealed that the main activities that interfered with the studies were: Preparing the farm 166 (83%), Fetching firewood 163 (81.5%) and Domestic work 160 (80%). These factors affected girls more than boys.

Table 4 shows that 24% of the boys and 25.0% of the girls had one sibling who had gone through primary education,

while 16% of the boys and 10.0% of the girls had two brothers and sisters who had completed primary school education. Only 3.0% of the girls responded that they had six siblings who had completed primary school learning.

From Table 5, 58% of the boys and 61.5% of the girls responded that they had no sibling that had completed secondary level of education. This was the greatest percentage in this group of data. This implies that a small proportion of the population had attained secondary education; hence the pupils lack good role models to emulate from. They therefore would not strive to excel in examinations. More boys (30%) than girls (19%) had one sibling completing secondary school. This figure progressively reduces as the number that completed secondary school goes down. Less boys (9%) than girls 11% said two of their siblings had completed secondary education. Less boys (2%) than girls (3%) identified three of their siblings as having completed secondary education. While 2.0% of the girls had four siblings having completed secondary education, while the boys had 1.0%.

**Table 6:** Number of Siblings who have completed University Education as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100).

Number of Siblings	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
None	89	89.0	83	83.0	172	86.0
One	8	8.0	10	10.0	18	9.0
Two	3	3.0	5	5.0	8	4.0
Three	-	-	2	2.0	2	1.0

**Table 7:** Factors Causing Interference of Studies at School as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100)

Factors	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Lack of textbooks	62	62	94	94	156	78
Lack of facilities	34	34	58	58	92	46
Harassment by teachers	2	2	5	5	7	3.5
Noise making	47	47	51	51	98	49
Sickness	20	20	18	18	38	19
Hunger and tiredness	20	20	15	15	35	17.5

From Table 6, a bigger percentage of both boys and girls had none of their siblings having attained any University education. 8.0% boys had only one of their siblings having attained university education while 10.0% girls had one sibling attaining university education. From the data, it is evident that majority of the siblings have not acquired university education.

### **Research Question 3: To what extent does the school environment affect the performance of boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?**

The study examined a number of school factors that would influence girls' and boys' performance in primary education in Kombewa division, Kisumu district. Among these factors was school curriculum delivery.

According to pupils' responses, lack of textbooks (78%), lack of facilities (46%) and noise making (49%) are atop the list as factors that create uncondusive environment in schools. Curiously the existence of noise making as a factor may either mean that teachers do not occupy the students well enough or that no assignments are left to be done. Yet still it is noteworthy that even in the above leading studies interference factors, girls are more disadvantaged than boys. More girls (94%) than boys (62%) experience lack of textbooks. More girls (58%) than boys (34%) lack facilities more girls (51%) than boys (47%) make noise in class. Fewer girls (15%) experience interference in their studies from hunger and tiredness than boys (20%).

Of the 20 head teachers interviewed 50% said that parents rarely consult on their children's education. Parents are too busy to go to school to find out about

their children's performance or they do not value education. 25% said sometimes the parents consult while 20% said that the parents often consulted. Only 1 head teacher (5%) said that parents do not consult at all. Pupils were asked whether they asked questions when they do not understand something in class. The pupils responded as recorded in Table 7.

Though 90% of the pupils asked questions in class, it is evident that more boys (97%) asked questions compared to girls (83%). Some girls (17%) flatly said they do not ask questions.

### **Research Question 4: To what extent does desired level of education affect performance of boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?**

The response to this research question by boys and girls were as shown in Table 8 and figure 3.

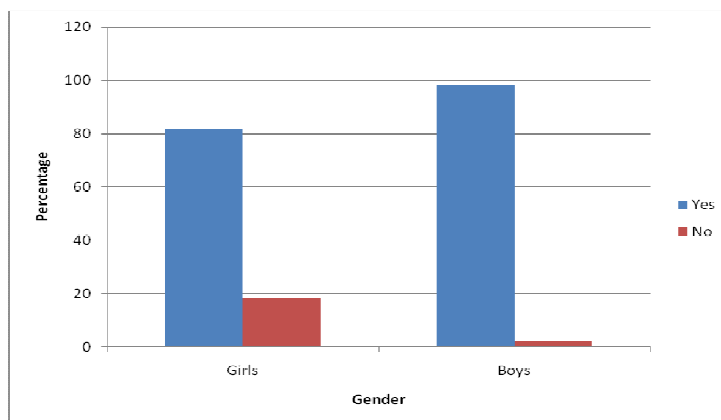
Pupils agreed that desire for different levels of education affect their performance in examinations. Table 8 shows the pupils' desired level of education. From the table it is clear that none of the pupils desire primary level of education only.

Table 8 shows that 63% of boys would like to attain university education compared to 33% of the girls. More girls than boys preferred secondary and college education to university education. All (100%) boys and girls would like to go beyond primary education.

**Table 8:** Boys and Girl child desired Level of Education as reported by Boys (n=100) and Girls (n=100)

ULE	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Primary	00	00	00	00	00	00
Secondary	22	22.0	32	32.0	54	27.0
College	15	15.0	35	35.0	50	25.0
University	63	63.0	33	33.0	96	48.0

Key: ULE= Ultimate Level of Education

**Figure 3:** Pupils responses on whether they asked questions in class**Table 9:** Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. error
Pupils *0	206	255.5971	55.6299	3.8759
1	207	214.8116	53.7331	3.7347

\* 0 stands for boys  
1 stands for girls

**Table 10:** Levene's Test for Equality for Variances

	Levene's Test for equality of Variances	
	F	Sig.
KCPE Equal Variances assumed	.165	.684
Equal Variances not assumed		

### Research Question 5: Is there a difference in performance between boys and girls in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kombewa Division, Kisumu District, Kenya?

In response to this research question, t-test was done to determine whether the two means were significantly different at selected probability levels. The t indicates how often a difference ( $x_1 - x_2$ ), as large or small, would be found when there is no true population difference. The t-test was also used to assess whether or not each independent variable helped to predict the dependent variable at 0.05 level of significance (Table 9).

A two-tailed t-test was used to test the hypothesis since no prediction was made on the possibility of the statistical results being positive or negative. This means that the value yielded by the significant-test can either be positive or negative.

The t-test has the following assumptions made in the mathematical derivation of the central t-distribution (that is the sampling distribution of t-ratios when  $H_0$  is true).

1) The X's within each of the two populations are normally distributed.

2) The two population variances ( $\sigma_1^2$  and  $\sigma_2^2$ ) are equal.

3) The individual observations (X's) are independent.

The Levene's test for quality of variance in (Table 10)

**Table 11:** T-test for Equality of Mean

	t-test for equality of mean			
	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
KCPE Equal Variance assumes	7.207	411	.000	38.7855
Equal Variance not assumed	7.206	410.359	.000	38.7855

The  $P < 0.05$  indicated that there was significant difference therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

showed that the variance are equal. Thus:

Significance of  $F > 0.05$

That is:  $.165 > 0.05$

Since  $.165$  is more than  $0.05$ , then we retain the null hypothesis. This means that the variances are equal.

### Testing the null hypothesis

The result of the tested hypothesis is as show above (Table 11)

## DISCUSSION

The educational level of the family members is an important factor influencing the participation of girls and boys in primary education. Parental level of education, occupation and income levels are important in gauging the parental ability to meet the basic household and school needs. Parents who are educated are more likely to impart prominent predictor than any other factors. Arguably, the preference given to the boys was because they were considered to bring return to the educational investment put in them. They were also considered to be better achievers. The emphasis was placed on boys because in many communities, boys were seen as a vehicle of continuity in the lineage and the girl was on transit. This was the same view held by Kelly (1989) as was noted in the literature review. Left to brood, this attitude impacts negatively on the education of girls. Thus there is need to give treatment to the girls as is given to the boys. Community based factors, like chores at home that prevent studies, number of siblings who have completed primary, secondary school and University education, were also considered and responses sought. There are quite a number of domestic chores that pupils perform at home that in the end might affect their performance in school. These ranges from fetching firewood, water, looking after cattle, preparing the shamba, preparing meals, going to the market and other domestic work.

The number of pupils who had brothers and sisters who had completed primary education are few, and this may impact negatively on the pupils due to lack of role models. Table 5 shows the number of siblings who have

completed secondary school education. The majority of the girls responded that they had no siblings that had completed secondary level of education. This in itself is a drawback to the girls because they lack role models to emulate.

Although on the overall, 90% of the head teachers felt that teachers do not discriminate against female students in their teaching behavior, they could not deny that their influence had a great impact on pupil aspirations and achievement than they actually seem to realize. As it has been discussed elsewhere, teachers' expectation of their pupils, mainly the references they make about the pupils and future achievement and classroom behavior have a substantial impact on the students academic performance (Hertz, 1991). The way teachers structure and select instruction process with pupils, shape girls' and boys' participation and persistence in school. The mode of teaching in primary schools, that relies heavily on rote learning and voluntary pupil responses, means that in classroom situation where boys have been socialized from birth to be assertive and girls to be submissive and quiet, it is often the case that boys do dominate.

The head teachers of schools were asked the school based factors that affect girls' participation in school as compared to boys' participation. Eighty percent of the head teachers enumerated lack of school fees, lack of uniform, lack of textbooks, less attention from the teachers, lack of physical facilities such as toilets, desks as some of the factors that led to poor participation among girls. The teachers interviewed were asked about the difference in performance between female and male pupils. The interview revealed that boys do better than girls in academics. Fifty percent of the female teachers agreed that boys do better than girls in academics. Fifty six percent of the male teachers also accepted that boys do better than girls in academic performance. With regard to the teachers' observation on gender factor in performance, 55% of the teachers felt that boys do better than girls, 5% felt that few girls have outstanding academic performance, 20% felt that boys have higher academic concentration than girls. The above reflect teachers' attitude on gender factor and may have negative impact on female performance since it is negatively tilted in disfavour of gender factor. From this response, it is only physical facilities that directly agree

with the pupils response. Beyond that we are left with divergent perspectives between the pupils and their head teachers. This is attributed to the fact that head teachers and their pupils were more inclined to give responses that touch on areas that directly affect them. For instance since head teachers need to run the schools using money, they were inclined to evaluate pupils in terms of how many times they hit the road to look for fees. However, the factor of less attention from teachers is distraughtly daunting and need further research.

More boys than girls asked questions during lessons. It could be attributed to intimidation from either teachers or fellow pupils or attributed to low esteem. The head teachers' responses show that most girls were uninterested in their work while boys were seen as active and attentive. This in the end may lead to poor performance in examinations. This depicts the fact that more boys are interested in attaining a higher level of education than girls. A good percentage of girls, (35%) view College education as the ultimate level that they can attain. This shows that the girls are less ambitious and in the long run may not even attain the desired level of education. Generally, more boys than girls would like to acquire higher levels of education. Gender therefore has a powerful influence on educational ambitions. This in the end may affect the performance of girls in schools.

The null hypothesis stated that: "There is no significant difference in performance between the boys and the girls in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education." The implications are that If  $P \leq 0.05$  then there is a significant difference, therefore the null hypothesis would be rejected. If  $P > 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is affected. The t-test result shows that there is a significant difference in performance since  $.000 < 0.05$ . The null hypothesis is rejected because there is a significant difference in performance between the boys and girls at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. The difference in performance between the boys and girls in primary schools is majorly attributed to the involvement in domestic chores, this affected the girls more than it affected boys. Kasente (1996) noted that girls' performance is affected due to the need for their domestic labour. Girls overworked in the home clearly have a detrimental impact on their academic performance, since their duties are a daily affair.

The research revealed that 47.5% of the female parents had attained primary education. This was a high percentage compared to that of male parents in which only 33.5% had attained primary level of education. This showed that more female parents than male parents acquired primary education. Probably this may have affected performance of the girls since they looked at the women as role models and thus may not desire higher level of education. As you go up in learning, female figures significantly reduce to 26.0% (secondary), 8.5% (College) and 4.5% (University). This suggests that even in the past girls did not stand a good chance to advance

in education. The study shows that more males have attained post primary education. This offers immediate good role models for the male children than it does for the female children, whose mothers (47.5%) have only reached primary school level.

As indicated in Table 2, more boys 80%, (40% sometimes and 40% always) are assisted with their homework at home than girls 70%, (45% sometimes and 25% always). Only 25% of the girls' parents always assist their daughters with their homework as compared to 40% of the parents who assist their sons. This lack of concern in assisting girls can be attributed to attitude, perhaps most parents value the education of boys to girls and may concentrate on the boys at the expense of girls' education. However, it must be noted that pupils get motivated when their parents express concern in their schoolwork and are willing to help where possible. This can go a long way to boost the self-esteem and attainment not only for boys, but also so equal importance for girls.

Male and female students agreed that they assist with work at home, but varied according to gender in the nature of the work they do. Girls mostly fetched water and firewood (63%); Domestic work (100%); engaging in errands to the market (93%) and prepared the shamba (85%). Boys mostly looked after cattle (78%). The number of girls far outweighs the number of boys engaged in domestic chores except in looking after cattle, a known male affair, that the number of boys (78%) outweighs the number of girls (11%). These findings agree with Mbilinyi (1996), who found out that it is greater sacrifice for parents to send girls to school than it is to send boys because of the girls' contribution to the family livelihood. Similar findings have been reported elsewhere in developing countries (Boserop, 1970; McSweeney, 1982). In the case of this research, the general picture that emerged from the respondents was that despite the long hours and long distance walking, children are not relieved of the obligations of work.

Both boys and girls have siblings who have completed primary education. Of the boys, 37% did not have any sister or brother that had completed primary education, while 43.0% of the girls did not have brothers and sisters who had completed primary education. Probably this would affect the pupils desire to excel in examinations at the primary level since there would be no role models to emulate. This is because 40% do not have brothers and sisters who have completed primary education.

The existence of a hidden curriculum which encourages girls to be inactive and have little pride has been noted and documented in studies. By and large this has to be related to teachers expectations, which are differential for students of various sexes and to and to a gender division of labour work and play activities in the classroom and the school. These factors interact with differential students' expectations for their future positions in the society and peer group pressure, both of which reflect the objective position of women in the society.



With respect to academic achievement, 80% of the head teachers thought that boys perform better than girls in class. Among the reasons given for boys' better performance were: girls lacked ambition or motivation and the spirit of competition. Some head teachers stated that girls lacked the ambitions to work hard because they are lazy. Others mentioned pregnancy and pressure to get married as among the factors that contribute to poor performance by girls. Male teachers' negative attitude towards their female pupils' academic ability tends to thwart the academic ambitions these pupils have. Since these teachers expect female pupils to be less achievement oriented than their male counterparts, female pupils tend to respond accordingly. Girls who enter school have to cope not only with societal attitudes that perceive them as less intelligent, less achievement oriented and less academically capable than boys, but also with gender stereotypes that school staff have for female pupils which reinforce these attitudes. Thus making it difficult for girls to overcome negative participation and achieve excellent results in school. A conducive learning environment plays a major role in the lives of pupils since they spend most of their time in school.

## CONCLUSIONS

Many factors influenced academic achievements of boys and girls in Kombewa division. One of the factors was community based, which favoured the boys more than the girls, for instance, in case of insufficient money the boys' school fees were paid first.

Involvement in domestic chores also affected the academic achievement of the pupils, mainly the girls. These included: fetching firewood and water, taking care of children, domestic work and going to the market for shopping and grinding maize. Since girls are more involved in domestic work than boys, this affects their academic performance more than it does to the boys. Traditional sex role stereotypes force girls to perform most of the domestic chores making girls to be exhausted and leaves them with no energy and time for school homework.

Another factor was that most girls are less ambitious. Most girls would like to limit their education to secondary and college education, unlike the boys who are interested in attaining university education. This attitude may lead to laxity in academic work and in the long run affects their academic performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should sensitize parents on the need and importance of educating their daughters and sons. This will mean breaking through cultural prejudice in many communities.

There is need for awareness campaigns targeting community leaders, local administration, teachers, parents, pupils and all members of the community about the benefits of education, especially of the girl child. This could be done through religious preaching in churches, public pronouncements in public barazas, seminars, school parents' day ceremonies and other community functions.

School administrators should organize training programs for boys and girls to enlighten them as peer educators on gender issues and educate them on the current norms and desirable participation of girls in education.

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