

ABSTRACT

Education is the foundation of economic development of human resources. A country that provides free access to quality education for all its citizens is far more likely to reduce poverty, promote economic growth, lower child and maternal mortality and achieve social inclusion. Despite efforts by the Kenyan government to attain gender parity in access and participation of school by both boys and girls, there are still gaps in Trans Mara East Sub-County, Narok County with boys' participation being low. This study aimed at establishing the influence of the Kipsigis cultural practices on participation rates among boys in selected public day primary schools in Trans Mara East Sub-County, Narok County. The study used descriptive survey research design. Study was conducted in twelve public day primary schools selected randomly from sixty primary schools in Trans Mara East Sub-County. The target population for this study was 10,080 comprising of 180 parent representatives, 60 Head teachers, 9600 pupils in class six, seven and eight and 240 class teachers. Simple random sampling was used to select 144 pupils while purposive sampling was used to select 12 head teachers, 31 class teachers and 12 parent representatives from which a sample of 199 participants was achieved. Questionnaires were used to collect data from class six, seven and eight boys and class teachers in the sampled schools while interview schedule was used to collect data from parent representatives and head teachers. Validity of the research was ascertained by expert judgement from the faculty of education and resources development, use of triangulation method in data collection and using simple random sampling technique. A pilot study was carried out in one of the zones that was not part of the actual study involving 34 respondents. Reliability of the instruments was tested using Cronbach's Alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.758 was obtained. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25.0. The descriptive data was presented using tables of frequencies and percentages, while the Spearman Rho' Correlation Coefficient was used to infer on the relationship between Kipsigis cultural practices and the primary school participation among boys. The findings of the study showed that there is a moderate positive correlation between Kipsigis cultural values and participation rates ($r = 0.587$) and Kipsigis circumcision rites and participation rates ($r = 0.454$). Further, there was a positive insignificant correlation between Kipsigis cultural festivities and participation rates ($r = 0.099$). The study concluded that Kipsigis cultural values, festivities and circumcision rites influenced primary school participation among boys in public day primary schools. Based on the study, the researcher recommends the Kipsigis cultural values, festivities and circumcision rites to be used as instrumental tools to instil positive values in enhancing participation of boys in primary schooling. It is hoped that the findings of this study may be useful in helping primary school administrators and managers, the ministry of education, and other key educational stakeholders in coming up with ways of strengthening primary school participation among boys.