



Role of principals in promotion of girl-child education in mixed day secondary schools in Kenya: A case study of Rongo and Ndhiwa districts

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Abstract

In 1990, at the World conference on Education for all held in Jomtien, Thailand, girls education was identified as a critical priority. Despite the various efforts put in place to promote education, the number of girls keeps on declining. They tend to lag behind boys creating a notable disparity with regard to access, and completion of secondary education cycle. Gross Enrolment Rate in Rongo District in 2005 for boys was 23.35% while girls was 16.4%, in 2008 it was 40.1% for boys and 31.1% for girls and in 2011 it was 25.6% for boys and 21.3% for girls. In Ndhiwa District Gross Enrolment Rate in 2005 for boys was 26.9% and 19.5% for girls. In 2008 it was 40.3% for boys, 37.2% for girls and in 2011 Gross Enrolment Rate for boys was 36.6% while for girls was 31.4%. The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the role of principals in promotion of girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts, Kenya. This is because principals are accounting officers and implementers of government policies at school level. The study population consisted of 38 Principals, 38 Director of Studies, 2 District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, 38 Board of Governors Chair persons and 2010 form IV girl students. The study established that principals factored in Re-entry and Free Tuition Secondary Education policies to enhance girl child participation in secondary education. Other opportunities used by principals to promote girl child secondary education were acquisition of bursaries, direct involvement of parents, teachers and provision of learning facilities and resources. Principals also faced many challenges in their endeavours to enhance girl child education. These challenges included teenage pregnancies, school levies, domestic chores and cultural barriers.

Keywords: Role, principals, promotion, girl-child education, mixed day secondary schools, Rongo, Ndhiwa, districts, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Low levels of educational attainment- especially of girl-child represent a very serious constraint on development in most Sub-Saharan African countries. This constraint hampers progress for individuals as well as for nations. At the individual level education is the ultimate liberator, empowering people to make personal and social change. Governments, international organizations, Non-

governmental organizations and researchers have shown a lot of interest in the issues of equality of educational provisions to girls and boys (World Bank, 1998). There is a wide international recognition that there is no investment more effective for achieving development goals than educating girls. Yet reaching gender equity in school enrolment is still a major challenge in most countries. Nothing illustrates this better than the failure of many countries to attain the only Millennium Development Goal fixed for 2015, which is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education (World Bank, 2002). A concerted global effort is required

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Table 1. Primary to Secondary Transition Rate.

Year in Std 8	Year in Form 1	% of transition to Form 1	
		Boys	Girls
2002	2003	43.60	49.8
2003	2004	47.20	44.30
2004	2005	57.70	54.20
2005	2006	58.30	56.20
2006	2007	56.50	63.20

Source: Statistics and EMS Section, Ministry of education from 2002 to 2006.

to ensure accelerated progress towards attaining the gender parity goal. To achieve this goal is both a moral imperative and a development necessity. Girl child education raises economic productivity, reduces fertility rates, lowers infant and maternal mortality, improves health nutrition and the well-being of families and ensures better opportunities of education for children. It promotes sound management of environmental resources and is instrumental in the reduction of poverty, by enabling women's absorption in the economy. Given the strong evidence on the benefits of girl child education, the relatively strong evidence on the range of obstacles involved and the less conclusive evidence on what works for girls, organizations, researchers and practitioners all have a role to play. Primary and secondary school principals can make an especially important contribution by assessing the roles, challenges and carefully choosing their strategies, while building a strong foundation for monitoring and evaluation.

Public demand for education and increased level of poverty in most African countries means provision of education for both genders is critical (Abagi, Owino and Wamahu, 1997). Despite the increased expansion of systems of education and growth in enrolment at all levels of formal education, the school participation of girl child in the African region still lags behind. In Kenya, progress in education has been made ever since. Although girl-child enrolment in primary education has increased in all regions of the world over the recent years, their participation and completion is not sustained up to their time for sitting for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (UNESCO, 1996). Most developing countries are yet to realize the full benefits of girl-child education all together. Gender discrimination and vulnerability are major reasons of low participation of girls in education. In most developing countries, far more boys are educated than the girls are (UNICEF, 1997). If one would choose a desk in a school in a developing country today, the chances are that a male student would occupy it, yet various studies have shown that education of girl child is one of the best investments available to a developing country. This confirms the research findings that once enrolled; girl child is in a distinct Gross Enrolment Rate of

dropping out than boys. About 800,000 girls in 2004 dropped out of school in developing countries (UNICEF, 2004). There is a great need for removal of the obstacles hampering girl child enrolment and retention in school; the government has made substantial efforts to achieve wider combination of opportunities coupled with a great concern at primary school level. This is evident in a massive expansion of primary education as tremendous increase in the number of pupils enrolled is being realized, with the government declaration of free primary education. However, the population of girls decreases as they progress through the grades. As such the impressive enrolment realized nationally has not eliminated gender disparities regionally in the arid and semi- arid districts in enrolment rates. As reported girl's completion rate is 35% against 55% for boys and this further mark the disparities among the districts (Republic of Kenya, 1997). Despite the government initiatives in the past decades, the education sector still faces greater challenges and calls for urgent measures of enhancing girl-child participation in education. Each part of the country has its unique characteristics and different intensity of girl-child participation in education (UNESCO, 1997). Transition rate of boys and girls from primary to secondary in the country is thus indicated in Table 1.

Transition rate from primary schools to secondary schools remained below 50% between 2002 and 2004 but increased to above 50% in 2005 with boys transition rate being 58.3% and girls 56.2%. The upward trend continued to 2006 and was 56.5% for boys and 63.2% for girls. This indicator means that as at 2007, 36.8% of primary school children who sat Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination were not able to progress to the next cycle of education.

From Table 2 it was established that Gross Enrolment Rate increased in the province and in the county except in the years 2004 when the Gross Enrolment Rate for girls dropped at the province. The increase in enrolment may be attributed to the sustained reforms, Free Tuition Secondary Education, bursary schemes, the expansion program being undertaken by the government and increased demand of secondary education. In comparison of girls in the province and nationally, it was

Table 2. Secondary Gross Enrolment Rate by Gender in Nyanza Province and Nationally, 2002-2009.

Year	Province		National	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2002	34.2	25.2	29.8	26.4
2003	32.4	28.6	29.7	27.4
2004	31.9	23.1	32.1	27.6
2005	35.8	26.3	31.3	27.2
2006	37.7	28.7	34.6	29.9
2007	44.4	30.6	40.4	33.3
2008	47.6	32.7	46.3	38.8
2009	50.9	34.8	49.5	41.3

Source: Statistics and EMIS Section, Ministry of Education (2009).

Table 3. Gross Enrolment Rate for Boys and Girls in the nation, Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts from 2002-2011.

Year	Province		National	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2002	34.2	25.2	29.8	26.4
2003	32.4	28.6	29.7	27.4
2004	31.9	23.1	32.1	27.6
2005	35.8	26.3	31.3	27.2
2006	37.7	28.7	34.6	29.9
2007	44.4	30.6	40.4	33.3
2008	47.6	32.7	46.3	38.8
2009	50.9	34.8	49.5	41.3

Source: Statistical return on student enrolment in Rongo District for 2011, District Education Office, (D.E.O) 2011.

observed that girls' enrolment was lower at the province and higher at the national level. Over the period under review, boys recorded higher enrolment as compared to girls.

Table 3 indicates the Gross Enrolment Rate for boys and girls in the years that have been shown. It is realized that boys participation in education was more than the girls, in 2002 the difference between boys and girls in terms of Gross Enrolment Rate was 4.5%, in 2005 the difference was 13.5%, in 2008 when free secondary education was introduced the Gross Enrolment Rate difference between boys and girls was 9%. However the population of girls decreases as they progress through grades. This is an indication that girl child participation in education is still low compared to the boys even if the government has made tremendous effort to provide Free Secondary Education to both boys and girls. There was therefore the need to look at challenges that affect girl-child participation in education. From the table, it is

realized that the girls' enrolment is low compared to the boys, for instance the Gross Enrolment Rate difference between boys and girls was 8.5% in 2002, and in 2005 the Gross Enrolment Rate difference between boys and girls was 12.5%, while in 2008 the Gross Enrolment Rate difference between boys and girls was 3.1%. This is an indication that there are factors that hinder girl child participation in education which this study sought to find out. Meanwhile in the 2002 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education results, 12.7% of boys qualified for University admission compared to only 5.2% of girls. In 2003 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education results the percentage pass for girls was 3% while that of boys was 97% in Nyanza province (Aduda, 2004). In Nyanza province 2011 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education result analysis, the total number of mean grade 'A' scored were 767, boys who scored mean grade of 'A' were 709 while girls were 58. At the same time 2010 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education result analysis for

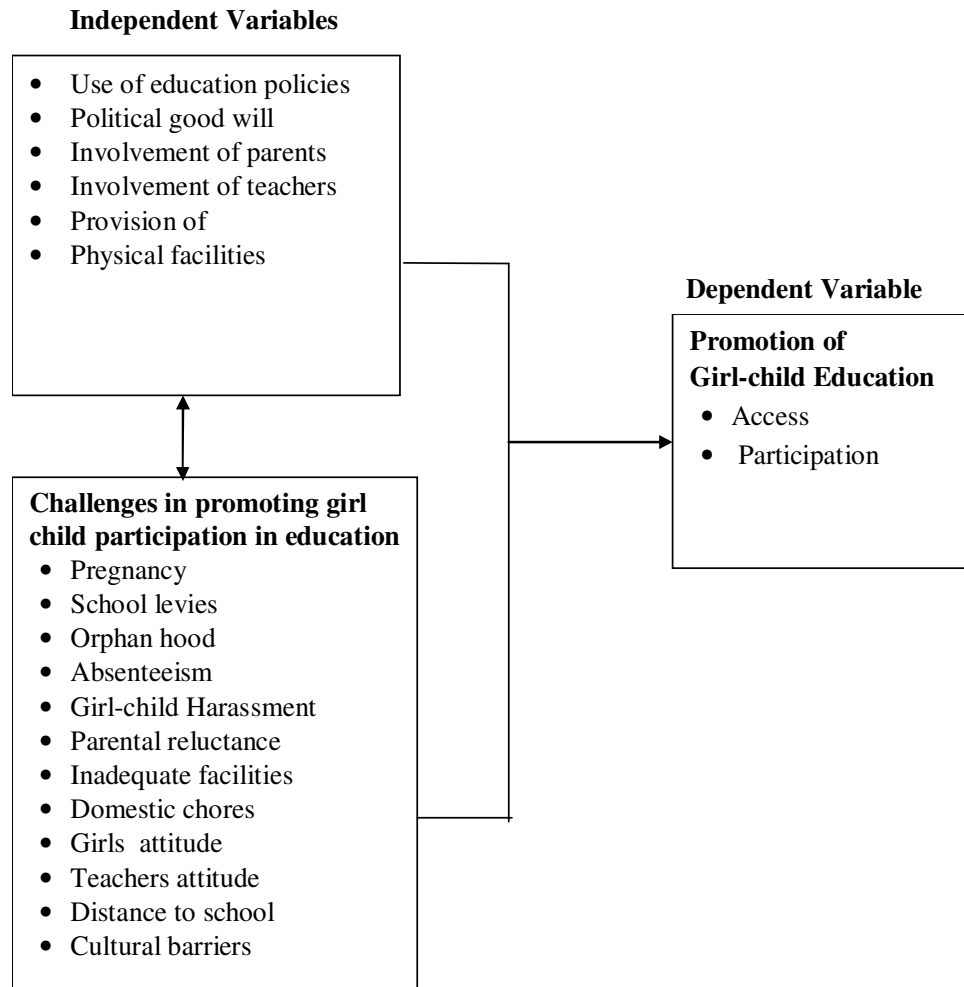


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework showing Opportunities and Challenges for Principals in promotion of girl-child secondary education.

Rongo district (Rongo DEOs' Office, 2011) indicates that 27 boys got mean grade of A while no girl scored a mean grade of 'A'. Ndhiwa district result analysis also indicates that no student managed to get a mean grade of 'A' in Ndhiwa district (Ndhiwa DEOs' Office (2011). Girls therefore need to be helped to better their performance in order to compete favorably with their male counterparts in Nyanza province. A critical review of literature further revealed that girl child education has been studied from other countries and regions of Kenya. Oloo (2003) researched on gender disparity in student performance in mixed day secondary schools in Migori district, her study embarked on the school related and economic factors that contribute to gender disparity in Migori district. Osodo (2008) studied at the impact of socio-economic factors that hinder promotion of secondary education in Siaya district. Meanwhile Osodo (2008) also researched on the role of guidance and counseling in mixed day secondary schools in addressing drop out of girls in Siaya district.

Research Questions

- i. Establish opportunities principals use in promotion of girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts.
- ii. Investigate challenges the principals' face in promoting girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework was used to focus on the variables that militate against girl child participation in education, the girls' access to education, challenges principals faced as they try to promote girl child participation in education. (Figure 1)

Girl child participation in education is greatly influenced by what goes on in the classrooms, in the schools and in the community. The principal is the main contributor to the success or failure of any school and

sets the school system in the right direction. The principal has the key role in curriculum implementation; he organizes plans and coordinates the school activities with the child at the center. School based factors contributed to poor girl child participation in secondary education by reinforcing gender differentiations that put the girl child at disadvantaged position compared with the boys. These are gender insensitive teaching and learning resources, inappropriate facilities, harassment by male teachers and peers, and fewer female teachers among others. The principal has the ability to plan what they will do in order to promote girl child participation in education. The principal has a role of making the school climate conducive for learning in terms of motivation, satisfaction and communication to the teachers, students and reduce poor participation of the girl child in education. Studies of the situations of girl-child education show that the disadvantage and discrimination start even before birth with parental and societal attitudes, which stress the value of a boy against a girl child (Odaga and Heneveld, 1995). Education is viewed as an instrument, which is just as profitable as any other form of investment. As the case in any investment, a choice has to be made, as such gender becomes a crucial factor in making decisions regarding who goes to school and for how long (Psacharopoulos and Woodall, 1985). In most cases, the girl child is more disadvantaged by the activities operating within the homes and schools than the boy. Both social cultural and social economic considerations combine to put girl child participation at a disadvantage (Wamahu and Njau, 1995) the principal has a role of formulating strategies that will promote participation of girl child within the school and outside the school. He has a role of looking into affirmative action and policies that will promote participation of girl child in education in secondary schools. The current study looked into the opportunities, challenges and strategies for principals in promoting girl child participation in education in public mixed day secondary schools in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts, Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the role of principals in promotion of girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts, Kenya. Objectives of the study were to: establish the opportunities for principals in promotion of girl-child education and investigate challenges principals face in promotion of girl-child education. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The study population consisted of 38 principals, 38 Director of Studies, 2 District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, 38 Board of Governors chair persons and 2010 girls. Saturated sampling technique was used to select 35 principals, 35 Director of Studies and 2 District Quality Assurance and Standard

Officers. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample 435 girl students. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used for data collection. Face and content validity of the instruments was determined by experts in the department of Educational Management and Foundation at Maseno University and the instruments improved based on their advice before using them for data collection. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, percentages and means. Qualitative data obtained from interview schedule were analyzed in an ongoing process as themes and sub themes emerged from the data.

RESULTS

Research question 1

The research question responded to was: What opportunities do principals use in promotion of girl-child education?

To address this research question the survey asked principals to indicate the opportunities they used in the promotion of girl-child education while Director of Studies and girls were asked to indicate their views on opportunities principals used in promotion of girl-child education. Their responses were as shown in Table 4.

Classification of weighted means

- 4.1-5.0 Very great opportunity
- 3.1-4.0 Great opportunity
- 2.1-3.0 Low opportunity
- 1.0-2.0 Least opportunity

Re-entry policy as a opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child education was rated 4.81 by principals. Director of Studies and girl students also indicated their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity greatest as the overall weighted perception mean was 4.34. Use of repetition policy as a opportunity to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be greatest as it was rated at 4.66. The Director of Studies' perception of the use of this opportunity was least as they rated it at 1.43 and according to girls perception of the use of this opportunity was low, as they rated it at 2.53. Director of Studies and girls also rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted mean score was rated at 2.36. On the use of repetition policy by principals to promote girls education, it was observed that there were girls who were still made to repeat classes while others were promoted to the next grade in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts as this was confirmed by the principals' Director of Studies 's and girls' mean rate of 4.66, 1.43 and 2.59.

Use of Free Tuition Secondary Education policy as an opportunity to promote girl-child education was consi-

Table 4. Opportunities for Principals in Promotion of Girl-child Education.

Opportunities for principals in promotion of Girl-child education	Weighted means for principals	Weighted means on perception of Director of Studies	Weighted means on perception of Girl-child	Overall weighted means on perception of Director of Studies and Girl-child
Government policies				
Re-entry	4.81	4.34	4.34	4.34
Repetition	4.66	1.43	2.44	2.36
Free Tuition Secondary Education	3.44	4.03	4.34	4.32
Political goodwill				
Provision of bursaries	4.66	4.43	2.53	2.67
Constituency Development Fund	4.65	4.17	4.80	4.75
Parental goodwill				
Advice to parents	3.63	4.46	3.13	3.23
Great parental level of education	2.13	1.97	2.84	2.78
Parents' positive attitudes	4.00	1.77	2.40	2.35
Promptness in payment of school levies	2.75	2.86	2.37	2.41
Involvement of teachers				
Teachers' positive attitudes	2.19	2.37	2.62	2.60
Regular class attendance by teachers	3.75	4.57	2.78	2.91
Provision of extra tuition by teachers	3.96	4.00	4.11	4.10
Physical facilities				
Girls' Toilets	3.44	3.83	3.28	3.32
Staff-rooms	2.78	2.86	3.05	3.04
Electricity	1.38	2.29	2.03	2.05
Facilities to dispose sanitary towels	2.38	2.46	2.19	2.21
Chairs/desks	3.44	4.06	3.47	3.51
Library	2.65	2.49	2.03	2.06
Water supply	2.94	2.2	3.25	3.17

dered by principals to be great as it was rated at 3.44. The Director of Studies' perception of the use of this opportunity was greatest as they rated it at 4.03 and girls' perception of the use of this opportunity was greatest as they rated it at 4.49. Director of Studies and girls also rated this opportunity greatest as the overall weighted mean scores was rated at 4.32. Use of bursaries as opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be greatest as they rated it at 4.66, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.43 and girls perceived the opportunity as great as they rated it at 3.40. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.67. Principals' use of Constituency Development Fund to promote girl-child education was rated 4.66 by

principals, 4.17 by Director of Studies and 4.80 by girls (Table 3). Use of Constituency Development Fund as a opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be very effective as it was rated at 4.65. Director of studies also perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it to be 4.17 while the girls also perceived this strategy as greatest as they rated it at 4.80. Director of Studies and girl-child also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity greatest as the overall weighted means was 4.75. In this respect the Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals used Constituency development fund to promote girl-child education.

Involvement of parents through inviting them to school to discuss matters affecting girl-child education as opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child edu-

cation was considered by principals to be great as they rated it at 3.63, the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.46 and girls perceived the opportunity as great as they rated it at 3.13. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity great as the overall weighted means was 3.23. Involvement of parents through finding out the educational level of parents as opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be low as they rated it at 2.13, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as least as they rated it at 1.97 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.84. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.78. Involvement of parents through encouraging them to have positive attitudes towards girls education was considered by principals to be greatest as they rated it at 4.00, the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as least as they rated it at 1.77 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.40. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.35. In this respect the Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals did not effectively encourage parents to have positive attitudes towards education. Involvement of parents through finding out their promptness in payment of school levies as opportunity used to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be low as they rated it at 2.75, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.86 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.37. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.41.

Involvement of parents through finding out the educational level of parents as opportunity used by principals to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be low as they rated it at 2.13, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as least as they rated it at 1.97 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.84. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.78. Involvement of teachers through advising them to have positive attitudes towards girl-child was considered by principals to be low as they rated it at 2.19, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.37 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.62. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.60. It was observed from the study that the principals

indicated by mean rate of 2.19 that teachers had positive attitudes towards girl-child education. Girls too were asked if teachers had positive attitudes towards their education. Girls gave their perception by a mean rate of 2.62. Involvement of teachers through ensuring that teachers attend classes regularly was considered by principals to be great as they rated it at 3.75, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.57 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.78. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity low as the overall weighted means was 2.91. It was established from the study that principals ensured that teachers attended classes by indicating mean rating of 3.75. Director of Studies and girls further indicated that teachers attended classes by mean rating of 3.57 and 2.78 respectively.

Involvement of teachers by being asked to provide extra tuition to the girls was considered by principals to be great as they rated it at 3.96, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.00 and girls perceived the opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.11. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity greatest as the overall weighted means was 4.10. Provision of toilets to girls as a opportunity used to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be great as they rated it at 3.44, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as great as they rated it at 3.83 and girls perceived the opportunity as great as they rated it at 3.28. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity as great as the overall weighted means was 3.32. In this respect the Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals promoted girl-child education by providing toilets even though they were not adequate. Provision with electricity in schools as a opportunity used to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be least as they rated it at 1.38, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.29 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.03. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity as low as the overall weighted means was 2.05. Provision of facilities to dispose of sanitary towels as a opportunity used to promote girl-child education was considered by principals to be low as they rated it at 2.38, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.46 and girls perceived the opportunity as low as they rated it at 2.19. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity as low as the overall weighted means was 2.21. Provision of desks/chairs to girls as a opportunity used to promote girl-child education was con-

Table 5. Challenges faced by Principals in Promotion of Girl-child Education.

Challenges	Weighted means for Principals	Weighted means on perception of Director of Studies	Weighted means on perception of Girl-child	Overall weighted means on Director of Studies and Girls
Pregnancies	4.88	4.57	4.91	4.88
Girl-child Inability to pay school levies	4.88	2.71	3.06	3.03
Orphan-hood	4.75	4.57	4.23	4.26
Absenteeism	4.72	3.99	4.06	3.76
Inadequate facilities	4.56	4.37	4.19	4.20
Domestic-chores	4.46	1.77	4.19	4.01
Long distance to and from school	4.38	4.34	4.59	4.57
Cultural barriers	3.36	2.94	1.50	1.60
Harassment by teachers and male students	3.41	3.74	4.78	4.70
Girl-child negative attitudes towards Education	2.03	2.00	4.36	4.14
Teachers' attitudes towards teen mothers' re-admission	2.03	2.00	4.39	4.21
Parents' reluctance to meet to girl-child needs	1.38	1.42	4.34	4.12

sidered by principals to be great as they rated it at 3.44, also the Director of Studies perceived this opportunity as greatest as they rated it at 4.06 and girls perceived the opportunity as great as they rated it at 3.28. Director of Studies and girls also gave their perception on principals' use of this prospect; they rated this opportunity as great as the overall weighted means was 3.32. Principals' use of desks/chairs in school to promote girl-child education was rated 3.44 by principals, 4.06 by Director of Studies and 3.47 by girls (Table 4). Principals' use of water to promote girl-child education was rated 2.94 by principals, 2.29 by Director of Studies and 3.25 by girls (Table 5).

Research question 2

The research question responded to was: What challenges do principals face as they promote girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts.

In response to this research question, principals, Director of Studies and girls indicated challenges faced by principals in promotion of girl-child education as shown in Table 5.

Classification of weighted means

4.1-5.0 Greatest challenge

3.1-4.0 Great challenge

2.1-3.0 Challenge

1.0-2.0 Least challenge

Pregnancy was considered by principals as the

greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.88, also the Director of Studies perceived pregnancy as the greatest challenge as they rated it 4.57, also the girls perceived pregnancy to be the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.91. Director of Studies and the girls also rated pregnancy as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted means was 4.88. Principals, Director of Studies and girls by mean rating of 4.88, 4.57 and 4.91 indicated that pregnancy was a major factor contributing to the poor performance of girls academically. Inability to pay school levies was considered by principals as the greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.88, also the Director of Studies perceived inability to pay school levies as a low challenge as they rated it 2.71, also the girls perceived inability to pay school levies to be a great challenge as they rated it at 3.06. Director of Studies and the girls also rated inability to pay school levies as a great challenge as the overall weighted means was 3.03 and in this respect the Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that inability to pay school levies was a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education even though to them it is not a serious challenge. Orphan hood was considered by principals as the greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.75, also the Director of Studies perceived orphan-hood as the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.57, also the girls perceived orphan hood to be the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.23. Director of Studies and the girls also rated orphan hood as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted means was

4.26. Girl-child absenteeism was considered by principals as the greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.72, also the Director of Studies perceived girl-child absenteeism as a great challenge as they rated it at 3.99, also the girls perceived girl-child absenteeism to be the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.06. Director of Studies and the girls also rated girl-child absenteeism as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 3.76. Inadequate physical facilities in schools was considered by principals as the greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.56, also the Director of Studies perceived inadequate physical facilities as the greatest challenge as they rated it 4.37, also the girls perceived inadequate physical facilities to be the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.19. Director of Studies and the girls also rated inadequate physical facilities as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.20. Domestic-chore was considered by principals as the greatest challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education as they rated it at 4.46, also the Director of Studies perceived domestic-chore as a least challenge they rated it at 1.77, also the girls perceived domestic-chore to be the greatest challenge as they rated it at 4.19. Director of Studies and the girls also rated domestic-chore as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted means was 4.01.

Long distance to school as a challenge faced by principals in the promotion of girl-child education was considered by principals as the greatest challenge as it was rated at 4.38, the Director of Studies perceived the challenge greatest as they rated it at 4.34 while the girls in their perception rated it at 4.59. Director of Studies and the girls also rated long distance to school as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.57. Girl-child harassment by teachers and male students as a challenge faced by principals in the promotion of girl-child education was considered by principals as great as it was rated at 3.41, the Director of Studies perceived the challenge great as they rated it at 3.74 while the girls in their perception rated it at 4.78. Director of Studies and the girls also rated girl-child harassment as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.70.

Harassment of girls by teachers and male students as a challenge faced by principals in the promotion of girl-child education was rated 3.41 by principals, 3.74 by Director of Studies and 4.78 by girls (Table 5). The study found out that some teachers (as indicated by Director of Studies' mean rate of 3.74, principals' mean rate of 3.41 and girls mean rate of 4.78) were harsh and inconsiderate to the girls, that the teachers had the tendency of thoughtlessly pushing the girls too far in pursuit of academic excellence. Cultural barriers as a challenge faced by principals in the promotion of girl-child education was considered by principals as a great challenge as it was rated at 3.36, the Director of Studies perceived the challenge as low as they rated it at 2.94

while the girls in their perception rated it at 1.50. Director of Studies and the girls also rated cultural barriers as the least challenge as the overall weighted mean was 1.60. Girl-child negative attitudes towards education as a challenge faced in the promotion of girl-child education was considered by principals as a great challenge as it was rated at 3.16, the Director of Studies perceived the challenge as least as they rated it at 1.46 while the girls in their perception rated it at 4.36. Director of Studies and the girls also rated girl-child negative attitudes towards education as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.14. Teachers' attitudes towards teen-mothers' re-entry as a challenge faced by principals was considered to be low as they rated it at 2.03, the Director of Studies also perceived it as low as they rated it at 2.00 while the girls perceived it as the greatest challenge with a mean of 4.39. Director of Studies and the girls also rated teachers' negative attitudes towards teen-mothers' re-entry as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.21. Parents' reluctance to meet girl-child needs as a challenge faced by principals in the promotion of girl-child education was considered least by principals as they rated it at 1.38, the perception of the Director of Studies on parents' reluctance to meet girl-child needs was least as they rated it at 1.42, also the perception of girls on this challenge was greatest as they rated it at 4.34. Director of Studies and the girls also rated parents' reluctance to meet girl-child needs as the greatest challenge as the overall weighted mean was 4.12.

DISCUSSION

From the findings of the study, it was realized that principals, Director of Studies and girls agreed that principals used re-entry policy to promote girl-child education. It is principals allowed teenage mothers to continue with their education after delivery. From the respondents, it was realized that girl-child resuming school after delivery is of benefit to the girl, to her family, the school, the community and the entire country as through education girls would gain new knowledge and skills that would be useful to them in future, such girls would act as role models and would encourage and inspire others to go to school. It would also help develop good character and good citizenship among the girls. In 1994, the Ministry of Education allowed girls to continue with education after dropping out of school due to early pregnancies (Ministry of Education, 1999). With their re-entry, participation rates were meant to increase. This trend therefore indicates that if most parents and girls were sensitized on re-admission policies then more girls who had conceived while in school would be re-admitted back to schools. These findings further concur with UNESCO (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2005) which targeted that by 2015 all school going children particularly

girls would have completed free and compulsory education of good quality more so with the intention of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary schools. Wamahiu and Njau (1995) agreed with the current study when they indicated that Botswana and Ivory Coast also have positive re-admission policies and that in these countries twenty percent and thirty percent respectively of girls were re-admitted to education system after delivery.

The Director of Studies and the girl students acknowledged that principals implemented re-entry policy to promote girl-child education. School principals are usually required to implement re-admission policy with the intention of giving girls who had conceived a chance to go back to school and continue with their education. Interviews conducted on Board of Governor chairpersons revealed that principals implemented re-entry policy as school girls who conceived and had delivered were re-admitted back to school. In fact one of the Board of Governor chairpersons asserted:

“Most of the girls who get pregnant while still in school are so young that if the government had not introduced re-entry policy, most of them would not have a chance to complete their secondary education. The policy has enabled girls a second chance to correct the wrong they had done and principals have allowed them to be back to school after delivery”

Another Board of Governor chair-person interviewed stated:

“The policy allows girls to stay in school up to the time they deliver and resume their studies as soon as they are strong enough to do so. If a girl is denied this chance, then the parents or the girl can report to the nearest education office and have the school compelled to re-admit her based on the Children Act or Education Act. However, many head teachers allow girls to come back after delivery while other head teachers expel girls immediately their pregnancy is discovered. Most girls lack support from parents, teachers or their classmates to challenge their expulsion. They may also feel they deserve to be punished or feel too shy to re-join their classmates”.

In this case, principals promoted girl-child education by allowing girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy related cases to resume their studies after delivery. From interview conducted on District Quality and Assurance Standards Officers it was further confirmed that principals allowed girls who had delivered to go back to school and learn. In this regard one of the District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers stated:

“Circulars have been distributed by the ministry to all primary and secondary schools allowing teen-mothers to resume their studies after delivery and most heads of schools have to adhere to this”.

Director of Studied and girls indicated least and low

scores on their perception on repetition. This meant that repetition policy as a opportunity for promoting girl-child education was not fully used by the principals. Thus some girls were made to repeat classes while others were promoted to the next class. Repetition of a grade according to respondents was not a total waste, as it provided students with time to grasp concepts and get them clearly hence being able to improve on their participation in education. Nevertheless, forced repetition forced girls to drop out of school reducing girl participation rate in secondary education.

From interviews conducted on Board of Governor Chairpersons, it was noted that there were girls who were promoted to the next class while others were made to repeat. One of the Board of Governor chair-person asserted:

“Girls who don't perform well have been made to repeat grade to give them an opportunity to better their grades, while those who are weak but feel like advancing to the next grade are allowed to do so”.

Another board of governor chairpersons stated; “Most principals made some girls to repeat in case they were weak in class and this impacted on the girl-child negatively as some dropped out altogether”. The principal has a role to ensure that there is an automatic promotion, which should be combined with other measures such as extra tuition to improve performance (Kasente, 1998). Making girls to repeat was an indication of the denial of a Childs' right to progress to the next class (Republic of Kenya, 2009a). An interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers indicated that there were schools that allowed girls to move from one grade to the next. From the interview conducted one other District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer;

“Weaker girls who will not improve even if they are made to repeat are promoted to the next grade and we have intervened in case we are informed of any school that forces girls to repeat. We therefore know that girls are promoted to the next grade”.

It was observed by the District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers that girls were promoted to the next grade hence this is promotion of their education because this reduces chances of girls giving up in education because they were made to repeat grade. The findings of the current study agree with the study conducted by Eshiwani (1993) which revealed that repetitions had several implications for educational systems. The first implication is that a number of school places have to be provided for every successful school leaver. Repetitions, therefore, imply wastage in the system. Secondly, the amount of money for a repeater adds an extra financial burden to the education system. Making of girls to repeat grades exacts a toll on the students involved and absorbs a large share of the limited resources available for education. From the findings of the study it was also

realized from the girls that they were not in favor of repetition as they indicated that repetition made some girls to drop out from school. This finding is in line with Kasente (1998) who also observed that one general scenario is that girls repeat classes and perform poorly than boys due to the fact that during class instructions, some male teachers practice sexual harassment against female students, victimization, provocative examples, intonation and body language. That this affects girls' participation in class and could make them perform poorly in exams or drop out of school. This finding is also in line with Ouma (2002) who noted that while repetition is against the government policy, it is still actively encouraged in schools due to publication of league tables based on mean scores at KCSE.

Director of Studies and girls showed that principals did effectively use Free Tuition Secondary Education policy to promote girl-child education. From interviews conducted with Board of Governor chair-persons, they indicated that Free Tuition Secondary Education increased girl-child participation in education. It was noted by one Board of Governor chairperson

"From the time Free Tuition Secondary Education was introduced, many students even those who are very old have gone back to school. Many mixed day secondary schools have also been established in several places that give young girls and boy's opportunities to realize their dreams".

Another board of governor chair-person had to say:

"It is quite pleasing to see needy students from various backgrounds get opportunities to go to school. Even those students whose homes were very far from school are now lucky as right now there are schools in most places where they can go and learn"

Interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers concerning contribution of Free Tuition Secondary Education towards the increase of girls in secondary education indicated that District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers also acknowledged that Free Tuition Secondary Education has contributed to girl-child education. District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers stated

"Many girls have had the opportunity to go to school since the government has opened up so many public day secondary schools in the entire nation; this has been of great advantage to girls from poor families as they pay less school levies as compared to their counterparts in boarding schools".

With the introduction of Free Tuition Secondary Education policy, day scholars are only required to pay for their lunch, for instructional expansion and upgrading. The government is meeting the bulk of the cost, 10,265/= (Republic of Kenya, 2009b). Respondents were asked if Free Tuition Secondary Education policy contributed to girl-child education. In response, the respondents said

that Free Tuition Secondary Education policy promoted girl-child education. Interviews conducted with Board of Governor chair-persons established that Free Tuition Secondary Education had given girls more opportunities to participate in secondary education. Interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers too gave more emphasis on the fact that establishment of more day secondary schools gave girls a chance to learn. This finding is consistent with the findings of Osodo (2008) who indicated that one of the most recent policies introduced by the government to promote secondary education was Free Tuition Secondary Education. The findings of the study indicated that Free Tuition Secondary Education impacted positively on the girl-child as many of them were seen going to school from the time it was introduced. Increase of girl-child participation in secondary education contributes to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal, which aims at achieving gender parity by 2015. Respondents indicated that the establishment of more mixed day secondary schools promoted girl-child education. This finding is consistent with the findings of Gogo (2008) who indicated that one of the most recent policies introduced by the government to promote secondary education was the creation of more mixed day secondary schools. The findings of the study indicated that more mixed day secondary schools impacted positively on the girl-child as girls were seen going to school from the time it was introduced.

The findings of this study are in agreement with Osodo (2008) who established that access to secondary education was hampered by the number of secondary schools, long distance to school, facilities and staffing. In Osodos' (2008) study, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2007) indicated that 55% of the nations' population is five or more kilometers away from the nearest public secondary school. In order to promote secondary education, there is need for more quality day and less boarding schools in the country. This view is consistent with the fact that rural day secondary schools had the following advantages: they are the surest way of showing government commitment to provision of education for all, they make secondary education more accessible to many more children, the cost of setting up five rural day secondary schools equals the cost of setting up one boarding school, even the poor can go to rural day secondary schools, students in rural day secondary schools do not lose parental influence and control especially in the teenage years and that concepts learnt at school can easily and instantly be applied by the children in a natural home environment. Gatawa (1998) observed that the rural poor in Zimbabwe could not send their children to school, hence the government embarked on an ambitious program to set up rural schools where parents provide labor and building materials. Therefore according to Gatawa (1998) the 1980 to 1989 saw the construction of schools in rural areas where no second-

ary schools existed before due to the social demand.

On the whole the three respondents indicated that principals used education policies to promote girl-child education as they indicated that girls who conceived while at school were allowed to resume their studies after delivery, and at the same time Free Tuition Secondary Education also promoted girl-child education as it contributed to the increase of the number of girls in secondary education. Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals did not effectively use bursaries to promote girl-child education. From interviews conducted with Board of Governor chairpersons it was confirmed that needy girls from various schools who applied for bursaries were provided with bursaries and this promoted girl-child education. From the interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers it was also established that girls who applied for bursaries were provided with bursaries and this promoted their education. District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers noted "Bursary scheme has benefited needy girls and boys in the district as the needy students often applied and qualified and they were finally provided with the bursary. We don't give cash but we often write cheques that are sent to various schools where the girls learn". Provision of government bursaries is one of the opportunities in place that principals use to promote girl-child education. The responses from principals, Director of Studies, girls, board of governor chairpersons and District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers indicated that some students in schools in the two districts had been provided with bursaries to promote their education. From the findings of the study principals indicated that girls who needed assistance through bursaries were often provided with as they advised those girls who were interested in such to apply. However, it was established by interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers that not all girls who applied for bursaries were provided with. Director of Studies too acknowledged that provision with government bursaries contributed to girl-child education since the poor and orphaned girls who had applied for bursaries were provided with and this promoted their education. It was further established from the findings of the study that girls especially from poor background and orphans benefited from this as it assisted them to pay for school levies. Board of Governor chairpersons indicated from the interviews conducted with them that they often reminded parents to apply for bursaries on behalf of their daughters or to inform their daughters to apply for bursaries in order to get ways of paying school levies hence promoting their education. One Board of Governor chairperson stated;

"Needy students seem to be brighter than others and one of the best ways of ensuring that they don't drop out of school is by advising them to apply for bursaries. Principals have advised them to apply for bursaries and at the same time I have

informed the chiefs to inform parents to ensure that their children applied for bursaries"

Osodo (2008) concurs with the findings of the current study that bursaries had been used to pay school fees for pupils from poor backgrounds and that this was an initiative intended to promote secondary education in the country. Overall, the three respondents indicated that principals promoted girl-child education by advising girls from poor background to apply for bursaries. Interviews conducted with Board of Governors chairpersons on whether principals were provided with Constituency development fund indicated that most schools were provided with Constituency Development Fund and that it was used to construct educational facilities that promoted girl-child education. The purpose of the Ministry of Education is to address education as a fundamental right for all children as is stipulated in Children's Act 2001. Therefore, the government has identified unique needs and developed policies and programs to meet those needs in line with the ministry of education's objectives of promoting girl child participation in education. The government had always strived to promote secondary education through the provision of bursaries and constituency development funds. Osodo (2008) in his study of the impact of socio-economic factors that hinder promotion of secondary school education in Siaya District indicates that CDF has been used to construct classrooms, laboratories and provision of some facilities such as desks, electrification and drilling of boreholes, the bursary components of Constituency development fund has also been used to pay school fees for pupils from poor backgrounds. Overall, the three respondents indicated that principals promoted girl-child education as they requested for Constituency development fund that would be used to construct school buildings and provide school physical facilities. Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals did effectively involve parents to promote girl-child education. It is the responsibility of the principals to seek and promote positive parental interventions and eschew unnecessary interference. This was to be achieved by nurturing cordial relationships between the principals, teachers and girls. Parental involvement was to be enlisted to promote girl-child education. This helped them to share with the school community on the best ways and means of promoting girl-child education. In this respect, an interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers about principals' involvement of parents to promote girl-child education revealed that parents were involved in the promotion of girl-child education. One of the District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers had this to say: "No one person can manage a school alone and it is for this reason that the government requires that principals are assisted to run schools by parents, Boards of Governor and Parents Teachers Associations. When such important stake holders are involved then principals will have ease of

managing schools". Indeed, parents were involved in the education of their children thus. Thus one board of governor's chairpersons indicated that principals invited parents to school annually to discuss various issues with them, and to inform them of the girls' performance. In this respect the Board of Governor chairperson noted "Every year parents are invited to school to discuss academic issues concerning their children. When parents are invited to school, some parents often attended while others never attended".

These findings are consistent with those of Osodo (2008) who found that the most successful approaches to girls' education involve multiple interventions tailored to a specific situation, some interventions take precedence because they lay the necessary grounds for others to be successful, for example for the girls' better performance, invitation of parents to discuss matters pertaining to girls academic performance may lay the necessary grounds for others to be successful. The current finding is in line with Ngaruiya (2008) in his study on the role of head-teachers in promoting girl-child participation in education in Trans-Mara District. According to Ngaruiya (2008), the success of girl-child secondary education will depend on the role of the secondary school head-teachers' involvement of all stakeholders emphasizing on girl-child education. To achieve this, the head-teacher has a role to invite guest speakers and women role models during annual general meetings to educate parents and to make them aware of their responsibility in providing necessary resources that will enable the girl-child to learn effectively. Interviews conducted with Board of Governor chair-persons confirmed that parents with higher education positively contributed to the education of their children. One Board of Governor chairperson noted,

"Parents with higher education level had a lot of interest in their children's education. They would always strive to ensure that they provided their girls with what they needed and whenever meetings were called at school, they attend and participate positively".

This finding concurs with Juma (1994) who discovered that educational level and outlook of parents is transmitted to their offspring. Juma further indicated that there is a relationship between parental levels of education and girls enrolment and performance in examinations in school because educated parents with great income were able to provide their children with a conducive home environment, provide all the necessities for school and pay extra tuition hence encouraging access and better performance for girls because they understand the value of education and its benefit to the child. From the findings of the study principals, Director of Studies and girls indicated that educational level of parents affected their education. This implied that such parents would always provide them with personal effects, would provide them with adequate time for private

studies, and would pay their school levies promptly. The findings of this study further concurred with Viliija (1997) who established in his study of students' attitude towards education and the future since the restoration of Lithuania's independence (1990-1997) that academic results of students depend on a number of subjective and objective factors, such as gender and age of the student, his/her plans in the future, composition of the family, the education of parents and even the location of residence.

Cheges' study (1983) is also in agreement with the current study as he found out in his study on Maasai girls that great educational level of parents, parental occupation and older members' level of education and occupation were significant variables explaining poor participation for Maasai girls in primary schools. It is based on such findings that Marube (2007) stated that the success of girl-child secondary education would depend on the role of secondary school head-teachers involving all in girl-child education.

To achieve this, the head-teacher has a role to invite guest speakers and women role models during annual general meetings to educate the parents and make them aware of their responsibility in providing the necessary resources that will enable the girl-child to learn effectively. Based on the findings of this study it is therefore necessary to know the education level of parents with a view to helping girls from such families to acquire secondary education. The Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals did not effectively encourage parents to have positive attitudes towards education. This also concurred with interview conducted with Board of Governor chairperson, which indicated that some parents had positive and negative attitudes towards their girls' education. From interviews conducted with board of governor chairpersons, 18 (fifty one percent) of them established that parents had positive attitudes towards girl-child education. A board of governor chairperson had this to say: "Parents who have positive attitude towards their girls' education try by all means to ensure that their girls are in school; whenever possible they visit the school to find out the academic progress of their children. Those who don't mind about their daughters' education don't even bother about giving them time to conduct private studies, they feel their daughters should be doing various duties at home but not studying".

It was further established from the interview conducted on District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers that some parents had negative towards girl-child education. In this respect, District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers said

"It has been difficult to deal with some parents when it comes to the education of their children. Some feel that the girls are wasting time in school and instead should use such times to some useful duty back at home. Some instead of giving their girls ample time to revise will always engage them

in other activities. Principals have reported to us cases of parents who have refused to buy for their girls the basic requirements for school and often make the girls to shy away and may not want to come to school”.

The current findings are in agreement with Ballara (1992) who established that households, fathers and men in general have negative attitude towards women's education, especially when it results in possibility of learning new skills that is given to women in the family. These attitudes lead to numerous stereotype gender biases in schools, families and in the society that impede the learning of girls and thus reduce their participation in education. This view has been supported by a research done in Gross Enrolment Rate which showed that many poor and large families preferred to educate boys for family continuity, headship of household and property inheritance, since girls may marry and go away from their homes (Okojie and Tjombonde, 1996). Moreover inability to pay school fees and purchase books, equipment and clothes compel parents to invest in the education of their sons, whom they see as a source of future family support, in the preference to their daughters whose economic contribution could as well be to a different household (UNESCO, 1997). In this case daughters are only seen as additional sources of household labor, who once married will become part of the productive labor force of another household (UNESCO, 1995). Furthermore, education is seen to give women better earnings opportunities which tend to give them more independence and change their economic status, a fact which sometime gave rise to family tensions. In conclusion, one can say that the ratio of boys to girls in any household will influence their active school participation because the privileged position of boys as compared to girls who are culturally “lesser children” in the African society. However research done by Ngaruiya (2008) postulates that the success of girl-child education depends on the role of school principals in involving the parents in the education of their daughters even if some parents have negative attitude towards girls' education while others have positive attitude towards girls' education.

From interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, it was established that some parents were prompt in payment of school levies while some of them were not prompt. He indicated from interviews

“Most of the parents who care about the education of their girls will always pay school levies as early as required by the school. Some parents have even gone to the extent of paying a whole years' school levies so that the girl learns freely without interference to go for school levies every now and then. However there are some few parents who will only pay school levies once their girls have been sent away from school several times”

Although the government has introduced Free Tuition Secondary Education, parents are still expected to cater for 59.78% of the cost for day students (Republic of Kenya, 2009a). One of the key areas where parents had to be involved was in payment of school levies. From the study it was realized that parents were not prompt in payment of school levies, this affected girl-child education as students whose parents were not prompt in payment of school levies had to be interfered with at times due to fee related problems. This implied that if some parents paid school levies while others did not pay promptly, principals would find it difficult to purchase teaching and learning materials. Lack of adequate teaching and learning materials would therefore lead to student unrest since girls whose parents had paid school levies promptly would not understand why adequate teaching and learning resources would not be purchased while they had paid school levies as required by the school authorities. From interviews conducted with Board of Governor chairpersons it was realized that most parents paid school levies promptly. In this respect one Board of Governor chairperson stated;

“Most parents paid school levies as required and whenever a parent could not pay school levies early enough, he had to talk to the principals early enough so that they agree on how and when they will pay, so that girls are not sent away from school to go and collect school levies”.

Another Board of Governor chairperson asserted;

“Principals had problems with parents about school levies in the first week of opening, but once girls who had not completed payment of school levies were sent away from school to go and collect school levies, most of their parents would then pay. However, there are a category of parents who will let their children stay long at home if they were sent away for school levies”

From the interviews conducted with Board of Governor chairpersons it was established that most parents were prompt in payment of school levies. Payment of school levies promptly by parents implied that principals had ample time to purchase school requirements early enough so that teachers could teach effectively and learners too have adequate time to be taught as they would not be sent back home looking for school levies while their contemporaries taught. Parents' promptness in payment of school levies promoted girl-child education as girls were relaxed as they were aware that they had completed payment of school levies and so revise freely without any worry about school levies and not missing any lesson or exams due to school levy related problems. Overly, the three respondents indicated that principals promoted girl-child education as they involved parents in the education of their daughters through various ways. For instance the respondents acknowledged that parents were advised by principals on the importance of girl-child education. However, it was observed that parents were

not prompt in payment of school levies and this affected girl-child education as sometimes girls were sent back home for school levies hence missing valuable time that should have been used for learning in school. The Director of Studies and the girl-child acknowledged that principals involved teachers in promoting girl-child education. From interviews conducted with Board of Governor chairpersons, it was established that Principals encouraged teachers to have positive attitudes towards girl-child education by assisting them in various areas that they had problems in school. It was established from one of the Board of Governor chair-persons

“The principal has always called teachers in meetings where the executive board members are also invited and teachers are encouraged to have positive attitudes towards girls’ education and help them realize their dreams of passing exams”

From interviews that were conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers it was indicated that principals involved teachers in various ways to promote girl-child education. In this respect District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers stated;

“The principal as the overall Gross Enrolment Rate of the school has a great task in the management of the school in order to achieve desired results, he has to ensure that his/her school has the right number of teachers to provide effective services to the girls, he has to ensure that, the teachers do their duties effectively like coming to schools, attending to their lessons promptly, covering the contents of the syllabus in good time and making sure every department in the school runs the right way”.

It was noted from the study that for the achievement of better results in a school, teachers have to be involved in the education of girl-child. Therefore, for good results in a school, principals had to use effective ways of involving the teachers. One of the effective ways was by ensuring that the teachers had positive attitudes towards girl-child education. It was observed from the study that the principals indicated by mean rate of 2.19 that teachers had positive attitudes towards girl-child education. One of the ways of having a positive attitude was by providing guidance and counseling to the girl-child and where necessary helping them solve problems they encounter in subjects selected. Director of Studies were asked if principals encouraged teachers to have positive attitudes towards girl-child education by guiding and counseling girls, listening to their problems and being close to them. The perception of Director of Studies by mean rate indicated 2.37. This is a low opportunity implying that principals did not effectively encourage teachers to be positive towards girl-child education. When teachers had positive attitudes towards girl-child education, the girls too will have positive attitudes towards them and be positive about the subjects they teach, hence promotion of girl-child education.

Oloo (2003) postulated that the attitude of teachers towards girl-child education promoted or hampered their performance. The current findings are in agreement with the findings of the Republic of Kenya (2002) which indicated that there are factors such as poor teaching and learning environment, which leads to lack of motivation in a class, teachers’ attitude and behavior, and teaching practices that may disadvantage girls. That such school factors limit girls’ expectations and reinforce negative self-perceptions.

In a study by Mulwa (1998) on causes of pupil absenteeism and dropping out of primary school in the arid and semi-arid areas, conducted in Kerio valley District, a different set of causes were identified. These were the poor relationship between teachers and pupils, lack of pupils’ motivation, lack of food at home, chronic sickness, and medical problems, physically marked deviations among pupils such as age, height, and involvement in casual employment to meet basic needs and long distance between schools and homes. In these findings, the most important of them all could be the identification of the role teachers’ play in influencing attendance and participation in education. Based on the findings of this study therefore, the researcher was of the opinion that teachers should be trained in establishing good working relationships with the pupils themselves. From the perception of the principals Director of Studies and girls it was established that teachers were involved in the promotion of girl-child education. Whenever teachers attended classes, they got a chance to impart knowledge and skills to the girls thus promoting their education. By regular class attendance teachers got a chance to complete the syllabus early enough and be ready for examinations that they give to the girls. Proper and early syllabus coverage also meant girls were prepared early enough to be ready to sit with other students when it reached time for national examination. Wamahiu and Njau (1995) observed that retention in schools can be greatly enhanced if the quality of instruction is stepped up and the curriculum made relevant.

It is important to note that in Rongo and Ndiwa districts Children are frequently taught in overcrowded class rooms by unqualified and unmotivated teachers, who are poorly paid and lack support. Teacher absenteeism is widespread, eroding public confidence in the value of education. Learning is further constrained by dilapidated schools, inadequate facilities and instructional methods which inhibit rather than nourish the potential of the children.

The study observed that the quality of teaching was often low with worked teachers and a very passive approach to teaching. This could have affected the completion rates hence wastage. It has been observed from the current findings that the success of girl-child secondary education depends on the role of principals’ involving of teachers. To achieve this, the principal has to ensure that teachers provide extra tuition to the girls.

Girls and Director of Studies concurred on their perception by indicating a great score in their mean rate while the principals indicated a great score meaning that teachers provided extra tuition to the girls.

Girls probably gave a higher score because they were the ones in position to tell if the teachers provided them with extra tuition since the busy schedule of the principals would sometimes not make it very easy for principals to monitor how teachers provided extra tuition to the girls. Director of Studies rated a higher score probably because they are the ones directly in charge of academic issues in school and so to ensure academic excellence in school he had to see to it that teachers provided extra tuition to the girls. Provision of extra tuition to the girls ensure adequate coverage of syllabus and catered for the slow learners who might have failed to get certain concepts right while they were being taught in class. In case a teacher was absent during the day and never attended to his or her lessons, provision of such extra tuition gave them that opportunity to cover what they would have covered during a normal lesson, during the time allocated on the time table. Overall, the three respondents indicated that principals promoted girl-child education since they acknowledged with great and higher scores that principals encouraged teachers to attend classes regularly and that he ensured that teachers provided extra tuition to the girls. Board of Governor Chairpersons was interviewed on whether their schools had toilets for girls. All Board of Governor Chairpersons 34 (100%) said that their schools had toilets that girls used whenever they were in need. A board of governor chairperson observed;

“One of the most important facilities that we ensured was provided in the school was the girls’ toilets. Previously when the school was started, our girls shared toilets with the girls in the primary, but later we built our own to assist our girls”

With the availability of girls’ toilets, girls learnt peacefully without fear or stress of where to go to whenever they wanted to respond to a call of nature. From the interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, he established further; “There is no school in the district that does not have toilets, we have often inspected all the schools to ensure that schools have toilet facilities used by students whenever necessary”

It was revealed from interviews conducted on Board of Governor Chairpersons that some schools had staff rooms while others did not have. However, those schools that did not have staffrooms were provided with some rooms where they prepared their lessons before they could go to class and teach. A Board of Governor chairperson had this to say;

“The teachers in my school use one of the rooms that were meant to be a classroom to be a temporary staffroom. Even though it was meant to be a classroom, the room serves the teachers well

as they use it for various purposes for the benefit of the girl-child”.

For whichever reasons, principals provided rooms where teachers promoted girl-child education for it was in such rooms where teachers assisted the girls on various academic issues. It was noted from District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers that teachers were provided with staffrooms from where they would prepare their lessons and also assist the students. District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers noted;

“Schools have staff rooms that promote teaching and learning. In schools where a staffroom has not been built for the teachers, one classroom is converted into a staff room and teachers use them to prepare for their lessons”.

Interviews conducted with Board of governor chairpersons showed that some schools had electricity while other schools did not have. From interviews conducted with the Board of governor chair-persons one of them stated

“Electricity supply has never reached our area and this has made it difficult for girls to conduct private studies effectively since poor lighting at home and even in schools has not made it easier for girls to revise or complete their home-work as required.”

Board of Governor chair-persons indicated through the interviews conducted with them that schools had desks/chairs that girls used for learning purposes. A Board of Governor chairperson had this to say: “We have provided desks/chairs to the girls, in forms one and two use desks where they sit three per desk while from forms three to four girls were given lockers and chairs to use” Interviews conducted with Board of Governor chair-persons revealed that some schools had no libraries while other school had well established libraries. In this respect one chairperson of Board of Governors said;

“In my school there is a big library that can effectively serve the needs of the girls and the teachers. It has been well equipped and girls can borrow books for their academic progress. Once in a while teachers from the neighboring school borrow text books from us since their school is just beginning”.

However the other Board of Governor chair-person observed “So far we don’t have a library, even though one of the classes has been converted into a room where text books are kept. Students often go to this room and borrow books for reading” Director of Studies too indicated that schools had toilets for girls even though they were not adequate. Lack of adequate toilets affected girl-child education because some girls often found it cumbersome waiting on a queue for others to use the toilets first before they could use them. Principals’ provision of toilets for girls promoted girl-child education as they provided the girls with a place to relieve themselves when there was need. Studies done by Wamahiu and Njau (1995) also support the fact that

outright lack of separated toilets or latrines may hinder girl-child attendance of school. This will therefore hamper syllabus coverage and in turn results into poor performance among the girls. A study by the Forum for African Women Educationists (2004) showed that more than half of the girls who drop-out of school in upper primary and secondary school perform poorly in class because they lack sanitary towels and separate toilet facilities. It is the role of the principals to put in place and maintain all physical structures in school. The principals have the role of ensuring that physical structures were in good working conditions (Republic of Kenya, 1980). While staffrooms were available, it was realized that some schools had adequate staffrooms while other schools had staffrooms that were too small and not well equipped. This made it difficult for teachers to mark the girls' books and papers and also give them adequate attention in case the girls had some problems that required help from the teachers. It was also observed that some schools had adequate supply of electricity while other school did not have electricity. Schools with adequate supply of electricity enabled girls to carry out their home work effectively and at the same time conduct their private studies with no lighting difficulties at night or at dawn. However, schools without electricity found it difficult to conduct private studies at dawn or late in the evening since there would be no lighting for them in the school. Teachers in schools with no supply of electricity too found it difficult to do some school work in school at night. Chairs/desks are very useful tools to teachers and students in school. Principals provided desks/chairs where girls sat as they were being taught in classrooms. The provision with desks/chairs meant that girls sat down while they were being taught and this gave them the comfort and conducive atmosphere for learning therefore making it easy for them to concentrate on what they were being taught.

The findings of Nyamesa (2008) in his study of pupil wastage in public primary schools in Nandi North District are in agreement with the findings of the current study as Nyamesa established that in Kenya concerns continue to be raised in the failure of the education system to satisfactorily inculcate a modern scientific culture and to imbue learners with desirable social skills and values. This is attributed to inadequacies in the provision and maintenance of essential physical facilities, instructional, and human resource capacities and a broad and inflexible curriculum mainly assessed through exams, which demand memorization of facts at the expense of development of great cognitive skills such as reasoning and problem solving. From the study, it was discovered that some schools had adequate libraries; others did not have libraries at all. Lack of libraries in schools contributed to poor performance of girls because it was an indication that girls had no stock of text books that they could often refer to in case they missed a concept while being taught in class. Schools with libraries

promoted girl-child education as the libraries had various materials where girls could borrow and read so as to acquire relevant knowledge and information that promoted their education. Libraries in the schools were also used as study halls, places where girls would go and revise quietly with no noise and undue interference.

These findings are in agreement with a study conducted by Federation of African Women Educationists (2004), which showed that more than half of the girls who dropped out of school in upper primary and secondary school perform poorly in class because they lack separate toilet facilities and facilities to dispose of sanitary towels. The study findings also indicated that in most schools there were hardly any facilities to dispose of sanitary towels and that in most cases girls shared pit latrines with boys or queued to use the few facilities in full view of boys and female teachers. Such factors often made shy girls to miss going to school and therefore hampering syllabus coverage and in turn results to poor performance in curriculum content. Overall, the three respondents indicated that principals promoted girl-child education by provision of physical facilities even though it was realized that all (100%) schools lacked adequate physical facilities. The Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that pregnancy was a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education. It was observed from the findings of the study that pregnancy was a factor that affected girl-child education; this was because once a girl got pregnant, she could not fully concentrate on her academics. Principals, Director of Studies and girls by mean rating of 4.88, 4.57 and 4.91 indicated that pregnancy was a major factor contributing to the poor performance of girls academically. When girls got pregnant; they occasionally missed school, due to pregnancy therefore, missing valuable lessons hence their accumulated poor performances during end-term, end-year or even national examinations. Pregnancy among girls implied that such girls got demoralized, would be a victim of a wide range of different types of treatment, such as harsh punishment, including beatings and verbal abuse, bullying by older male pupils, extra domestic chores at home and an unfair allocation of "domestic" tasks at school. Pregnancies among school girls bring a lot of humiliation to the family and this may cause such girls to get married at an early age leading to school dropout.

Board of Governor chair-persons and District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers echoed further that pregnancy cases were rampant among the school going girls and that it interfered with girl-child education.

When the Board of Governor chair-persons were interviewed, one of them stated:

"Nowadays it is common to find many school girls pregnant. It has become too much that the government realizing that many girls were going to drop out of school due to pregnancy, decided to introduce a policy that allowed girls who had con-

ceived to deliver and then resume their classes. The main problem with pregnancy is that it affects girl-child education due to the complications that come with it”.

Interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers confirmed that pregnancy was a challenge to girl-child education by stating that, “Girl-child pregnancies have increased and it is as if someone somewhere is not doing her/his work effectively by not counseling girls on abstinence and pregnancy related cases. Teachers and all the school stake-holders have to see to it that both boys and girls become responsible in all aspects of life” According UNICEF (1998) more than 15 million girls aged 15 to 19 gave birth each year, that mother-hood at a very young age entails complications during pregnancy and delivery and a risk of maternal death that is much greater than average, the children of the young mothers have higher levels of morbidity and mortality. That early child bearing continues to be an impediment to improvements in educational, economic and social status of women, overall, early motherhood can severely curtail educational and employment opportunities and are likely to have a long term adverse impact on children’s quality of life. The current study is in agreement with Majiwa (2005) in his study of factors that affect the participation of girls in secondary education in Turkana District which established socio-cultural factors that contributed to low participation of girls in Turkana district as pregnancies and early marriages.

It is a requirement that students pay some school levies even if the government was paying the bulk of it. However some of the girls especially from poor families are still not able to pay the bit that is left for them. This has resulted into frequent absenteeism from school as they are required to pay the expected amount for the school to run effectively. Once girls are sent home for such while others are in school and are being taught, they don’t get the concepts taught while absent. This idea of being absent every now and then take a lot of their time from school and cause lack of interest in education with the consequent that the girls end up dropping out of school. When the opinion of the Board of Governor chairpersons were sought on whether being unable to pay school levies was a challenge to girl-child education, it was established that there were girls who were not able to pay school levies and this was a hindrance to their education.

A Board of Governor chair-person emphasized “Most of the girls from poor families are sometimes not able to pay school levies. Most of the parents from such poor homes have to go to work elsewhere so as to raise money to pay for their children. In some cases a family could be having more than two children to educate and at the same time they have no salary to be paid at the end of the month. This makes girls from such poor families to get difficulties in paying school levies as

required by the school”.

From interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers it was realized that some girls were unable to pay school levies, he said “Most of the school fees that the parents were to pay are paid by the government however; it is surprising that the little amount that the parents are to pay some of them still cannot afford to pay”.

Inability to pay school levies by the girl-child was also cited as a cause of poor performance. Poverty limits one from getting basic needs. It was observed that there were girls, whom poverty caused problems like late payment of school levies, frequenting home for fees and staying away from school for extended periods of time. These fee-related problems contribute to girls’ poor performance in school. Inability to pay school levies may make one to drop out of school and this will deny one the opportunity for employment as well as the means to increase their social and political participation. Non-completion of schooling due to inability to pay school levies may also contribute to their low social status in the society as well as reduce decision making power in the house and over their lives. Given the social and economic benefits of female education, the drop out of female students from schooling represents a significant regression in the development of the nation.

These findings are in line with the findings of Oloo (2003) who established in her study of gender disparity in students’ performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in mixed day secondary schools in Migori District that poverty, that is inability to afford basic needs in school was a factor that contributed to poor girl-child performance.

Muganda (1997) reported a similar situation in her study of the effects of dropping out in secondary schools among girls in Shinyalu, in Kakamega District. In her study, she found out that lack of school fees accounted for 90% of dropouts from secondary schools. This study is also in agreement with World Bank studies (1990) on school enrolment and dropout in Western Europe which found out that inadequate income among lower class families hindered the provision of tuition fees, books and other material inputs necessary to ensure continuation and concentration in school. The study is further in agreement with Benell et al. (2002) who established in their study on the impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic on primary and secondary schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa that in countries like Uganda nearly one third of children at the survey primary and secondary schools have been sent home because of non-payment of fees, lack of materials and discipline problems. Cases of orphan-hood among girls have increased and this has made it difficult for girls to study effectively due to the fact that some of them will lack a responsible person to pay for their school levies. In case one of the parents of a girl was dead and the other was sick, then the girl may be required to stay at home and take care of the sick parent. In case a girl

has lost both parents and she is the eldest among siblings, she will have to find some work in order to get some money to buy food for her siblings. Such responsibilities exhaust the girls, give them no time to be in school and thus may not perform well in school and may finally lose interest in education.

During the interview when the Board of governor chair-persons was asked: are there girls who are orphaned in your schools. Most of the Board of Governor chair-persons indicated that most of the girls were partial and total orphans. When they were asked if orphan hood was a challenge to girl-child education, Board of Governor chair-persons responded that such total orphans sometimes had to stop going to school in order to take care of their Gross Enrolment Rate siblings. One Board of Governor chair-person established that:

“At secondary school level, orphans have problems with home-work, in an unsupportive home environment; orphans find it difficult to complete home-work assignments on time and to the required standard, physical or sexual abuse by adults living in the career’s house hold, general isolation at school or in the community at large. Pupils whose parents are affected by HIV/AIDS or have died through different diseases seem not to be part of the school community, though teachers try by all means to bring them close, some students end up discontinuing school.”

From the findings of the study Board of governor chair-persons and girls indicated that there were orphaned girls in schools. It was established that girls who were orphaned sometimes had to drop out of school so as to take care of their siblings and also fend for their siblings. Interviews were conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers to establish if orphan hood was a challenge to girl-child education. District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers established that:

“Deaths that occur in the district are HIV/AIDS related cases. In some instances girls whose parents were dead take up the role of the mother and have to care for the young Gross Enrolment Rate siblings. Sometimes they missed going to school as they had to look for food for themselves or even go for child labor in order to get ways for their survival. Payment of school levies is a nightmare to some of them”.

This view is readily in agreement with Ouma et al. (2002) who indicated that there were several factors that could be traced to influence pupils’ wastage. It was observed from their studies that orphaned girls sometimes could not pay fees and that this interfered with their education as often they were sent away from school to go and collect school fees and they took a long time looking for it. The current findings are in agreement with a study by Juma (2003) who found out that drop out was higher for girls and that early

pregnancies, early marriages, lack of interest in education, orphan hood and poverty in the household contributed most to the problem of drop out. She indicated further that many children were orphaned and pay their fees, they eventually dropped out of school. there being no one to According to these findings, it was evident that girls were the most hit by several factors thus interfering with their education.

Interviews conducted with the Board of Governor chair-persons established that girl-child absenteeism was a challenge to girl-child education. One of the Board of Governor chair-persons stated:

“Some girls were often absent from school even though most of the girls were always present. One disappointing point is that some parents never reported to school when their girls did not report to school and sometimes the girls would take as long as two weeks before reporting back to school. By the time they reported back to school they found that other students had done a lot in academic issues and in the long run this interfered with their performance in class”.

From interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers it was observed that absenteeism was a challenge to girl-child education and he indicated,

“Principals and teachers are to ensure that girls are present in school and through marking of attendance sheet they got to know those who were absent from school and if possible find out from the parents or guardians why girls were absent” Girl-child absenteeism was established as a factor interfering with girl-child education in Rongo and Ndhiwa Districts. From the study principals, Director of Studies and girls established that some girls did not go to school regularly. Michieka (1983) readily consolidates this view when he observes that primary schools in Kisii District experienced educational interruptions that corresponded to socio- economic activities during particular seasons like planting and harvesting periods. That school attendance by pupils from families with low income was found to be poor during market days and during cash crop harvesting seasons, that poor class attendance was used to explain reasons for low academic achievement in internal examination among pupils from poor families. In agreement with the findings of the current study are Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) who established in their study of education for development: an analysis of investment choices that the concept of absenteeism is a factor affecting girl-child education. They established further factors responsible for great wastage rates in schools to be poverty, illness, malnutrition, absenteeism, great opportunity cost, of schooling in poor families, cultural factors, which affect girls more than boys, inappropriate curriculum and examination which is too academic and designed to prepare a minority for further education and poorly trained teachers. It was established

from the study that absenteeism finally leads to poor performance since the more the girls were absent from school, the more lessons they missed hence negative effect on their performance in education.

The findings of the current study are also in agreement with Oghuvbu (2010) who established in his study of attendance and academic performance of students in secondary schools that effective teaching and learning cannot take place without the coming together of teachers and students. He established further that class attendance is necessary in order to check on students' commitment to receiving instructions from teachers. Onomuodeke (1995) in his study of the management of students' learning problems postulates further that a student that is regular in school, facing learning problems, resulting from late coming to school, truancy, inability to read and not consulting with teachers cannot perform well in school. The current study is also in agreement with Oghuvbu (1998) who established in his study of classroom management problems in urban primary schools in Delta State that the social status and educational level of parents influence school attendance, geographical location of a school, students attitudes towards education and subjects, inadequate supervision of students activities by teachers and parents, poor teaching methods, lack of facilities affect students' school attendance. The current study is in agreement with Bennell et al. (2002) who established in their study on the impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic on primary and secondary schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa that in Malawi and Uganda which are more typically low income countries, the over-riding issue is that absenteeism is very great among all primary and secondary school children due to poverty with majority of children facing a range of problems which prevent them from attending school regularly.

The Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that inadequate physical facilities were a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education. In a normal situation, formal learning cannot take place without important physical facilities like chairs, toilets, water. Girls value privacy and when toilets are not well situated like when built next to the school gate or next to the boys' toilets, or when such facilities are not adequate, they are likely to suffer as they may shy off from using such inadequate facilities like toilets. School libraries may be inadequate due to the fact that reading culture is poor among Africans and this may contribute to the inadequacy in the provision of the facility to promote girl-child education. During the interview, when asked if inadequacy of physical facilities was a challenge to girl-child education: the Board of Governor chair-persons indicated that their schools did not have adequate physical facilities. A Board of Governor chair-person said

“Physical facilities like well-equipped laboratories are rare; some schools do not even have libraries while some schools lacked adequate classrooms,

chairs/desks. A facility like water and electricity supply was non-existent”

Interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, confirmed that there were schools that lacked adequate supply of physical facilities like water supply, laboratories, libraries classrooms and even toilets for girls.

He stated

“Not all the schools in the district have adequate physical facilities. Most of the schools are lucky to have important facilities like classrooms where girls can learn freely without interference from the sun, rain, or cold weather. Others have desks where the students get seated when teaching and learning takes place. The teachers can always improvise to ensure that the girls are provided with the other physical facilities to ensure effective teaching and learning take place.

This study found out that inadequate physical facility was a challenge to girl-child education. Infact most of the schools in rural areas had classrooms that were dilapidated, with floors that were not properly cemented and thus dusty. In fact the most worrying issue was lack and /or poor state of toilets and sanitary facilities and this was a health hazard and that the students: both boys and girls were exposed to Gross Enrolment Rate s of being infected by diseases, that most schools had no water facility within the school. With the kind of facilities described in the foregoing, girls found it difficult to utilize such facilities especially when menstruating. The psychic, cost (loss of dignity and privacy) incurred by girls in such gender insensitive schools with no proper physical and sanitary facilities are very high. The result is that most girls in such schools will not come to school regularly and will not come out at all when they are in their monthly periods. In some cases, to save themselves from the embarrassment all the time some girls choose to drop out of school completely.

The current study concurs with the study carried out by Majiwa (2005) who established in his study of factors that affect the participation of girls in secondary education in Turkana District that school based factors such as drug abuse, distance to and from school, students forced to repeat, poor academic performance, lack of physical facilities, conflict with teachers, an uninteresting curriculum affected girls' participation in education. This study like that of Majiwa established that factors affecting girl-child education included very poor physical infrastructure, coupled with harsh environment, inadequate physical facilities such as equipment and supplies, low levels of gender awareness, parents' negative attitudes that once girls are educated, they cannot make good wives or secure husbands, therefore they prefer girls to learn only basic reading and writing. Indeed these were great challenges to the principals in their endeavours to promote girl-child education in Rongo and Ndiwa districts. FAWE (2001) alluded to the current

study when it revealed that inadequate or poor physical facilities adversely affected quality of education and that it has been proven that in such environments, the girl-child always ends up performing poorly in class because the tendency has been that the poorer the physical facilities, the less gender responsive they are

Culturally girls are required to carry out domestic chores in the home. Some of these domestic chores are too demanding for example preparing meals for the entire family, general cleaning of the home, fetching water and fire wood and in some cases taking care of the sick relatives, assisting mothers small scale income generating activities among others. These tasks take a lot of time and cause fatigue to the girl-child with the consequent that the girls end up failing to attend to their academic work. They therefore develop negative attitudes towards schooling. During interviews conducted with Board of Governor chairpersons and District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, it was established that girls spent most of time on domestic chores at home and that this affected their time for private studies. One Board of Governor chair-person stated

“Whenever girls return home from school, they are subjected to a number of domestic chores, first they are sent to fetch water for domestic use. They are then directed to prepare supper for the entire family, clean utensils after meals and prepare their sibling for going to bed. This in itself takes them up to about mid-night, yet they have home-work which they are expected to complete before retire to bed under poorly lit rooms. The outcome is that school work is never given the necessary attention that it requires. In such circumstances, the girl-child easily gives up schooling because of poor performance as she cannot cope with both domestic chores and learning”.

During interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers he noted

“Some parents, especially mothers over burden the girls with much domestic chores such that by the time the girls go to school, they are already too exhausted that they then lack proper concentration during lessons. Lack of concentration from such girls often make it hard for them to perform well in class”

This finding concurs with that of Oloo (2003) who in her study on gender disparity in students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in mixed day secondary schools in Migori District found out that domestic-chore contribute to girls' poor performance in education. It was also observed from her study that in the morning before the girls left for school, they had to perform numerous domestic chores. The case was the same when they returned home from school in the evening. The chores were a burden even during weekends and holidays. With all these domestic chores, the girls indicated that they were therefore left with

inadequate time to study while at home and thus negatively impacting on their academic performances in school. In this respect, this study indicates that although efforts should be made at the family level to have children participate in domestic chores, thus enabling them to acquire skills for use in adulthood, care must be taken so as not to overburden them, which could be detrimental to their education. In his study, he established that domestic tasks had negative impact on students' academic performance.

The current findings were in agreement with UNICEF (1992) report which noted that even when both boys and girls had access to education, girls were often overburdened with household chores, with the result that their school performance suffered and could end prematurely. This sentiment is further supported by Machakos Workshop (Daily Nation 1994, April 23) which attributed to the girls' poor show to socio-cultural practices that insist that a woman's place is in the kitchen, further noting that problems for the girls start at the household level where they were overburdened with domestic chores while boys are left free to study. As to whether domestic chores affected their academics, it was realized that domestic chores had negative impacts on the girls. To mention but a few; the girls performed poorly in class, some were fatigued such that they could not concentrate during lessons, others were too exhausted to study after the chores while others plainly had no time to study after the chores. The afore-mentioned eventually affected the girls' performances as they had no time to neither do their homework nor conduct their private studies.

Weeks, (1963) indicated in his study of a report on sociological case study of urban day secondary school that domestic chores expected of a day student by parents or guardians are often excessive and downright exploitation. Parents and guardians of day students should refrain from overburdening them with a lot of chores that hamper their private studies while at home. By the time the girls return home from school, they were already exhausted and have not yet done their assignments. This study is also in agreement with Maleche (1972) in his study of a new status for women in Kenya who made similar observations on the contribution of girls to family labor in Kenya. He noted that girls are still taken away from school to help in the garden and home, to nurse babies, clean the house, and fetch firewood and water, cook food, milk cows and to make beer. The findings of Kasente (1998) in his study of the processes influencing gender differences in achievement in primary and secondary education and Abagi et al. (1997) in their study of household based factors as determinants of school participation of girls in Kenya concur with Maleche's (1972) study which established that girls' performance is affected due to need for their domestic labor, that girls' workload in the home clearly has a detrimental impact on their academic performance,

since their duties are a daily affair. From the study, it was observed that girls were so overburdened with family and household chores thus do not enjoy plenty of time to study and freedom to choose what to engage in. As a result, they were not able to concentrate in studies. This leads to poor performance among girls.

The study established that girls more often than boys are consistently denied opportunities to go to school for an array of reasons including those related to HIV/AIDS gender discrimination, domestic demands and inappropriate physical and learning environment at school. Kombian (2008) indicated that when girls go missing in classrooms, poverty, fear, violence, sexual violence are factors that hinder girl-child education in Afghanistan. He stated that girls account for an estimated 90% of child domestic and therefore few have a chance to attend school. This study is in agreement with Majiwa (2005) who established in his study of the factors that affect the participation of girls in secondary education in Turkana District that socio-economic factors like missing school to look after animals, lack of uniforms, and taking care of other family members was a major cause of low participation of girls in education. The study is further in agreement with Benell, Hyde and Swainson (2002) who established in their study on the impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic on primary and secondary schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa that in countries like Malawi, the death of a mother does appear to lead to an appreciable increase in house hold demand for female child labor while in Uganda on the other hand, it is the loss of a father that increases the demand for child labor especially in domestic chores. Overall, it was indicated by the three respondents that domestic-chores was a factor that affected girl-child education as girls spent much time in domestic chores at the expense of their studies. The Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that long distance to school was a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education. In most cases, mixed day secondary schools are far from the girls' homes, this makes one to relate to the length of time and energy that children have to expend to cover the distance, often on an empty stomach, the other relates to the concern and apprehension parents have for the sexual safety of their daughters, and it also has implications for the motivation of girls to stay in school as close proximity of school had a positive motivating impact on girls participation in schools and at the same time living far away from home and having to walk from home to school discourages some girls hence making the girls to develop a negative attitude towards education. Boards of Governor chair-persons were interviewed on whether long distance to school was a challenge to girl-child education. One Board of Governor chair-person noted

“The distance that some of the girls took from home to school was long some walked as long as five kilometers from home to school and when they reached school, some of them were so tired

and could not concentrate on what teachers taught in school thus their education was challenged”.

District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers was interviewed on whether long distance to school was a challenge to girl-child education and he noted:

“One disadvantage of the mixed day secondary schools is that most of them are far apart such that it forced some of the girls to walk long distance for them to reach school. This therefore forced most of the girls whose homes were far from home to ensure that they left their homes very early in the morning in order to reach school in good time. The fear of long distance to school is that it was sometimes insecure from wild animals or human beings who would scare or harass the girls as they walked to school”.

From the study, it was realized that some girls in mixed day secondary schools walked over a long distance more than five kilometers to school unlike their boarding school counterparts. Through such long distances, they would be subjected to numerous interruptions, which hinder them from performing well in education. It was established from the principals, Director of Studies and girls that some girls walked for a long distance to come to school. The current study concurs with the findings of Mulwa (1998) in his study of pupils, teachers, parents' perception of causes of absenteeism and dropping out in primary schools in arid and semi-arid areas who indicated the causes of pupil absenteeism to have been poor relationships between teachers and pupils, pupils' lack of motivation, lack of food at home, chronic sicknesses, long distance to school between home and school, physically marked deviations among the pupils such as age and height, and involvement in casual employment to meet basic needs This view is in line with the view held by Action Aid (2004) in their study of quest for quality girls' education which indicates that insecurity and long distance to school are twin factors, which were cited as inhibiting girl-child participation in school. From his findings it was established that parents indicated that insecurity and long distance to school made them not to send or withdraw their children from school. The Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that girl-child harassment was a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education. Culturally men have a feeling that they are superior to the women and there are cases, be it in schools when even boys feel they are better than the girls. The boys extend such behaviors to the girls even when they are in school. Sometimes when girls give wrong answers, they may laugh or giggle about it. Even some teachers sometimes may make funny remarks when girls give wrong answers. Such remarks or behaviors make the girls to shy off and may fear even talking in the presence of the boys or the male teachers. Such behaviors may discourage some girls hence they develop negative attitude towards

education.

Boards of Governor chair-persons were interviewed on whether girl-child harassment by teachers and male students was a challenge to girl-child education. They acknowledged that it was a challenge and one Board of Governor chair-person stated

“I have heard of girl-child harassment by teachers once when the principal reported of a girl who complained that she had been harassed by one of the teachers in the school. However, on more than two occasions I have seen some boys harass some girls as they were going home from school. I had to intervene so that the boys could stop such an act”.

Interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers confirmed that there were reported cases of teachers harassing girls in the schools thus interfering with their education. District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers on the other hand stated;

“Reports have reached the District Education Officer’s office of girl-child harassment especially by teachers and even the support staff. Some of the reports have been brought by the parents of the girls and in some case the principals and even the teachers. Some have even harassed the girls sexually and the victims have been called and actions have been taken against some of them”.

The study found out that some teachers (as indicated by Director of Studies’ mean rate of 3.74, principals’ mean rate of 3.41 and girls mean rate of 4.78) were harsh and inconsiderate to the girls, that the teachers had the tendency of thoughtlessly pushing the girls too far in pursuit of academic excellence. That the teachers used brutal physical punishments for dismal performance and such created anxiety and stress among girls thus interfering with their education. It was further confirmed that male students harassed the girls by beating them up unnecessarily or laughing at them during class lessons if they gave wrong answers. Girl-child harassment is a challenge faced by girls as observed from the study. When girls face different forms of harassment, they often shy off and feel disappointed in life. Principals, Director of Studies and girls agreed that there were cases of harassment of girl-child in schools. The findings of this study are in line with Action Aid (2004a) that pointed out that multiple forms of violence and harassment are there in schools and that they are silent and overlooked barriers that prevent adolescent girls from attending schools. She pointed out further that violence and harassment against girls’ result in low enrolment and attendance of girls in schools, great drop-out rate, and poor performance at schools, unwanted teenage pregnancies, and early marriages, increased rates of HIV/AIDS in 15-24 years old age group, fear of victimization, loss of self-esteem, depression and Gross Enrolment Rate.

The notion held by Action Aid (2004b) coincides with

Gender Report (2004) which indicates that there were cases of girl-child harassment in schools; it explains further that school girls had no hesitation of reporting how teachers treat them. He established that teachers were very abusive to girls and that they were harsh and always beating them, that boys emulated what teachers did, they beat girls, abused them in school or on their way home and that they were at times humiliated in class. He established further that girls are shy and that co-educating them with boys made them uncomfortable and thus unable to focus on the schoolwork hence interfering with their education. In most homes, some parents are the promoters of cultural practices like initiation, early marriages, domestic-chores and others that often interfere with the education of girls. Some parents arrange for the marriage of their daughters even if they are still young and going to school. Because of fear of parents, the girls obey their orders and often this interferes with their education as they leave school to go and get married. Some times when girls stop going to school because they are going for circumcision, this interferes with their education as the time they are out as they heal is lost while others are often taught hence interfering with their education. From interviews that were conducted with Board of Governor chair-persons it was established that cultural barriers were a challenge to girl-child education. In this respect, one of the Board of Governor chair-persons said;

“Cultural barriers like early marriages were some of the barriers that seriously affected girl-child education as some parents would insist that their girls had to be married when they had reached a particular age and this is a real threat to girl-child education”.

District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers on the other hand stated;

“There are only a few communities where parents insist that their girls get married even when they are young as they see the girls as a source of wealth for them. Some parents especially the mothers because they are not educated think that educating girls is a waste of time and that instead such girls should remain at home and assist in family chores instead of going to waste time in school”.

The current findings are in line with Juma (2003) who established that some of the factors to explain girls’ performance in education were indicated to be due to socio-cultural environment. She argued out that all cultures convey images and values about men and women and the roles appropriate for them. The exact nature of these images and roles vary between countries, but generally reflect the idea that women are inferior to men. The views and general role expectations, which exist for women, can be expected to affect the performance of the girl-child in school. It is argued that girls are continually reminded, by various aspects of the

school structure, the expectations of their teachers and teaching practices that their primary roles are to be wives and mothers. In Africa, the educational status puts less emphasis on the role of women as producers as compared to men, although this is an integral aspect of the female role in most traditional societies (Duncan, 1998; Namuddu, 1992).

The Director of Studies and the girls acknowledged that girl-child negative attitudes towards education were a challenge faced by principals as they promote girl-child education. Quite often girls who come from families where people are not interested in education also develop negative attitudes towards education. In such homes because adults may not be responsible over the girls education girls may take advantage and may not go to school or may leave home for school but may end up not reaching school because they are aware nobody will ask them why they did not go to school or where they had gone to. Such negative attitude to education may finally contribute to poor performance hence interference with girl-child education. When Board of Governor chairpersons were asked if girls had negative attitudes towards education, fifty percent of Board of Governor chairpersons indicated that there were girls who had negative attitudes towards education.

One Board of Governor chair-person stated that:-

“There are parents who have made girls to have negative attitudes towards education right from the comment they have heard their parents make concerning girl-child education. The way some teachers handle and treat the girls in school have also contributed to girl-child negative attitude towards education. Some of the girls have been influenced by fellow students until they have developed a negative attitude towards education and that was why some of them feigned that they were sick in order not to go to school”.

District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers were also interviewed on whether girls had negative attitude towards education. He stated

“Whatever takes place in the environment of the girls will influence their attitudes to education either negatively or positively and while some girls are negative towards education, some have positive attitude towards education and will never be influenced by anyone not to like education”.

Negative attitudes of girls towards education affect their education, as they then don't strive to better their grades. It was observed from the study that some girls had negative attitudes towards education. This finding is echoed further by World Bank (1995) who indicated that most children, and girls in particular, especially those in rural areas fail to enroll or complete primary or secondary schooling because their parents do not value education, and that there is a 'myth' among most illiterate parents that boys are generally clever and hard working at school. But girls like playing and when they mature, they

are difficult to deal with and they end up getting pregnant. The implication of this is that girls should not be given opportunity to go to school. Such “messages” are not motivating to the girls, who internalize them and in turn end up believing that school is not for them and look for excuses to drop out of school.

Dorsey (1996) proceeds to say that another category of obstacles to girl-child education comes from perceptions build around a girl's ability. She pointed out that many girls do not continue with their schooling on the other hand or do not take certain subjects because they have imbibed the notion that they are not intelligent enough to do so. She pointed out that at the secondary school level, girls perform at a lower rate than boys do and that reasons given for this state of affairs include the disparaging attitudes towards brilliance in girls causing them to practice a form of auto censorship and lower their academic horizons in order not to stand out. The implication of this is that in a competitive atmosphere where secondary school places are few, low performance creates a small pool of girls who could be admitted at college level.

This study established that girls are shy and lack self-confidence and self-esteem and that this leads to their low value of education. That the girls did not show seriousness in school work and a majority of them lacked patience and endurance especially when they failed. They indicated further that girls are easily influenced by their peers to think about marriage more than getting education. They have been socialized to believe that education and wealth are for boys while they are intended for marriage. They are thus made to feel inferior and not worthy of the investment in education. Usually when teen-mothers realize that teachers have negative attitude towards them, they shy off and may regret why they had conceived or had gone back to the school where it had been known that they had once conceived. Such feelings make teen-mothers to feel guilty, out of place, rejected and ashamed of themselves. Some teen-mothers may end up not liking school in fear of those teachers who had negative attitudes towards them. Such teen-mothers may not attend lessons for such teachers because they fear that the teachers may shame them in class. Tendencies like this often interfere with girl-child education as missing classes on the part of the teen-mother and having fear of what the teacher may say about them impacts negatively on the teen-mothers' education. Board of Governor chairpersons were interviewed on whether the teachers had negative attitudes towards teen-mothers who were admitted back to school. Forty percent of Board of Governor chairpersons pointed out that some teachers were negative about re-admitting of teen-mothers since such teachers felt such teen-mothers were a bad example to the other girls in school and would easily influence the innocent girls to follow their example.

One Board of Governor chair-person noted;

“Those who oppose girls return to school argue that allowing these teenage mothers back to school would trigger Gross Enrolment Rate multiplier effect among other girls, however if girls who have not conceived are counseled well then, the teen-mothers will not influence them into getting pregnant.”

Teachers' negative attitudes towards teen mothers often make such girls to shy off and hate education; however it was established from the study that some of the teachers had negative attitudes towards teen-mothers being re-admitted after they had given birth hence interfering with their education.

From interviews conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers it was established that teachers had negative attitudes towards teen-mothers.

He emphasized;

“A gender and education policy developed in 2003 makes provision for re-admission of girls who became pregnant while at school, even allowing them to seek a place at a different institution to the one they originally attended. This is to avoid girls being stigmatized by their former school mates as a result of pregnancy.”

In agreement with the idea that some teachers had negative attitudes towards girl-child education is Wamahu and Njau (1995) who indicated in their study of school dropout of school and adolescent pregnancy: counting the cost that most teachers oppose the idea of re-admitting girls who dropped out due to pregnancy because they were seen as a bad role model to other girls. Ministry of Health (1998) sums up by confirming further that some teachers had negative attitudes towards teen mothers by pointing out a Ministry of Health report on the willingness of school heads and teachers to re-admit girls who had dropped out from school follows a similar trend. That most teachers, (seventy seven point three percent) were against re-admission of girls to school. Most teachers who were against re-admission stated that if it was made easier for a girl to return to school after a pregnancy, they would be bad examples to other girls. There are girls who are bright and interested in education but what some times may discourage them from continuing with their education is that there are parents who are not interested in education and so may not support them. Basic needs that girls may need from their parents that may help them in school include school uniform, a pair of shoes, supplementary books sanitary pads or any other requirements that teachers may require from girls in school that will promote their education. When girls require such and they are not provided with, they may be discouraged and may also look for other people to supply them with such needs, when such people provide the needs, they may also be expected to pay back and this may interfere with their education.

As the interview progressed, the Board of Governor chairpersons were asked: Do parents provide the girls

with the necessary requirements that could enable conducive learning environment for the girl-child. Most of the Board of Governor chairpersons, fifty one percent responded that some parents did not provide their girls with their basic needs and that is why in some cases some girls missed going to school. Other Board of Governor chair persons stated

“Parents provided the girls with their needs like purchasing for them the right school uniforms, sanitary towels, oil, soap for bathing and washing their school uniforms and providing them with adequate time to carry out home-work that is assigned to them by the teachers”

It was realized from the interview conducted with District Quality Assurance and Standard Officers that there were parents who were reluctant to meet girl-child needs, he emphasized:-

“Parental involvement in promoting education of the girl-child is an important undertaking in education as it is through this that parents, teachers, and students team up together for better academic performance. There are cases of girl-child pregnancies due to the fact that some parents don't provide the girls with what they need and so in some cases the girls look for alternative ways of getting these needs and end up being confused by other men who provide them with such at an expensive cost”

The current findings are supported by the findings of Nyamesa (2008) in his study of causes of pupil wastage in public primary schools in Nandi North District which found out that reluctance of many parents to educate girls when faced with a choice between boys and girls as a factor leading to great dropout and repeater rates.

These findings are further supported by the findings in a recent survey in Kenya. When parents were asked what they would do if they had to make a choice about who stayed in school on cost grounds, 58% indicated that they would withdraw a daughter and 27% said they would withdraw a son (UNDP, 1999). Reluctance of parents to educate girls is a factor that hinders girl-child education as many a time parents will always have excuses so that the girls do not go to school while boys attend with full support from their parents.

This study noted further that at the family level parents have negative attitude towards education as they do not provide for girl-child needs and that girls suffer from domestic work over-load, a situation that reduces their interest in pursuing education. Girls are regarded as inferior to the boys. That it is a common expectation that girls should be married off as early as 12-13 years of age. The parents therefore do not put emphasis on girls' education and consider it as a waste of time and money. The girls know it, too and are aware of their parents' perceptions regardless of their education. They do not therefore find it necessary to work hard since they know they will drop out of school early anyway. Oghuvbu

(1998) established in his study of classroom management problems in urban primary schools in Delta State that the social status and educational level of parents influence school attendance, geographical location of a school, student's attitude towards education and subjects, inadequate supervision of student puts activities by teachers and parents, poor teaching methods, lack of facilities affect students' school attendance. It was observed from the three respondents that girl-child education was interfered with by girl-child pregnancies, domestic chores, girl-child inability to pay school levies, harassment of the girl-child by teachers and male students, orphan hood, parents' reluctance to meet girl-child needs, inadequate physical facilities, girl-child negative attitudes to education, teachers' negative attitude towards teen mothers' re-admission back to school, long distance to school, cultural barriers and girl-child absenteeism. Of all the challenges that respondents indicated to affect girl-child education, pregnancy was rated as the greatest challenge, followed by orphan hood, long distance to school, inadequate physical facilities, and girl-child absenteeism from school, the least challenge being teachers' negative attitude towards teen mothers' re-admission.

CONCLUSIONS

- i. Principals used educational policies like re-entry, repetition and Free Tuition Secondary Education policies to promote girl-child education.
- ii. Principals used bursaries to promote girl-child education.
- iii. Principals involved parents in promoting the participation of the girl-child in education; parents were involved in matters of fee payment, inviting them to school to discuss matters affecting education of their children, finding out if parents' great level of education contributed to the education of the girls.
- iv. Principals involved teachers in promotion of girl-child education; teachers were involved by being advised to have positive attitude towards girl-child education, attending classes regularly and provision of extra tuition by the teachers to the girls.
- v. Principals provided facilities for learning in mixed day secondary schools; for instance physical facilities like toilets, staffrooms, and electricity supply, facilities to dispose sanitary towels, chairs, desks and libraries were adequate in some schools and inadequate in others. There were schools where facilities like electricity, regular supply of water, library and facilities to dispose sanitary towels were not available.
- vi. Principals faced challenges like domestic chores, girl-child pregnancies, inability to pay school levies, girl-child harassment by teachers and male students, orphan-hood, parents' reluctance to meet girl-child needs, inadequate physical facilities in school, girl-

child negative attitude towards education, teachers' attitude towards teen-mothers, long distance that girls walk from home to school, cultural barriers and girl-child absenteeism in their endeavours to promote girl-child education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to opportunities of principals in promotion of girl-child education, it was realized that education policies like re-admission, repetition and Free Tuition Secondary Education were implemented. Re-entry and repetition policies were not properly implemented in some schools. This study therefore recommended that strict supervision by District Quality and Assurance Standards Officer should be done in schools to ensure that principals implemented such education policies.

With regard to principals involving parents in promoting girl-child education, it was realized that some parents were never concerned, especially in terms of payment of school levies for their girls and provision of girl-child basic needs. This study, therefore, recommended that girls whose parents were not interested in their education should be supported by their schools or the government.

In light of challenges faced by principals in promoting girl-child education like domestic-chores, the study recommended that;

- i. More boarding schools be established so that girls overburdened by domestic chores get adequate time to do assignments and private studies and principals effectively advise parents on effects of many domestic chores on girl-child performance and principals to keep on reminding girls to create time and study even if there were many domestic chores at home.
- ii. Parents, teachers, girls, the government and other stake holders to join forces and be responsible for girls' effective participation in education.

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