

## **LEARNER RETENTION LEVELS AND TRENDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA, TURKANA COUNTY TO ESTABLISH LEARNER'S RETENTION**

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### **Abstract**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, declared, "Everyone has a right to education." Education is a social, economic, cultural, civil and political right. Kenyan government spends a big percentage of resources on education. Despite this effort, however, the retention rate of pupils in public primary schools is relatively low. Kenya's vision 2030's social pillar on Education and training states in part that the overall goal for 2012 is to reduce illiteracy by increasing access to Education, improving transition rate in primary and secondary schools and raising the quality and relevance of education hence retention. The major concern of this study is that despite the Kenya government re-introducing free primary education, some school age children are still locked out of school whereas dropout continue to be pervasive.

Current statistics indicate that Turkana County has learner's retention rate of 8.7% compared to the national statistics of 79.6% despite the Free Primary Education Policy in Kenya. This, therefore, denies pupils of school going age in Turkana County the opportunity to progress upon admission and complete primary schooling. This study sought to establish learners' retention levels and trends in Turkana County. The study was anchored on the retention theory advanced by Vincent Tinto (1975) and pragmatism philosophy. The study used an exploratory approach design within the Mixed Methods Approach Designs where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used during the various stages of the research. The study was conducted in seven Sub-Counties of Turkana County and targeted 419 public primary schools and 42 private schools comprising 419 teachers, 4288 pupils, 42 teachers, and 212 pupils, which were clustered respectively. Private primary schools were selected using the Krejcie & Morgan determination and sample size of 354 pupils. Proportionate and simple random sampling was employed to select individual schools and learners from each Sub County. Purposive sampling was used to select senior teachers from the schools. Data was collected using the triangulation approach that involved questionnaires, document analysis, focus group discussions and interviews. Validity was determined with the help of the supervisors and the questionnaires were tested for internal reliability by the use of Cronbach alpha. The obtained data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and qualitative thematic approach.

**Key words: Enrollment, retention, Learner, Primary schools.**

## **Background**

Education is not only a human right (UNESCO, 2017) but also one of the millennium development goals (United Nations, 2015) which helps to lay a foundation for a bright future for the young with good employment, socio-economic status and health in general (Mpyangu, Onyango, Lubaale, & Ochieng, 2014). Globally, education is highly valued and recognized as a basic human right for every child (UNESCO, 2009). This is because education contributes to national development through provision of human resource that helps to increase production and eliminate poverty, disease and ignorance (Republic of Kenya, 2015). Kenya like many other countries in the globe subscribes to these declarations and upholds education as a fundamental human right and recognises it as pivotal for the attainment of National development goals (GOK 2007, Children Act 2001, 2022). Pupil retention in school is important for the attainment of these goals.

In Kenya, Universal Primary Education contributes to national development through arrangement of human resource that helps to increase production and eliminate poverty, disease and ignorance (Republic of Kenya, 2019, Republic of Kenya, 2015). The legislature of Kenya received the strategy of free primary Education in 2003. The primary school enlistment rate had expanded to 104% by 2015 but still 1.8 youngsters are out of school (Government of Kenya, (GOK, 2015). Free education policies lead to reduction in inequality, but do not necessarily increase equity. The key lessons to be learned from the introduction of free education policies is the risk of the poorest students benefitting the least. In this study, it was envisaged that ASAL regions of Kenya with regard to Turkana County may have a great difference especially to learner retention within the Free Primary school education in Kenya. With Free primary education, it was hoped that every Kenya child would have access to basic education and that access and retention rates would improve. However, research has shown that even with the introduction of FPE, primary education is characterized by declining enrolment and low retention rates.

## **Learner Retention Global Initiative and Situation**

From 1970 to 2010, the level of children across the region who complete primary school rose by practically from 46% of children to 68%. The extent of children finishing compulsory primary school almost multiplied from 22% to 40%. Regardless of these gigantic additions, almost one of every three children actually does not complete primary school. The median extent of children finishing primary school across nations has increased from 27% to 67% between 1971 and 2015 (World Bank, 2020).

Through SDG's Objective 4, the world has reaffirmed the right to schooling for all children, and committed itself to guaranteeing that each child access inclusive and equitable quality education. Beyond the fact way that it is a human right for all children to benefit from inclusive quality education, the social and financial advantages of a completely taught populace are documented. It is in light of a legitimate concern for all public specialists to guarantee that no child is denied, particularly at the basic level, from learning valuable open opportunities. Nonetheless, a numerous number of children are as yet excluded from these opportunities because of reasons for which they are not responsible: either in light of the fact that they are girls, or on the grounds that they come from poor families, or in light of the fact that they have a handicap or they live with their parents in rural areas or in a region impacted by conflict (World Bank, 2020).

Notwithstanding, regardless of the significant headway that has been made as far as access, finishing and nature of fundamental schooling, discrepancies continue inside and among nations, and learning accomplishment stays low in many places of Africa. Young girls, children from the least fortunate backgrounds and children with disabilities face specific challenges in understanding their right to education. For the most minimized poor children, an expanded stake is left

considerably further behind. Youngsters from unfortunate families those living in rustic regions actually experience imbalance. For example, a child from the most extravagant quintile of families is multiple times bound to finish elementary school. Considered on their economic background, on normal two of every five African children from poor family complete basic school, contrasted with four out of five from the richest families. It is assessed that the number of younger children has been expanding beginning around 2010 that are not in school and by 2019; there were 105 million children of school age who were not enrolled for school.

Two essential indicators of a nation's educational level are enrollment in school and attendance. The number of students enrolled in a particular primary school who fall into the age group that formally corresponds to primary level schooling divided by the total population of that age group is typically regarded as the rate of enrollment in primary schools and can be measured using administrative data. The proportion of students in the age range that corresponds to primary schooling who attend primary schools is used to calculate the attendance rate (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2016).

According to Ortiz-Ospina & Roser (2016), despite a rise in the number of children enrolled in primary schools in the majority of emerging states, these nations continue to have difficulties with student retention and attendance. Because fewer children are enrolling in primary schools and finishing their primary education, there are more dropouts, which results in poor retention by primary schools.

In spite of the popular notion that sound formal education is one of the crucial prerequisites to better living, far too many children in the developing world and especially the poorest of the poor in Sub-Saharan Africa either miss out completely or access a quality of education which is too compromised to deliver the desired results for transformative development and self-advancement (Hewlett Foundation, 2016; UNICEF, 2014). Both private and public institutions feel obliged to enhance access to education, hence the myriad pro-access policies and approaches pushed in most of the developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa. It is appreciated that most of these countries focused mainly on enrolment with minimal attention to retention, completion and attainment of quality learning (UNICEF, 2007). Nevertheless, the efforts have led to increased enrolment rates and thus the number of children accessing education has increased tremendously.

While to some extent the push might have been spontaneous, international pressure like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have necessitated adoption of styles such as free primary education, cost sharing in secondary schools, public provision of scholastic materials and other support systems (UNICEF, 2010). These approaches have had mixed results in most of the sub-Saharan African countries. In some of these countries, the education infrastructure and the support system is too poor to promote quality education even as the enrolment numbers have continued to rise (UNECA, 2015; UNICEF, 2010).

It has been argued that modern approaches to educational policy have contributed to rising retention rates, which are correlated with increases in student dropout and are unsuccessful as a remediation strategy for student performance (Roderick, 1995). Retention often carries a perception of student failure, lack of support from teachers and the school, and negative socio-emotional effects for the student, such as increased frustration and disengagement. Retention continues to be a common form of intervention for students who have been deemed unprepared for the next level of cognitive and social development, despite the known deleterious impacts on student dropout rate, attitudes towards school, and engagement (Schnurr, Kundert, & Nickerson, 2009).

While the extent of children admitted to the main primary school at the official entry age has expanded around the globe and in each country since 2000, little and lopsided advancement has been made in diminishing the rate at which learners drop out before completing at the last class of primary school learning (Subrahmanyam, 2016). The fundamental limitations that learners face in

getting to or staying in school stem from issues, practices, and arrangements at family, school and policy level, including individual level: poverty; low apparent estimation of girls' education; salary problems; demise or ailment of guardians; absence of parental help for instruction; ethnicity and social avoidance; gendered conventional practices; early marriage; early pregnancy; and absence of enthusiasm for school (Subrahmanyam, 2016).

### **Learner Retention in Kenya and the Situation in Turkana County**

According to available statistics in Turkana County development plan 2002-2008, out of a population of 497,779 only 115,989 were of primary school going age and only 35,060 were attending schools in the County. This translates to only 30% enrolment rate which depicts a situation of low enrolment levels. An analysis conducted to map schooling levels of all persons aged six and above indicates that only 32.3 % in drought prone areas in Kenya to have ever enrolled in school against a national average of 76.8% (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2008).

According to Clark (2015), enrollment in an educational institution is required for everyone seeking an education in Kenya. The process of enrolling in school involves the total number of learners who are properly identified or who are attending classes at a particular school (Bartlett et al., 2014).

President Mwai Kibaki instituted Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 as part of keeping his electoral promises, which marked the beginning of the third major reform of the educational system. Kibaki, who had been elected as part of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), aimed to swiftly prioritize education as part of the program when it was introduced in January 2003. The policy led to a positive result because it resulted in increased enrolments in many of the public primary schools in Kenya (Ogola, 2010).

By distributing money to the school administrators to streamline the process, the Free Primary Education program funds assisted public primary school heads in buying instructional and learning materials. The textbook pupil ratio increased to 1:2 at first (Orodho, 2014). Therefore, it is clear that despite the government's increased efforts to extend access to free primary education, a sizable proportion of students continue to skip school, which is a fact that should worry administrators. The government developed FPE to guarantee that all school-age children receive a primary education regardless of their socioeconomic, cultural, or racial status. To ensure that all school-going children are enrolled in primary schools, however, has proven difficult due to the cultural and socioeconomic issues that divide them, according to some education specialists.

According to Wambugu, the primary school dropout rate in Kenya was 2.7% as of 2012. (2013). These statistics show that the primary school dropout rate in Africa is high due to the states' failure to resist the strain brought on by a rise in the number of students enrolled in public primary schools. Njue (2014) claims that statistics on the total number of students enrolled in class one and those who appear for class eight examinations can be used to determine the retention of students in primary schools. In other words, the number of dropouts can be subtracted from the total number of students enrolled in primary schools to determine retention rates (those that do not complete their primary education).

The government is working with advancement partners to expand enrolment and maintenance of retention in schools in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). This follows worries that numerous children of school-going age from the pastoralist communities are still out of school despite the presence of free indispensable and sponsored optional education in the country. The 'Displaying of Integrated Nomadic Education, Child-Friendly Schools, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Program in the dry districts of Kenya expects to improve access to education through the presentation of ease essential all-inclusive schools.

The government is working with advancement partners to expand enrolment and maintenance of alternatives in schools in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). This follows worries that numerous children of school-going age from the pastoralist groups are still out of school despite the presence of free basic and sponsored voluntary education in the nation. The 'Displaying of Integrated Nomadic Education, Child-Friendly Schools, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Program in the dry districts of Kenya' expects to improve access to education through a presentation of improved essential all-inclusive schools.

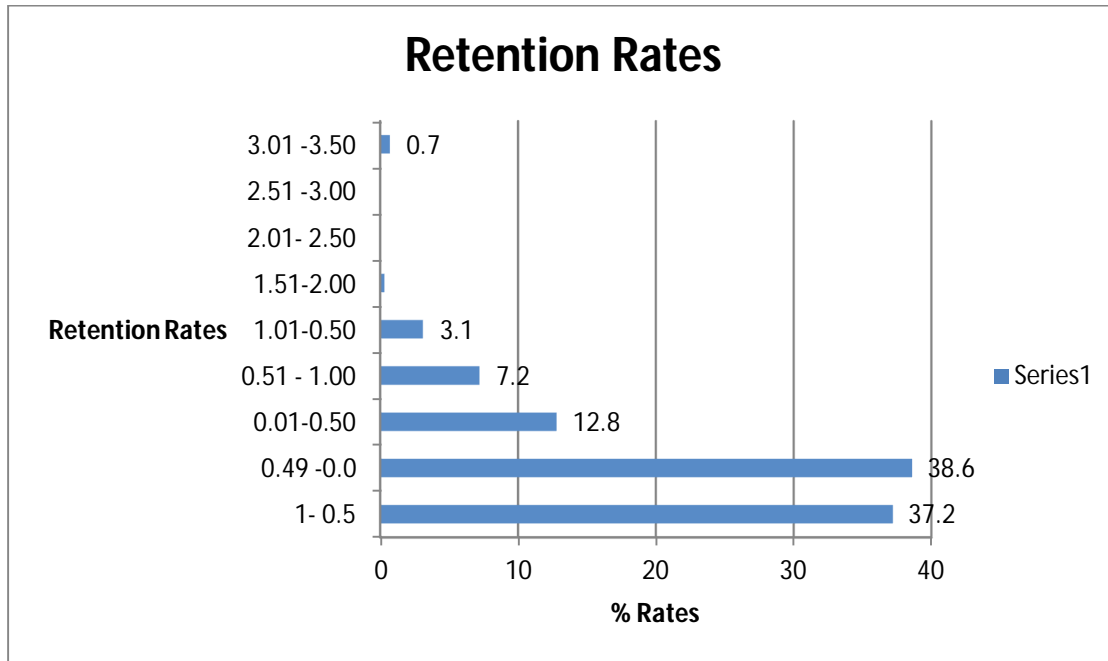
As indicated by the Turkana County Director of Education, the government gives Sh4,000 every year to every learner from these nomadic families to deal with the boarding facilities other than the Sh1,025 for Free Primary Education (FPE). The sponsor offices supporting the program additionally offer different types of help like boarding facilities and clean towels though the World Food Program (WFP) gives dinners, to guarantee the learners stay in school. "The learners don't pay by any means. The program would address high dropout rates and learners missing schools as they join their families to trek for significant distances looking for water, food, and field for their animals," said the County Director of Education. The program is financed by the Department for International Development (DFID-UK) and is being actualized by The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) in an organization with Kenya Primary Schools Head Teachers Association (KEPSHA), NGOs and community. Dry season conditions broke out in Kenya in 2017, bringing about 2.6 million food dependable individuals needing helpful support. UNICEF reports that children were at an expanded danger of being isolated from families, dropping out of school, and being offered as an endurance strategy.

Kenya has resolved to discourage of child, early and constrained marriage by 2030 by target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2014, Kenya marked a joint proclamation at the Human Rights Council requiring a goal on youngster marriage. Kenya sanctioned the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, which sets a base time of marriage of 18, and agreed, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, which commits states to guarantee free and full agreement to the marriage.

At the Girl Summit in July 2014, the legislature marked a contract resolving to end child marriage by 2020. The National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya (2015-2022) recognizes that child marriage prompts physical, sexual, and psychological mistreatment of girls and that open mindfulness focusing on barazas (network gatherings), families and girls are significant. In October 2016, the Gender Department and Anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Board inside the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender drove the improvement of a draft National Plan of Action on Child Marriage. This procedure included Girls Not Brides individuals, and meetings drove by UNICEF Kenya are proceeding. Region Probation Offices are dynamic inside a few regions of Kenya and are liable for restoring girl marriage survivors, researching instances of child marriage, making proposals to pertinent specialists, and sharpening networks on the results of girl marriage.

### **Findings**

The study sought to investigate the learner retention rates and trends in Turkana County in Kenya. The learners' retention rates were examined by looking into the enrolment in standard one and the current enrolment in standard eight then calculating the percentage. The results are indicated in Figure 2



**Figure 2: Learners Retention Rates**

Figure 2 indicates that schools with the lowest retention rates of (-0.49 to 00) were the majority with a percentage of 38.6% followed with (-1 to – 0.5) that were about 37.2 %. Schools with a higher retention rate (3.01 to 3.50) were few as represented with 0.7%.

#### 4.3.2 Enrolment Status for the years as per the Gender

The present research examined the enrolment status per gender in the last 3 years. This is presented in Table 4.5

**Table 4.5: Enrolment Status for the years as per the Gender**

#### 4.3.2 Class with the Highest Drop Out

**Table 4.6: Class with the Highest Drop Out**

	Frequency	Percent
Class 1	4	1.4
Class 2	3	1.0
Class 3	14	4.8
Class 4	7	2.4
Class 5	13	4.4
Class 6	63	21.4
Class 7	175	59.5
Class 8	15	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.6 indicates that 4 (1.4%) of the teachers felt that there was high dropout in Class 1, 3 (1%) felt that it was in class 2, in class 3 there were 14 (4.8%), in class 4 there were 7 (2.4%), in class 5 there were 13 (4.4%), in class 6 there were 63 (21.4%), in class 7 there were 175 (59.5%) while in

class 8 there were 15 (5.1%). From the results majority of the students drop out while in class 7. This implies that a number of factors which this study is interested in may be contributing to the drop out among learners.

### 4.3.3 Challenges Facing Students

Students as indicated in Table 4.7 rated the following to be the challenges facing them in school.

**Table 4.7: Challenges Facing Students**

	Responses	
	N	Percent
Absenteeism	189	29.0%
Lateness for lesson	60	9.2%
Lateness for school	58	8.9%
Pupils negative attitude towards school and class work	82	12.6%
Lack of school fees	174	26.7%
Discriminated at school or home	89	13.7%
	652	100.0%

As indicated in Table 4.7 189 (29%) of the students indicated that absenteeism was a challenge they were facing, 60 (9.2%) cited lateness for lesson, 58 (8.9%) cited lateness for school, 82 (12.6%) cited negative attitude towards school and class work, 174 (26.7%) cited lack of school fees while 89 (13.7%) cited discrimination at school or home. From the results it can be seen that majority of the students were faced with absenteeism. This implies that they may have dropped out of school therefore missing in school.

### 4.3.4 Issues Related to Learner Retention in School

The following issues in Table 4.8 related to learner retention in school were investigated and findings presented as follows.

**Table 4.8: Issues Related to Learner Retention in School**

	<b>Issues related to learner retention</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>StdDev</b>
		<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>			
1.	Education should give all learners open access to education	184	63.2	104	35.7			3	1.0			1.3883	.54810
2.	Dropouts have fewer life opportunities	62	21.3	222	76.3			6	2.1	1	.3	1.8385	.54901
3.	Low learner retention is attributed to family social economic status	153	52.6	114	39.2	13	4.5	10	3.4	1	.3	1.5979	.76103
7.	The law has been constituted to protect the right to education	95	32.6	177	60.8	6	2.1	11	3.8	2	.7	1.7904	.71971
8.	Kenya is committed to international law and statutes to ensure learner retention in school	140	48.1	137	47.1	8	2.7	5	1.7	1	.3	1.5911	.66524
9.	Turkana county has partnership with other stakeholders to improve learner retention	114	39.2	155	53.3	6	2.1	9	3.1	6	2.1	1.8213	1.43924
10.	ASAL regions has low learner retention in the country	131	45.0	142	48.8	5	1.7	11	3.8	2	.7	1.6632	.75429



Table 4.8 indicates that 184 (63.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that education should give all learners open access to education, 104 (35.7%) agreed while 3 (1.0%) disagreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.388, SD = 0.548) strongly agreed that education should give open access to learners. This implies that with open access to education all learners will be capable of completing their education thereby avoiding drop out from school.

Further information in Table 4.8 showed that 62 (21.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that drop outs have fewer life opportunities, 222 (76.3%) agreed, 6 (2.1%) disagreed while 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed. From the results majority of the respondents (Mean 1.84, SD = 0.549) agreed that learners will have fewer opportunities.

Table 4.8 further indicated that 153 (52.6%) respondents strongly agreed that low learners retention is attributed to family social economic status, 114 (39.2%) agreed, 13 (4.5%) were undecided, 10 (3.4%) disagreed while 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.598, SD = 0.761) had a lower retention that was attributed to family social economic status.

Further information in Table 4.8 indicated that 95 (32.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the law has been constituted to protect the right to education, 177 (60.8%) of them agreed, 6 (2.1%) were undecided, 11 (3.8%) agreed while 2 (0.7%) strongly agreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.790, SD = 0.719) agreed that the law has been constituted to protect the right to education. This results are similar to CEDAW report which indicated that Kenya has resolved to reduce child, early, and constrained marriage by 2030 following target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report indicates that in 2014, Kenya marked a joint proclamation at the Human Rights Council requiring a goal on child marriage. Kenya sanctioned the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, which sets a base time of marriage of 18, and submitted, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, which commits states to guarantee free and full agreement to the marriage. In 2017 Kenya turned into the nineteenth nation to dispatch the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa.

Table 4.8 further indicated that 140 (48.1%) of the respondents indicated that Kenya is committed to international law and statutes to ensure learner retention in school, 137 (47.1%) agreed, 8 (2.7%) were undecided, 5 (1.7%) disagreed while 1 (0.3%) agreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.5911, SD = 0.6652) felt that Kenya was committed to the international laws and statutes. This can also be seen in the following laws and statutes. One, The African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, including Article 6 which sets the base age for marriage as 18. Two, The 2015 Universal Periodic Review in which Kenya upheld four proposals to fortify endeavors to kill child marriage. Three, The Girl Summit in July 2014. The National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya (2015-2022) that recognized child marriage prompts physical, sexual, and psychological mistreatment of girls and that open mindfulness focusing on barazas (network gatherings), families and kids are significant. Three, the National Plan of Action on Child Marriage. And four, the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, which sets a base time of marriage of 18, and agreed, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Table 4.8 further indicated that 114 (39.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Turkana county has partnership with other stakeholders to improve learner retention, 155 (53.3%) agreed, 6 (2.1%) were undecided, 9 (3.1%) disagreed while 6 (2.1 %) strongly disagreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.821, SD = 1.439) felt that Turkana County had collaborated with others to ensure learner retention. This means that the county leadership is working with a Non-Governmental Organization and international aids bodies. This is indicated by the Turkana County Director of Education, in which the government gives Sh4,000 every year to every learner from these nomadic families to deal with the boarding facilities other than the Sh1,025 for Free Primary Education (FPE). The sponsor offices supporting the program additionally offer different types of help like boarding facilities and clean towels though the World Food Program (WFP) gives dinners, to guarantee the learners stay in school. "The learners don't pay by any means. The program would address high dropout rates and learners missing schools as they join their families to trek for significant distances looking for water, food, and field for their animals," said the County Director of Education. The program is financed by the Department for International Development (DFID-UK) and is being actualized by The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) in an organization with Kenya Primary Schools Head Teachers Association (KEPSHA), NGOs and community. Dry season conditions broke out in Kenya in 2017, bringing about 2.6 million food dependable individuals needing helpful support. UNICEF reports that children were at an expanded danger of being isolated from families, dropping out of school, and being offered as an endurance strategy. Lastly, 131 (45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that ASAL regions has low learner retention in the country, 142 (48.8%) agreed, 5 (1.7%) were undecided, 11 (3.8%) disagreed while 2 (0.7%) strongly disagreed. The results shows that majority of the respondents (Mean = 1.66, SD = 0.754) strongly agreed that ASALS region experience lower learner retention. Kiminza, Ogula and Getui (2021) posited the same sentiments indicating that the government is working with advancement partners to expand enrolment and maintenance of alternatives in schools in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). This follows worries that numerous children of school-going age from the pastoralist groups are still out of school despite the presence of free basic and sponsored voluntary education in the nation. The 'Displaying of Integrated Nomadic Education, Child-Friendly Schools, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Program in the dry districts of Kenya' expects to improve access to education through a presentation of improved essential all-inclusive schools.

### **Causes of School Drop Out**

The interview schedule for the teachers, Focus Group Discussion for students, teachers and parents provided a number of causes for school drop outs. This is presented in the following excerpts.

One participant who had moved around a lot in Turkana stated, "I felt like I was different because there was no stability. There was no anything. If someone had paid attention and cared then I could see that being a factor in not dropping out. But it didn't happen that way" (Respondent in the interview, schedule July, 2022).

Another participant stated that (They) became disillusioned about the value of education, suffered from a sense of failure, became alienated from their communities and turned to violence and the disruption of the society which had rejected them. Little has been done to rescue them, to provide a second chance through various forms of further education and training.

Another participant stated that: “My mom was abusive. I had a dysfunctional family. I thought I was grown and felt unloved and I felt unworthy. There was no stability at home” (Student Respondent, FGD July 2022). Other participants voiced similar statements. Because of this, we can conclude that having a stable living environment was a critical factor in determining whether or not the student dropped out of high school

Four respondents stated that if there were school support or help from a school counselor, it would have helped keep them on track and prevent them from dropping out. “I feel like I fell through the cracks at school. No one cared what I did” (student, FGD July 2022). These were common phrases throughout the interviews that support the idea that counselors and school support are critical in keeping students on track

Other factors that were identified were on an individual basis. For some, if peer changes had been made at the time of dropping out or if family financial stability had been established early on, this would have been an influential factor that would have prevented them from dropping out. One other participant stated that nothing could have prevented them from dropping out.

One of the teachers stated that, “I feel like students often drop out of studies because they don't initially understand the full commitment.”

It was also alluded that;

“Most parents leave the responsibility of advising and guiding their children to the school. Some parents say ‘go to school, that is where you will be guided from’. Parents have that tendency and say that teachers are the ones who will manage their children. You can send them back home from school at 6 pm but you find them in the trading center at 9:00 pm in their school uniforms. However it should be that once this child gets home late, a responsible parent must question them where they have been but when the girls go back and they are not tasked, they consider it as something very normal and have left the children to whom-it-may-concern.” Parent FGD

A number of causes were highlighted to include the following

- i. Unqualified/untrained teachers
- ii. Low teacher motivation
- iii. Teacher's attitudes toward pupils and teaching
- iv. Inability to adapt the curriculum to pupil's needs
- v. Lack of understanding of pupil's needs
- vi. Inadequate knowledge of teaching principles
- vii. Over-use of teacher-centred methods
- viii. Poor relations with pupils
- ix. Inability to relate with parents/community
- x. Poor/inadequate resources
- xi. Location (distance) of school
- xii. Teacher-pupil ratio
- xiii. Relevance of the curriculum
- xiv. School schedules and calendar unsuitable to economic activities of community
- xv. Ability/competence of school head to lead teachers
- xvi. Lack of learning aids (books and equipment, etc
- xvii. Lack of community support

- xviii. Community attitude toward education
- xix. Seasonal activities
  - xx. Topographic characteristics (mountainous areas, swollen rivers)
  - xxi. Climatic conditions
- xxii. Migration/mobility

### Conclusion

Based on the study findings the study concludes that Family issues contributed towards early teenage pregnancy thereby contributing to girls dropping out of school. This was happening at a backdrop of instituted laws that ensures girls are readmitted back to school. The teenage pregnancies were mostly associated and impacted on girls than boys. This was further illustrated from the aspect of predominance where early pregnancy predominated among school going girls. The study resolved that as a result of early teenage pregnancy girl were subjected to child bearing at an early stage of their education.

Early marriage among the girls had contributed towards gender inequality in education in Turkana County as occasioned by the high number of girls of 15 years and below supposedly school going were affected. The early marriage was predominant among the pastoralist communities in ASAL regions in Kenya. .

The study concluded that pupils who came from families with both parents who had at least a secondary level of education were better positioned to understand the importance of retaining learners in schools. Educated parents were better placed than uneducated parents to handle issues related to the child's learning. These issues included the pupils discipline such as premature sexual activities, supervision of academic work such as homework and children education rights such as the readmission policy.

Findings also showed that level of education of father had a positive and significant influence on learners retention in primary schools in Turkana County in Kenya ( $\beta_3 = .466, P < 0.05$ ). The fourth hypothesis ( $H_{04}$ ) stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between level of education of mother and learners retention in primary schools in Turkana County. Results showed that level of education of mothers had a negative and insignificant influence on learners retention in primary schools ( $\beta_4 = -0.158, P > 0.05$ ).

The study further concluded that parents were more involved in the payment of school monies more than the guardians were. Most importantly, Child labour was rampant in Turkana County. Lastly, the study findings showed that economic activity of parents has a positive and significant influence on learners retention in primary schools ( $\beta_4 = 0.223 P < 0.05$ ). The regression model showed that collectively, teenage pregnancy, early marriage, level of education of parents and economic activity had an impact of 16.1% on the variations of learners' retention in school in Turkana County. Mostly importantly, 'teenage pregnancy had the strongest positive effect on the learners retention ( $\beta = 0.356$ ), and that this is statistically significant. This was followed by the independent variable level of education of fathers ( $\beta = 0.168$ ), this was followed with parent economic activity ( $\beta = 0.130$ ). The independent variable 'early marriage' had the least effect on the learners retention ( $\beta = - 0.012$ ) but that this is statistically insignificant.

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