

**SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
NAIROBI CAMPUS**

**CHRIST THE TEACHER INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION**

*Effects of Early Marriage on Academic Performance of Girls in Primary  
Schools among the Pokot in Kacheliba Division*

By

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Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Bachelor of Education Degree of  
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, USA**

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**NAIROBI-KENYA**



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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this research work is my original work achieved through personal reading, scientific research, and critical reflections. It has never been submitted to any institution of learning for academic credit. All sources used have been duly cited and acknowledged.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my dear parents who taught me the value of education. Their dedication to education inspired me to venture in this study.

To all the girls who are denied education due to early marriage especially among the Pokot

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to all those who have helped me at different levels of this study through their support and encouragement. I would also like to thank in a special way the students with whom I shared the course. Their journey with me has been a source of courage.

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I express my gratitude to the head teachers, teachers, pupils, and parents of Kacheliba Division who responded with a lot of cooperation and honesty.

## ABSTRACT

This research focused on the effects of early marriage on academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division. The study was carried out in three schools in Kacheliba Division. These were Lokichar Primary School, Kacheliba Mixed Primary School and Kacheliba Girls Primary School.

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary schools in Kacheliba Division?
- ii. What are some of the suggestions on how to discourage early marriages and improve girls' academic performance in primary schools in Kacheliba Division?

The study used survey and case study designs. The sample population included the teachers, pupils, head teachers and parents. The instruments used to elicit data were questionnaires and interview guides. Data was analyzed mainly by use of descriptive statistics.

The findings of the study revealed that girls in primary school of the area under study perform poorly academically as compared to boys. Girls also lack motivation to study and even the aspiration to go beyond primary school because in most cases a good number of girls in primary schools have been already asked to marry, or knew cases of their colleagues who got married before completing primary school. This presents interference by early marriage on the academic performance of girls. Some of the effects of early

marriage on academic performance are interference with concentration, demoralization as they lack motivation to study and lack of parental support essential for positive academic performance. Due to early marriage, girls lack good participation at school demoralizing those who remain. Although early marriage in some occasions was said to have positive effect on the academic performance of girls primary as it discouraged them not to marry basing on the experience of those who got married if they did not succeed in their marriage, the negative influence is more felt as in most cases the girl is not given the freedom to choose when and who to marry.

In order to improve the academic performance of girls in primary schools in Kacheliba Division there is great need for combined efforts by all the stakeholders. First, the government needs to involve the local community as it comes up with the laws against cultural practices such as female circumcision and early marriages. Secondly, the government, the church and the NGOs need to involve the Pokot community in eliminating cultural practices, especially early marriage, and sensitize the parents on the values of gender equality in education in the light of rights of the girl-child. Thirdly, the government, the church and NGOs need to construct more boarding schools and ensure free primary education, especially for girls, so that they too can have enough time to study. The government also needs to invest in regional development that will lead to job placement opportunities for school leavers to motivate girls who are still in schools. At the same time there is need for the schools, church and NGOs to work with the local administration and the community in order to ensure girls' rights to education and the freedom to choose when to marry are respected. This will improve academic achievement of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

FAWE: Forum for African Women Educationalists

NCCC: The National Association of Congregation of Christian Churches

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children Fund

UNIPF: United Nations Population Fund

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

According to Forum for African Women Educationalists, FAWE (1995), various traditional customs and cultural values, including female circumcision and early marriage, compete with the education of girls and young women. In the case of early marriage, the continuation of education is threatened due to the new responsibilities acquired. In most cases, when a girl reaches marriageable age, according to different communities, the possibility of continuing education is determined by the value her community places on education. That is, if the community does not value education, then the girl is not encouraged to continue with her studies. However, if she does not consent to marriage she can be forced to marry the man chosen for her.

Girls in Standards One to Four perform well, but as they move to the upper classes, their performance tends to deteriorate (FAWE, 1995). The girl looks at herself as no longer a child and at the same time, the societal attitudes towards her change. Moreover, it is around this time that circumcision takes place, implying that she has now entered womanhood. In this case, the new stage she has entered permits her to marry. In the situation where there is pressure for the girl to marry, her performance and involvement in the school is interfered with, even though she may remain in school.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

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Globally, the age of marriage is determined by the respective values and norms of a given community. According to King and Hill (1997), marriage affects primary school children in the societies where schools have children who join late or where betrothal takes place at a very young age. This could be due to the fact that they already know their destiny or purpose to be that of marriage, and there are no aspirations to further their education.

In Africa, marriage is greatly valued as it offers the society continuation. Through marriage, one acquires new status and is respected. In some communities marriage is not an individual affair but communal one. The parents or members of the clan are there to see that one makes the right choice of who and when to marry. In other cases where the individual may seem to delay, in getting married, the community comes in to ensure that one does not neglect the obligation to marry. In other words, in some communities, it is preferred that the girl should marry so that she can bear many children. Thus, in some communities girls are encouraged to get married as soon as they reach adolescence.

However, with the introduction of formal education, the age of marriage may no longer be the same. Girls who are still in primary school may be marriageable according to the given community but at the same time the desire to remain in school is a source of conflict. The intensity of the struggle between education and the age of marriage of the girls varies from community to community. King and Hill (1997) write

that education enhances women's economic productivity in all sectors, such as agriculture, health, business and even family cares. Therefore, the African woman, now more than in the past, needs to be empowered through formal education up to primary level.

In Kenya, the response towards formal education is improving. However, some communities, especially the pastoralists, seem to be moving at a slow pace towards embracing formal education. Education of girls seems less valued, and marrying off girls who are still in primary school is a common practice. Among the Pokot, a pastoralist community of Kenya found in the North West part of the country, especially the West Pokot District, education of girls is not fully embraced. In such a community where early marriage is common, academic performance in primary school can be affected as it demoralizes and interferes with girls' concentration, even though they may remain in school. The reasons could be due to the lack of role models, (since older girls are married) or due to the fear of being married off at any time and therefore girls' dreams and aspirations may not be to further their education. Primary education is interfered with, yet it is considered vital for introducing children to the basics of the changing world. Empowering through education will enable girls to occupy their rightful place in the community and contribute to social and economic development.

## **1.2 The Pokot People**

The Pokot are a Kenyan community whose population is about 300,000, forming one of the most marginalized communities in Kenya (The National Association of Congregation Christian Churches, NCCC, 2002). Probably, the tough environment they live in and their lifestyle contributes to their being cut off from the rest of Kenya in many aspects, such as education, religious, politics, communication and others. The Pokot can be divided into two sections. One of the sections consists of those living on the Cherangani Hills, who are mainly agriculturists. The other section consists of those living East of Baringo District and on the slopes of Cherangani Hills, on the vast plateaus stretching towards Karamoja in the northwest. The latter are mainly pastoralists acculturated with the Karamojong and the Turkana, their immediate neighbors, from whom they have borrowed many cultural signs and symbols (Tibaldo, 1998). Like their counterparts the pastoralists, the Pokot have maintained most of the significant elements of their traditional culture; for example, the distinct roles of each gender are still not interfered with by the introduction of formal education.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Marriage is basic for the continuation of any society because through marriage the parties involved are expected by the society to bear offspring who continue the community. However, marriage, instead of offering society the best, can contribute in a negative way if those who enter into it are not yet fully equipped for the experience that is offered with the advancement with years. It is also important that marriage take

place not too early, when those involved could be in school acquiring the basic knowledge, and to utilizing every opportunity available to further their education. Among the Pokot, many girls are married before completing primary school and are denied their right to education. Moreover, some of the girls are married off to older men, who already have several wives. Early marriage not only robs girl their childhood but also denies them their rights to education and the freedom to choose. Experience has shown that, the events that happen around us affect us directly or indirectly, for example, a girl growing up in a community that marries off girls while still very young has her aspirations affected, and her way of life may be shaped by the societal expectations. Among the Pokot, the performance of girls in primary school is affected by different factors such as circumcision, ignorance of the value of education, lack of facilities and early marriage, among others. The problem this research seeks to study is the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot in Kacheliba Division.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study:

- i. What is the academic performance of girls in Kacheliba Division?
- ii. What are the effects of early marriage on academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division?
- iii. How do teachers' and parents' support the girls?

- iv. What are some of concrete suggestions of improving academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

The girl child continues to be deprived the opportunity to go to school and instead is oriented towards marriage while still at a tender age. In such environments, the girls are not motivated to work hard and exhaust their talents. Rather, the phenomenon has a negative influence even for those who that remain in the school.

The finding from this study will contribute to improve girls' education among the pastoralists, especially the Pokot. It will help to sensitize the parents and the entire community on the impact of early marriage on girls' education, and probably suggest ways of dealing with the situation at hand. The findings will also help other researchers to do more comprehensive studies in the related areas.

### **1.6 Delimitation of the Study**

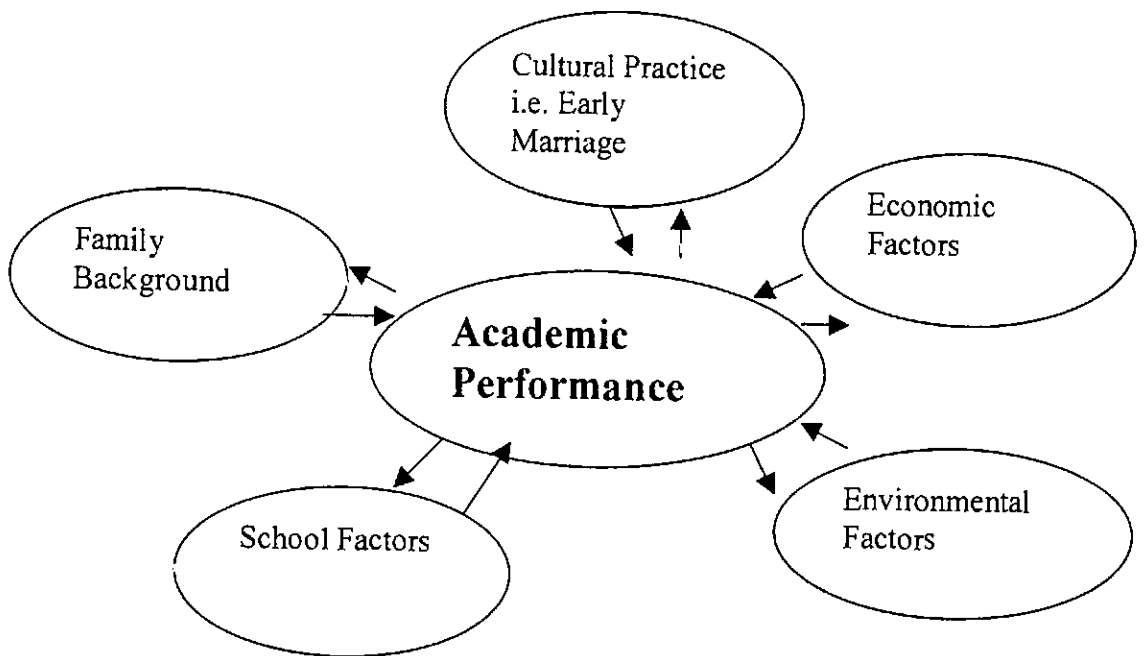
This study was delimited investigating the effects of early marriage on academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division. This study concentrated more on the Pokot of Kacheliba a Sub-location, people who are both agriculturists and semi-nomads. It would have been of much interest to get respondents from other divisions of the same community who have different lifestyle since they are more in the interior of the West Pokot District. However, due to limited

time it was practically impossible to study in a wide area. Hence, the findings may not be generalized to all primary school girls among the Pokot.

### 1.7 Conceptual Framework

The capacity for a student to perform academically depends on a number of factors. For the case of girls' academic performance in primary schools among the pastoralists, some of the factors are: Cultural practices such as early marriages and circumcision, school factors, economic factors, environment factors and family factors, among others. Figure one illustrates these factors.

Figure 1. *The Relationship among the Variables*



## 1.8 Definitions of Terms

**Community:** the people living in one particular area or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interest, culture, tradition and language.

**Early Marriage:** the legal union leading one to be recognized as husband or wife of someone before the expected age of maturity. Early marriage here refers to that marriage that takes place before the expected time. In most cases it takes place before the completion of primary school between ten years and seventeen, that is before proper maturing physically, emotionally, psychologically and even intellectually.

**Effect:** A result brought about by an agent. That is a consequence that something has on a given situation or on person. It could be either positive or negative consequence

**Pastoralists:** a group of people who are either nomads or semi-nomads who depend mainly on pasture.

**Pokot:** an ethnic group living in some parts of Rift Valley Province of Kenya. While some of the population is agriculturalist, the majority are mainly semi-nomads.

**Performance:** Success or lack of success of pupils in terms of academic achievement. It also refers to the pupils' competence.

**Primary School:** comprises the basic foundation of eight years. It acts as a door to other levels of education.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the literature review in four parts. The first is about the nature of early marriage; second early marriage and education in Africa and in Kenya; third, early marriage and girl education in Kenya and the last part deal with girls' education and early marriage among the Pokot.

#### **2.1 Nature of Early Marriage**

The understanding of the term "early marriage" depends on the circumstances and on the society on which one is basing the issue. For example, prior to the introduction of formal education, the age of marriage depended on the norms and customs of different communities. The Women's Human Right Resources (2004) points out that, international conventions do not clearly state when is girl is too young to marry. However, according to the same report, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) have suggested that 18 years should be considered the minimum age. In some communities, when a young girl approaches puberty, she is prepared for initiation and after this she is ready for marriage. In most communities, the age for marriage was around fifteen. However, the degree of preparation depends upon the culture, and also on the opportunities available.

## **2.2 Global Phenomenon of Early Marriage**

UNICEF (2004) states that child marriage can be found across the globe, but is common in parts of Africa and South Asia. Ingrid (2004) also notes that early marriage is a global issue, which violates the rights of girls and boys in this generation and the next, especially because it affects education and the well being of millions of children, as well as having knock-on effects for poverty and development of communities.

UNICEF (2004) also presents the percentages of girls' aged 15-19 in selected countries who are already married: Democratic Republic of Congo 74%, Niger 70%, Afghanistan 54%, Bangladesh 51%, Honduras 30%, and Iraq 28%. This illustrates that early marriage is a global issue that is a barrier to girls' education. According to this report, UNESCO (2003) alleges that in Nepal, 40% of girls are married by the time they are 15 years old.

However, King and Hill (1997) assert that social customs such as early marriage do not systematically affect whether girls enroll in schools in East Asia. The decision on how much to educate a girl depends on the value the family places on female education and their willingness to bear the costs of schooling.

Therefore, considering various reports on the global phenomenon of early marriage, it is clear that it is a common issue in different countries. Due by the fact that it takes place at a tender age, affects all aspects of the girls' growth and development.

### **2.3 Early Marriage and Education in Africa**

Marriage and education are vital in Africa. Even before the introduction of formal education, the community facilitated the education of the individual at different stages of life so as to prepare the individual with the necessary skills to enable him/her to undertake the role expected by the Society. In many African cultures, the girl-child is a non-entity, the last to be considered and least to be recognized (Manzi, 2004). This implies that in the communities that do not value formal education, the preparation for marriage and the raising of children may not value schooling as a preparation vital for the young girls. According to an investigation by Pita (2000), it was revealed that about 53% of girls among Kakwa community of South Sudan marry at the age of 14 to 17 years. At this age, the young woman is not yet through with her primary education. Even because children do not begin school until they are 8 or 9 years of age in some communities.

Both the parent and the society play a great role as far as early marriage and the interruption of a girls' education is concerned. According to Kidane (2002), cultural expectation of the girls and priority given to housewives has a strong negative influence on educational opportunities. In such a situation, the girl has no freedom to move in a different direction but is forced to marry according to her culture. In such a culture, even though a girl may remain in school she may pay attention to only what is relevant to her preparation to undertake her married role at any time, according to the culture.

On the other hand, if the girl is married or 'promised' at an early age, while still in primary school, her performance in school is affected because of the new role she is to assume or has already undertaken. A survey (King and Hill, 1997) carried out in Ethiopia showed that 20% of primary school students were 'promised', married or divorced. Girls who grow in such situations may not be motivated to perform well in school if schooling is not considered an important aspect in marriage.

A recent survey by UNICEF (2004) showed that 44 percent of 20 to 24 year-old women in Niger were married before they reached age 15, because of the traditional desire to protect girls from early pregnancies before marriage. Thus, the traditional customs may want to preserve the girls from out-of wedlock pregnancies, but at the same time does not understand the profound physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional consequences of early marriage. A further report by UNICEF (2005), pointed out that in Ethiopia and in parts of Western Africa, marriage at the age of seven to eight is common. The same report noted that in Kebbi state in Northern Nigeria, the average age of marriage for girls is just over 11 yrs against a national average of 17yrs.

On some occasions, many girls had to go against the 'current' of their own traditions and give more attention to their studies, regardless of the challenges they met. This is affirmed by Mrs. Mgonja, a headmistress in Tanzania, who states, "Most girls have had to defy the tradition that determines that girls get married early and thus do not

need to be educated beyond the basics” (FAWE, 1995). However, in such cases where the girl insists on continuing with school, may lack support necessary for her to achieve good academic performance at school.

#### **2.4 Early Marriage and Girls Education in Kenya**

In Kenya, an attitude towards formal education has been positive in most communities. However, among the pastoralists, there has been some resistance towards western education as in many other aspects. This does not mean that among the rest of the non-pastoralists there are no exceptions. Although there seems to be everyday improvement in education, the education of girls lags behind. Eshiwani (1993) outlines some factors that cause low educational attainment among girls at primary school level. The most serious ones are: the need for domestic assistance by daughters, traditional views towards the proper role of women, and dropout due to pregnancies. Ambia (2003) in his study in Wajir District noted that cultural practices such as female genital mutilation and betrothal, dictate the inferior place of the girls in the society. This in turn determines what kind of preparation the girls receive.

According to a study by Lang’at (2002), early marriage hinders education of girls in the sense that parents force their children into marriage even when they could continue with education. Thus, the continuation of girls’ education depends also on the value parents place on education. Kurewa (2001) argues that parents who are educated encourage their daughters to remain in school while those who are not may not.

Parental support and encouragement plays a great role in educational achievement. These roles of the parent in education of girls are further pointed out by Lang'at (2002) who, in his study arguing that parents see girls as assets that belong to another family and so the girls are not encouraged to study, as educating them would be a waste of time and in the long run, the benefits will fall directly to the other family.

Early marriage is even more undesirable when a minor is married to someone who is advanced in years. For example, an eleven old girl was rescued from forced marriage among the Samburu (Nation Correspondent, 2004, Oct 14). She was a standard four pupil who was to be married to a forty-year old man. As she goes back to school, the experience she has undergone may have a tremendous effect on her performance in school.

Among the Maasai community, early marriage is considered part of every day life, as shared by Ms Pricilla Nangurai, a Headmistress of Kajiado primary school who has rescued hundreds of girls from early marriage during her 20 years experience. She shared the story of a 14-year-old girl who dreamt of becoming a doctor but was forced to marry a 74 years old man during the school holidays and later was rescued and taken back to school (Ombuor, 2004, Nov 27). Psychologically, she is no more the same and her academic performance may have been interfered with even if she return to school.

Dibasso (2000) in his research in Marsabit District notes early marriage as one of the cultural practices that affects girls' education, especially in cases where engagement is done when the girl is still young. This is because intended marriage may be so imminent such that it preoccupies girl's mind wasting their time in school.

In Kuria District, the issue of early marriage is also common. According to Wanyoike (2004) in her radio presentation, girls are circumcised between the age of ten and twelve, after which they are oriented towards marriage. Thus few girls participate in school in Kuria District as compared with the boys.

Early marriage in some occasions involved two primary school pupils a boy and a girl. Otieno (2005) presents an example of a marriage between two primary school pupils in Taita Taveta. The 'couple' lived together for three weeks until their marriage was stopped by the District Children's Office who alleged that the marriage contravened the children's right to education and warned parents against condoning such acts.

Early marriage affects girls' education. A study by Ambia (2003) in Wajir District indicated that the emphasis on marriage and motherhood results in undue preoccupation of girls with marriage and inhibits them from developing imagination, initiative and independent thought. As a result the girls lose interest and hence drop out of school or even remain but perform poorly. Onyango (2000) in his study in Nginyang and Marigat Divisions of Baringo noted that due to gender role stereotypes

at school, girls are passive and lacked motivation especially in upper classes due to the internalized traditional roles expected of them in the society as extended in school. Ambia (2003) also argues that betrothal early marriage greatly interfere with the retention of girls in primary education since girls are trained and fully prepared to be good wives and mothers for sale to the highest bidder. Thus the girl-child in such a community is oriented toward marriage. Worst of all, if their colleagues get married, it has an impact on them. A study carried by Onyango (2000) indicated that 60% of the teachers interviewed say that when girls see their colleague getting married without going far in education and living well, they see no need of working hard since there is nothing to be gained from education in their view. In this case, marriage becomes the next greater thing in life.

### **2.5 Early Marriage Among the Pokot and Girls Education**

Early marriages among the Pokot and Njemps are still popular (Onyango, 2000). Due to their nomadic lifestyle, the Pokot have not fully seen the value of formal education, especially for girls. This is because as they move in search of water and pasture, their settled life is interrupted, and even worse in some cases, they have to move with the entire family and thus the children are withdrawn from school. The status of women has remained low in this community, as evidenced by initiation rites that include girls' circumcision and forced marriage at an early age. According to Armada (2001), women are also not entitled to any active participation in decision-making.

According to Onyango (2000), circumcision encourages early marriage, more because it is seen as the hallmark of a successful girl and woman, especially among the Pokot. Shame is abhorred most, and girls become conscious of such at a very early age. Mwangi (2003) states,

*“ From the age of eight, the girl’s mother or family members begin to prepare her for marriage. At twelve she is circumcised as a sign of maturity and initiation into womanhood, after which she is married off”.*

Thus, in cases whereby the girl is still in school during the period of preparation of marriage, her concentration is diverted from school and thus her academic performance is equally affected.

As Mwangi (2003) quotes Abdulilahi Leloon, the West Pokot District Commissioner, “education for female children is still a problem owing to the traditional belief that a girl is born for marriage and nothing more”. Such beliefs affect the girl’s performance and her participation, since she is socialized to see herself in the same traditional belief. According to the report by NCCC (May, 2003) Pokot girls are greatly oppressed, and the family sees no need for educating girls. The same report indicates that in a community of about 1,100 people only 3 are in high school and that in elementary classrooms, the number of girls to boys is 8 girls to every 25 boys. During high school the ratio is 1girl for every 22 boys. Girls are also subjected to early marriages and female genital mutilation.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Parents and the society contribute greatly to early marriage for girls in many societies, and their consequence is felt in the education of girls. Early marriage affects the girls' education to the extent that many end up dropping out of school to take on their new responsibilities. Those who remain at school are also affected since their morale may not be so high, with the fear that tomorrow they too may be married. With early marriage, the aspiration of the girls is interfered with and girls may be oriented towards marriage and therefore education is given very little value.

Among the Pokot, the girls may be sent to school only to wait for them to mature for marriage. Consequently, though they remain in school their performance may be poor, owing to the fact that their performance is not rewarded because their parents and the society expects them to get married as soon as they reach puberty. Gender equity in education is still far from being achieved in terms of participation and academic achievement. Therefore, the situation at hand calls for investigation in order to improve girls' academic performance, starting from primary school in order to build a strong foundation for other levels of education.

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with research design and methodology. It presents the research design, targeted population, description of the sample and sampling procedures, description of instruments of data collection and data analysis.

### **3.1. Research Design**

The research used the survey design, which allowed for the collection of data from a large number of people, while giving room for self-report, study on perceptions, attitudes and values. At the same time, the study used the case study design whereby a number of parents were interviewed on the phenomenon under study.

### **3.2. Target Population**

The target population was the girls, teachers and parents among the Pokot people. The schools' population focused mainly on the primary school girls and boys, schoolteachers and the head teachers. Due to the low population of girls in primary schools, three schools were selected.

### **3.3. Description of Sample and Sampling Procedures**

The study used stratified random sampling to ensure that no single group was left out. Schools within the different parts of the area of the study were selected. The sample population sizes of the pupils were 30 out of a total population of 70. The sample size

of the teachers was 10 out of 30 teachers. 10 parents were randomly sampled and interviewed. And three head teachers were purposely interviewed.

### **3.4. Description of Research Instruments**

Two tools of data collection were used. These were questionnaires and interviews.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaires**

There were two categories of questionnaires, one for the pupils, and the other for the teachers. Questionnaires were of both closed and open-ended formats. The researcher opted for questionnaires to facilitate collection of data from a large population within a short time. They also gave the respondents enough time to understand before responding. (Copies of the questionnaires are attached on appendices I, II and III).

##### **3.4.1.1 Questionnaires for Pupils**

These were two pages long, and were divided into two sections. The questionnaires included both closed questions since they are easier to analyze because they are in immediate usable form. At the same time open-ended and they allowed a greater depth of response.

##### **3.4.1.2 Questionnaires for Teachers**

The questionnaire for teachers was three pages long, and divided into four sections. The sections contained the background information about the respondents, the girls'

education, their performance and the effects of early marriage on girls' the academic performance of girls in the primary school among the Pokot, and also sought suggestions on how to improve girls' performance. The questionnaires for the teachers used open-ended and close-ended questions. They were also in Likert scale format to reduce subjectivity.

### **3.4.2 Interview Guide for the Parents and Head Teachers**

The interview guide for the parents was one page long with seven items. The interviews were chosen because they would effectively facilitate the study to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study. The interviews gave room for in-depth answers that were not possible to get through the questionnaires. The interview for the parents was preferred because most parents are illiterate in the chosen community and therefore through the interviews the questions were well explained and clarified. Probing questions were employed. The parents were not necessarily those of the girls in the selected sample schools but those also with pupils in other schools. The content of the interview guide was the participation of girls in schools and the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of primary school girls among the Pokot. Also through the interview suggestions on how to assist girls improve their performance and the participation while in school. (Copies of the interview guide are attached on appendices IV and V).

### **3.5.Data Collection Procedures**

The data were collected through opinionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were also administered. However, the explanation of purpose for the study was done at the before the questionnaires were administered. For the parents, the interviews were conducted with the aid of some assistants who translated the language.

### **3.6.Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, percentages and frequencies. Data analyses were based on the research's study objectives.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The content of this chapter includes data presentation, discussion and interpretations of the research findings. The data presentation and discussion are based on the main questions of the study. The chapter is divided into several themes. These are: background information, importance for girls' schooling, girls' educational performance, early marriage in primary school, parents and teachers' support and the suggestion on how to improve girls academic performance and discourage early marriage.

### **4.1 Respondents' Background Information**

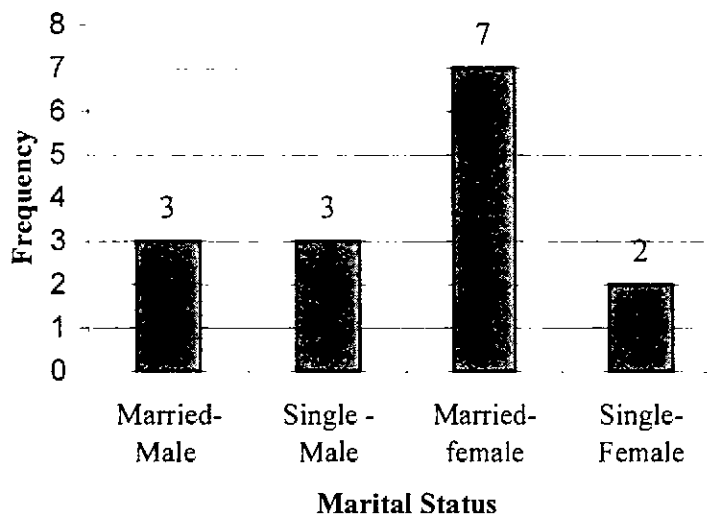
Background information of the teachers, pupils and parents was included in the data collected.

#### **4.1.1 Teachers**

Fifteen teachers participated in the study; among them there were six male teachers and nine female teachers. There was 100% response. The background information of the teachers also included marital status as seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Distribution of Teachers' Respondents by Gender and Marital Status*



As indicated in the Figure 2, respondents were gender imbalanced. The imbalance could be due to the fact that despite the few small numbers of educated women in the area, teaching career is giving room to women to compete with men, unlike many other areas whereby the career is female dominated.

Although the marital status included separated, divorced, widowed and others, the responses revealed that the respondents were either married or single with the majority being married, and among them majority of the female respondents were married. This can reveal the emphasis and value attributed to married life in the community.

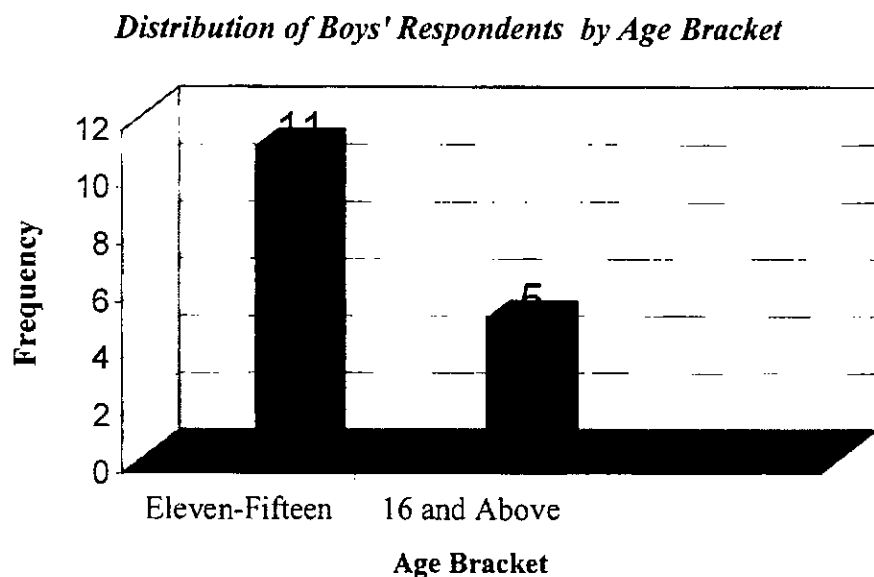
### 4.1.2 Pupils

Fifteen five pupils participated in the study, and 49 pupils responded. The responses of boys and girls were considered separately because some of the items used to collect data from the boys were slightly different from those of girls.

#### 4.1.2.1 Boys

The background information of boys consisted only the age as all were from class eight.

**Figure 3**

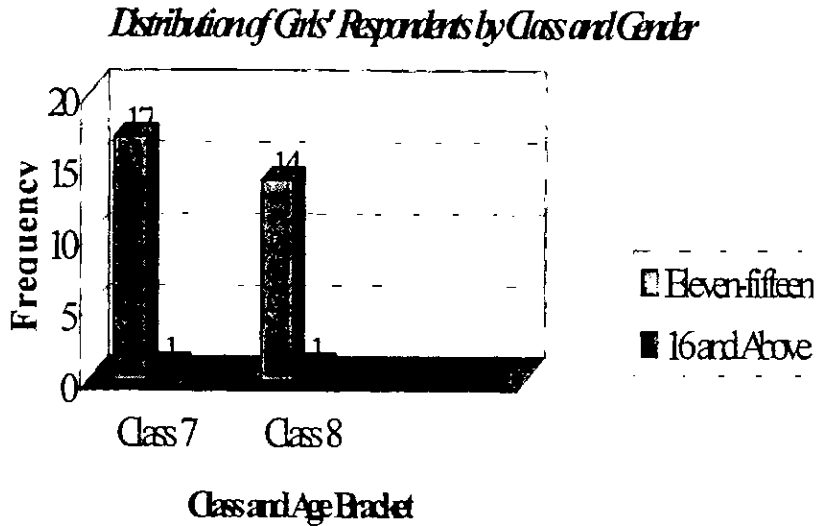


According to Figure 3, 11 respondents aged between 11-15. Five of the respondents were within age bracket 16 and above. And although age bracket of 6-10 was included in the background information of boys, none was found in that category. The category was too low to apply to the class eight boys

#### 4.1.2.2 Girls

Girls' respondents' background information included both the age and the class. Thirty-three girls responded.

Figure 4



From Figure 4, 33 girls participated in the study among them those within the age bracket 11-15 were the majority. Respondents within age bracket 16 and above were only two in both classes, indicating that older girls are not common in primary.

From the background information of boys and girls, it was evident that older boys are likely to be found in school as opposed to girls of the same age, either because by age 16 and above they have completed school or they are not encouraged to remain at school.

### 4.1.3 Parents

Ten parents were interviewed and there was 100% response rate. The respondents were gender balanced. Though randomly selected, data revealed that most of the parents interviewed had at least one daughter in school. Interviews were either in English, Kiswahili or Pokot and were all translated for compilation purposes.

## 4.2 Girls' Education

Data was elicited through closed and open-ended item, on views of pupils on whether girls need to go to school.

### 4.2.1 Boys' Respondent Views on Need for Girls to go to School

Boys were asked whether they see the need for girls to go to school and the reasons as to why they see the need or no need.

**Table 1**

| <i>Whether Girls need to go to school</i> |          |            |
|---|----------|------------|
| <b>Response</b>                           | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b>   |
| Yes                                       | 15       | 93.3       |
| No  | 1        | 6.7        |
| <b>Total</b>                              |          | <b>100</b> |

Table 1 presents data elicited boys in which 93.3% of the respondent agreed that, girls' need to go to school. Majority argued that, through education, girls would have a better future, contributing to the well being of their families and that of their community.

One of them emphasized,

*Especially girls who are under fifteen years old need to have a good life in the future*

One boy said,

*Girls need to go to school because the world of today without education there is nothing and education is the only way to handle life.*

Another stated,

*Because are usually they need to know the clinic card of the child and secondly to read and pass and get employment she earns salaries.*

On the contrary, one boy sees no need for girls to go to school.

He notes,

*The parents of the girls encourages early marriage*

From the responses of the boys, it is clear that most boys see the need for girls to go to school as a way of improving their lives. However, the view of one boy that the parents of girls encourage early marriage reveals likelihood through interferences from early marriage though girls' education may be valued.

#### **4.2.2 Girls' Respondents Views on Whether there is Need for Educating Girls.**

Girls' respondents' opinions on whether girls need to go to school were sought using both closed-ended and open-ended items. Great majority agreed on the need for girls to go to school. They all agreed that through school, girls would improve their future and be able to contribute to their families and their countries owing to the fact that they can take good care of their children.

One girl said that,

*They will know more things at school e.g. the Pokot girls can get infected by HIV/AIDS by using one knife.*

Another had this to say,

*Because they may get more information and know more about circumcision in the village and area*

One of those who based their reasons on the need to help their family said,  
*Because in future a girl will be able to help her parents and take care of her children.*

Another noted,  
*Girls need to go to school because after some time they will be the ones who are much depended on by their parents and also to make their future life much easier.*

A girl noted,  
*Because they will help their families may they are only girls in their family and can thus improve their poor family...but their parents said there is no fees for secondary school and thus girls stops education.*

From the responses of the girls, it was revealed that girls see the need for their education. However, their views are more tied to the service they will render to their parents and to their families meaning. If this is not achieved then education of girls may be considered a waste.

#### **4.2.3 Parents' Views on Whether Girls Needs to be Educated**

When asked about their views on whether girls need to be educated all interviewees agreed anonymously there is need to educate girls

One parent stated,  
*...There is need to educate girls because primary education helps girls to read and write, promoting cleanliness, take care their environment, and will enable them to join other institutions.*

Another added,  
*...Educated girls are able to help themselves in the 'Boma', take good care of the family maintaining hygiene.*

A parent also commented,  
*...It is good to educate girls because once they are educated they can help their parents in future as they get jobs.*

One man had this to say,

*...Yes, there are differences a woman who is educated is different, even the way she caters for her family, cleanliness, and cook good food. However, if we compare with those who have not gone to school, educated women are different.*

Parents see the need of educating girls. However, the views reveal the need for girls' education was confined to their roles in the family as married women. This points at the importance given to married life in the community

From the findings on the need to educate girls, it can be concluded that most pupils and parents see the needs to educate girls. Their opinion reveal that most parent are likely to send their daughters to school, however, their academic performance will depend on the reasons as to why go to school. One of the common elements on the need for girls to go to school is their role especially in the family as the main factor revealing the roles of women among the Pokot of the area under study.

#### **4.3 Girls Performance**

Under girls' performance, the respondents were presented with different items to investigate girls' performance as compared with that of boys and their motivation to study. Also Girls performance after initiation, girls' attitudes towards their performance were considered.

##### **4.3.1.1 Teachers' Views on Girls Motivation and Girls Performance**

Two items were presented in Likert scale format to deduce whether girls have motivation to study and how is the girls' performance as compared with that of boys.

**Table 2**

***Responses on Girls Motivation and their Performance***

| Item   | SA | A | UD | D | SD | $\bar{X}$ |
|--|----|---|----|---|----|-----------|
| Many girls are not motivated to perform well         | 6  | 7 | 1  | 1 | 0  | 4.2       |
| Many girls performs poorly as compared with the boys | 3  | 8 | 0  | 3 | 1  | 3.6       |
| $\bar{X}$  |    |   |    |   |    | 3.9       |

From Table 2, majority of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that many girls are not motivated to perform well (mean,  $\bar{X} = 4.2$ ) that many girls perform poorly compared with the boys, (mean,  $\bar{X} = 3.6$ ). Thus, both items scored an average of 3.9 weight of the responses, meaning that respondents view girls as not motivated to perform well and thus they perform poorly compared with boys.

On the other hand, the 27% respondents views girls' vision being interfered with by cultural practices such as circumcision and early marriage, and also lack of role models and poor parental support.

One respondent said,

*Because the education for girls is mainly hindered by cultural practices i.e. circumcision... and they lack role models*

Another added,

*Girls believe in marriage*

Yet another pointed out that, girls do not have strong support from parents and also the environment affects their performance.

Thus, teachers have the opinion that girls are not motivated to perform well and that the girls perform poorly as compared with the boys. This was attributed to early marriage, circumcision and poor parental support.

#### **4. 3.1.2 Girls Performance after Initiation**

Opinions on girls' academic performance after initiation were sought from teachers. All respondents agreed that after initiation, girls do not perform well due to the new status acquired. The teachers noted that girls view themselves as adults and owing to this fact, they feel superior and are difficult to control and to mix freely with others who may not have gone through the rite. Thus their aspiration is to marry.

One of the respondents said,

*Bounded by tradition, after initiation girls view everything as useless because of the teachings they got during circumcision and sometimes others are already engaged to old men so they just come to school to waste time till it's time to go.*

Thus, it is clear that most girls do not go back to school after initiation, and those who do back perform poorly academically, mainly because the interaction with the teachers and the other pupils at school is interfered with reducing opportunities of learning which comes about with the interactions at school. And therefore their sense of belonging to school is hampered with as they aspire to get married.

#### **4.3.1.3 Married Girls in Schools**

The teachers were asked whether they knew cases of primary school girls who were married or engaged and still remained in school.

**Table 3**

*Teachers Who Encountered Married Girls Who were Still in School*

| Responses | n  | %   |
|-----------|----|-----|
| Yes       | 9  | 60  |
| No        | 6  | 40  |
| Total     | 15 | 100 |

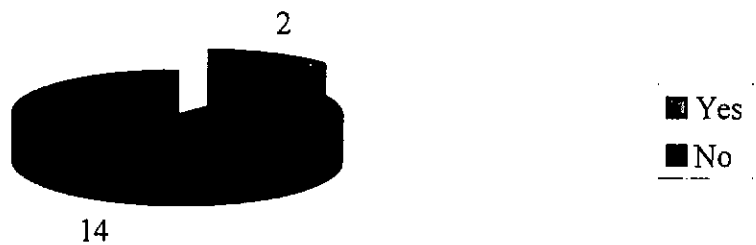
From Table 3, 60% of the respondents had encountered girls who are still married in school. They all agreed that the performance of those girls was poor due to the 'divided mind' due to the demands from their families because of the new status and commitment acquired.

**4.3.2 Responses of Boys on Girls Performance**

Boys' respondents' views on the girls performance as compared with boys' performance was sought. In addition, their reasons behind their views were investigated.

**Figure 5**

*Whether Girls Perform Better than Boys*



As indicated in Figure 5, 2 boys had the opinion that girls perform better than boys.

One of them said,

*Girls were very active and they don't misbehave like boys, girls are listening to the teachers.*

The other argued,

*Girls perform better than the boys, but not all the girls.*

On the contrary, a majority argued that girls don't perform better than the boys.

One noted,

*Girls don't care about their academic performances.*

Another commented,

*Girls are misled by rude and undisciplined boys who talk of marrying most of the time.*

A boy had this comment,

*Girls in our school are very few and that make them to lose hope.*

Another added,

*Because girls are helping their mothers for fetching water so they may not have time to study at home.*

Other respondents cited disturbance from boys, fear of some subjects such as mathematics and science and yet others argued that boys were hardworking more than girls.

From the boys' responses it was confirmed that girls perform poorer than the boys because of some external factors and the existing mentality that boys are more hardworking. Ironically, the same boys seem be part of the interference with girls' performance.

### 4.3.3 Girls Attitudes toward their Performance

Girls' respondents' feelings towards their performance was sought. At the same time girls were asked to give reasons why they were satisfied or not satisfied with their performances

Figure 6

*Distribution of Girls Respondents' Feelings Towards their Performance*

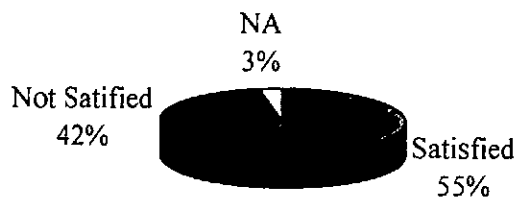


Figure 6 shows that only 55% of the girl respondents were satisfied with their performance and although reasons for being contented with their performance were not well elaborated compared with those not happy. Some attributed their good performance to parental help. Out of all the respondents, 42% were not satisfied with their performance. Some stated factors affecting their performances. Majority among them stated that there are many disturbances around. Although the nature of the disturbance was not explained, some stated some of the difficulties they encountered.

One of the girls said,

*Because my parents want me to leave home.*

Another said,

*Because my parents don't know the meaning of going to school.*

Two others attributed their poor performance to the request to leave school and stay at home. Other factors given were language barrier, lack of teachers, and lack of time to study due to domestic work.

From the findings on girls' performance from teachers, parents and other students, it can be inferred that cultural practices such as initiation and early marriage affect academic performance since they interfere with their concentration and also their aspirations. Although most girls were satisfied with their performance, interference from parents and the environment due to the cultural practices was common, which in turn affected their academic performance.

#### **4.3.4 Head Teachers' Views on Girl Performance**

Head teachers were interviewed on their experience on girls' performance, and whether girls perform better than boys.

One of the head teachers said,

*Although our school is single school for girls, it is clear from the mocks and national exams that boys always lead the girls as far as academic performance is concerned.*

Another had this to explain,

*Girls performs poorly due to few girls in the school so being minority that affects their participation...domestic chores also affects girls performance especially if the parents do not value education.*

From all the responses it is clear that girls perform poorly compared with the boys since girls are not motivated to perform well. Some of the main causes of their poor performance are: early marriages, circumcision, poor parental support, domestic work

and the existing mentality that girls are not as hardworking as boys. It was established that after circumcision and marriage, girls do not go back to school, and of those who go back, their performance is poor due to the new status acquired. Therefore, due to these cultural practices, girls' participation is interfered with making their population at school to be small and thus they lack sense of belonging to school necessary for good academic achievement

#### **4.4 Early Marriage and Girls in Primary School**

The respondents were asked about their experience regarding girls who got married before completing primary school.

##### **4.4.1 Number of Primary School Girls Who Got Married**

An item was presented to establish how many boys and girls among the respondents had encountered girls who got married within the last one year and how many girls they knew who got married to establish whether marriages among the primary school girls was common.

##### **4.4.2 Pupils' Experience**

Out of the fifteen boys, three had not encountered a case whereby a girl got married while still in primary school. Eight respondents cited that they had known three of girls married cases that were still in primary school. Instead two respondents encountered five and two cases respectively.

According to the girls' respondents, three had not known cases of girls getting married while still in primary school. However, nine admitted that they had witnessed two girls getting married among their classmates. Nine of the respondents knew an average of three cases. At the same time seven respondents admitted that they had witnessed one case each.

Their responses revealed that within one year the cases of girls getting married while still in primary were common.

#### **4.4.3 Head Teachers' Experiences**

On the cases of early marriage in primary schools the head teachers interviewed had this to say.

One noted,

*...There are number of cases of girls getting married while still in school. Two cases took place last year. One girl in class six and the other in class seven due to parental influence. This also affected those who remained in school because they felt that the same will happen to them and thus they care less about their education*

Another added

*...Yes two girls got married last year, one class six and the other in class eight...early marriage affects the academic performance as the girl-child get has different interests and divided mind*

On the other hand one of the head teacher had a different experience as she said,

*...No getting married is not an issue. The issue here is early pregnancy. For example last year we lost two girls in class six and eight. However, early marriages lowers literacy rate for girls and reduces the number of girls in school.*

Cases of girls who got married were found to be common among girls in primary school.

And as established from the responses of the teachers and pupils, the academic

performance of girls who remained was affected especially because these marriages took place to their colleagues. Therefore, in reference to these responses, early marriage can be inferred to affects girls' academic performance.

#### 4.5 Attitudes Towards Early Marriage

The respondents were served with a close-ended item to find out how girls react when a girl terminated her primary school to get married.

##### 4.5.1 Teachers Responses on Girls Attitude Towards Early Marriage

Teachers were asked whether girls at school react when their colleagues terminate school and get married and what was their reaction.

**Table 4**

| <i>Whether girls React when their Colleagues Gets Married</i> |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| Response  | n  | %   |
| Yes   | 5  | 33  |
| No  | 10 | 67  |
| Total   | 15 | 100 |

The findings from Table 4 indicate that 5 respondents agreed that girls react when their classmate stops school to get married as they try to persuade them to come back to school and to pursue their case through the chief area. On the contrary, 10 respondents argued that girls do not react when their classmates get married because they are either indifferent to early marriage or most of them think it is part of their traditions. They also fear their parents and thus some even talk about it positively.

#### **4.5.2 Boys' Attitude Towards Early Marriage**

The boys were presented with an item to establish their attitude towards early marriage. Only ten respondents responded to this item. Among them six were opposed to early marriage.

One of argued,

*Early marriage is not good because it prevents those who get married to complete school.*

Two boys felt pity for those who marry very young because without education girls are useless.

One of them had this to say,

*Girls should avoid circumcision as a way to avoid early marriage.*

On the other hand four supported early marriage as one said,

*That they should look for a good husband so that they don't come back to their parents.*

Another argued that girls also like to marry early as he said,

*Some of the girls do not like school that's they leave school and get married.*

According to the opinions of the boys' majority were opposed to marriage of girls before completing primary school. Although minority supported early marriages, their views reveal a culture of early marriages that may take long to die since some boys at this early stage seems to share the opinion of those who marry girls early and thus they may in one way or another influence girls to marry early.

#### **4.5.3 Girls Attitudes Towards Early Marriage**

The study sought to establish what are the feelings of girls when their colleagues leaves school to get married. Out of 33 respondents, only two were happy when their classmates get married while the 31, were found not happy.

One of the two said,

*It is their wish (girls) to marry when they reach standard eight refusing school.*

The other said,

*Because her age is fifteen, clear to marry... life is hard.*

Among the thirty-three who are not happy when their colleagues leave school to get married one said,

*As you marry when you are young eg. Pokot, your husband will beat you saying that although I beat you provided my cattle went because of you.*

Another lamented,

*It is so bad for a girl to leave the school and get married instead others are going on well with their education and thus she will be in troubles in life.*

Yet another said,

*Because they may be forced to marry a man they did not like or even an old man.*

A girl noted,

*Because when girls get married the number of those who remain reduces in class and they too get married before time.*

A class seven girl commented,

*It is not good for them to leave school...we don't want people to leave school.*

Yet another added,

*I feel bad when girls leave home to get married because they were too small to get married.*

Another commented,

*Because we are going to miss our classmate and may be she will get pregnant.*

Other reasons given were that those girl who marry will have a difficult life for without education, they cannot get jobs and that they are exposed to diseases.

Thus it is clear that when girls leave school to get married those who remain are concerned and are worried about what will happen to their colleagues. This reveals events that interfere with the concentration of those who remain as they worry what will become of their classmate. Probably, if it happens regularly, then the academic performance of girls in primary school too is interfered with.

Thus, girls are affected when their classmates leave school to get married as they concern themselves with what will become of those who got married. Likewise, the persuasive means they engage themselves in to have their classmate back also consumes their school time and thus also their academic performance is affected.

#### **4.6 Marriage Before Completing Primary**

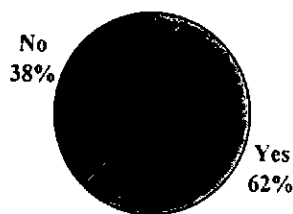
The researcher sought to establish whether girls should marry before completing primary school.

##### **4.6.1 Boys' Views on Marriage of Girls Before Completing Primary School**

Opinions of the boys on whether girls should get married before completing primary school were sought.

**Figure 7**

*Whether Girls Should Marry Before Completing Primary School*



From Figure 7, 62% of the respondents agreed that girls should get married before completing primary. About half of those who supported marriage of girls before

completing primary school suggested that in a situation where the girl gets pregnant, she should marry. Other reasons given had to do with the parental influence.

On this one had this to say,

*Even those they are in class seven they are told by their parents to stay at home.*

A boy said,

*When they went for circumcision, some change of their life and went for marriage*

Yet another saw the influence from villagers as a contributing factor to marriage before completing primary.

One of noted,

*The villagers advise them that they are getting old so they cannot get married again.*

For the 38% who said no, one of them said,

*No! Girls in primary school are still young and they all need to continue with school.*

Another added,

*Primary school is not the last studies in the girls; she is supposed to finish even university level.*

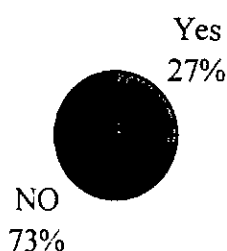
From the views on whether girls should marry even before completing primary school, it was clear that most boys are for the idea of marriage before completing primary school, based on the influence girls receive from the society and from the parents as a consequence of circumcision. Thus, the attitude of the boys toward early marriage carries a weight of effects on girls' academic performance since the boys may communicate either directly or indirectly to the girls that they should marry thus affecting girls' concentration at school.

#### 4.6.2 Girls Views on Marriage Before Completing Primary School

The study sought to establish whether girls support marriage of girls before completing primary school.

Figure 8

*Whether Girls Should Marry Before Completing Primary School.*



From Figure 8, it was established that the 27% of the respondents agreed that girls should get married before completing primary school attributed their reasons to the as circumcision

One said,

*They can get circumcision and marry because in Pokot if you are circumcised you are ready to marry*

Another added,

*Others got circumcision although they are still young and are then are then forced to get married.*

A girl said,

*Because they said that when they pass their exam no body can pay for them school fees.*

Yet another girl said,

*Our parents want the cows and goats because they want us to leave home.*

On the other hand, the 73% of the respondents gave the reasons that girls should not get married before completing primary school because they are too young to get married and they have not completed education. About four girls feared that marrying while too young would lead them to suffer more with the difficulties of life.

One girl expressed her sentiments as she asked,

*If I am a girl why should I get married before completing the school, please I can't. I can finish my school and be married.*

From the findings on whether girls should before completing primary school it was established that a good number of pupils support early marriage of girls who have who are still to complete primary school. Although boys are the majority support, their attitudes affects girls academic performances as they may directly or indirectly orient girls to marry before completing primary school thus making them not to feel at home at school and thus they perform poorly.

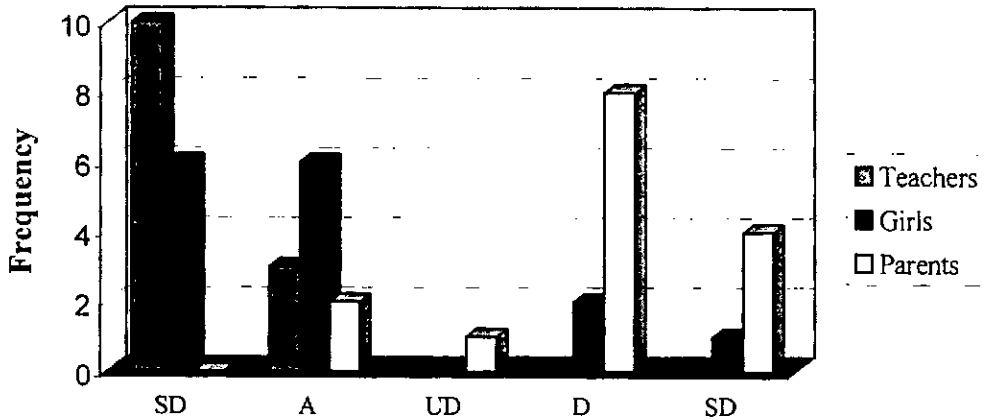
#### **4.7 Parents' and Teachers' Support**

##### **4.7.1 Teachers' Responses**

Teachers' respondents' were asked to rate their efforts to know girls, parental supports on their daughters, and girl's sharing on their personal insight.

**Figure 9**

*Distribution of Teachers View on Teachers, Parents and Girls' Sharing on their Insights*



Almost all the teacher's respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they put effort in knowing what girls go through and support girls. About 12 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that girls share their personal insight and three disagreed that girls share their personal insight. On the parental support on their daughters, only two teachers agreed that parents support their daughters, one was undecided, and twelve had the opinion that parents do not support their daughters.

From the findings from the teachers' respondents it is clear that teachers support is rated very high, and that most girls share their personal insight. Instead, parental support is rated poorly for their daughters. These may affect girls who are in school even though teachers' support is very high, lack of parental support may frustrate both the teacher and the girl and thus performance may be affected

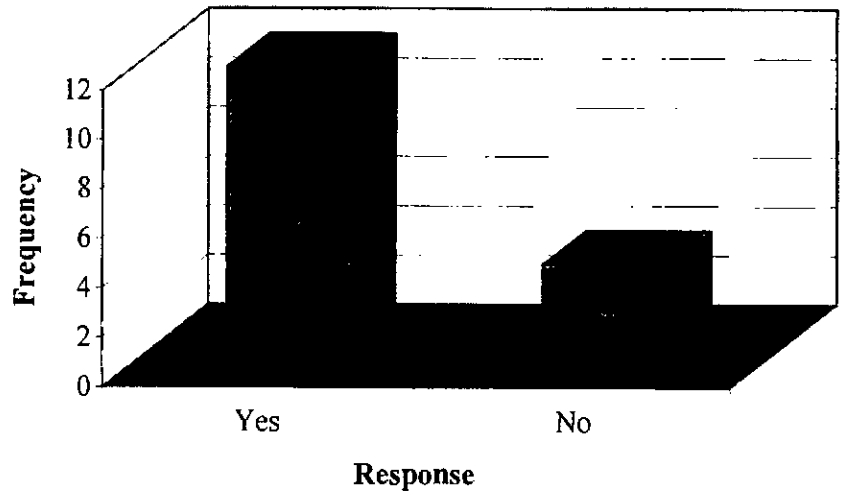
#### 4.7.2 Boys' View on Parental Support

The boys were presented with an item to investigate whether parents supports their daughters who are at school.

**Figure 10**

From Figure 10, it can be noted that among sixteen boys' respondents, 12 have the

*Distribution of Boys' Responses Whether Parents Support their Daughters*



opinion that parents support their daughters at school by providing them the essentials for the school, moral support, hopes of better future having received education. On the other hand, 4 respondents argued that girls lack parental support with the major main reason that parents want their daughters to be married so that they could get dowry.

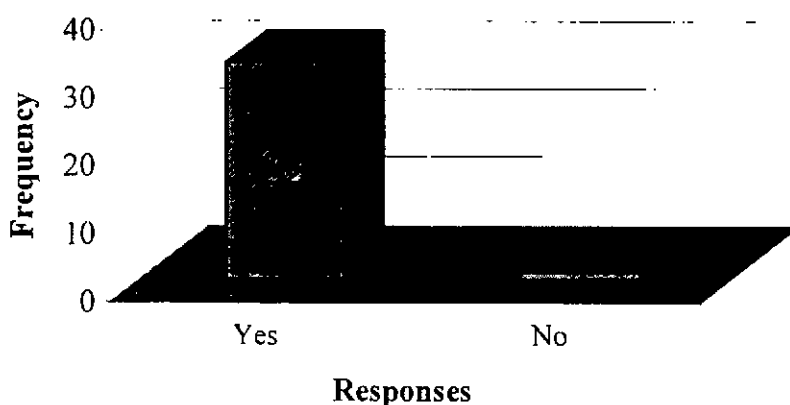
Both boys and girls acknowledged that guidance and counseling are available to them at school.

### 4.7.3 Girls Views on Parental Support

Girls were asked whether their parents support them at school and what is the support they receive.

**Figure 11**

*Distribution of Girls' Respondents on Whether Parents Support them at School*



From Figure 11, 32 girls' respondents admitted that they receive parental support at school through encouraging them to work hard at school and have good behavior. Also parents listen to their daughter in their needs also provides them with the essential for the school.

On the other hand one girl said that parents do not support girl at school as she said, *Because they said that no need for girls to be educated because they cannot help our family, they only help their husband's families.*

#### 4.7.4 Parents' View

Through an interview parents were asked whether they support their daughter and difficulties encountered in educating their daughters.

One of them said

*...Most parents do not support their children in giving them school they say stay at home since you will be married.*

A parent noted,

*...I try to buy for them whatever they need for school and I advice them so that they can remain in school and do well.*

One man answered,

*...I provide them with the essential for the school. For sure I find difficult to educate girls because girls are delicate, naturally they do not do well, they fear some subject...if they are not supported they have no power even to remain in school.*

Another woman stated,

*... I support my daughters by giving them financial help. But I think girls encounters problems as they are in mixed school...when they are with boys... if they are not helped they can even be influenced to misbehave by others*

A parent commented,

*...I help my daughters at school although I find financial difficulties at the same it is not easy to educate girls because it challenges the culture that marries girls early.*

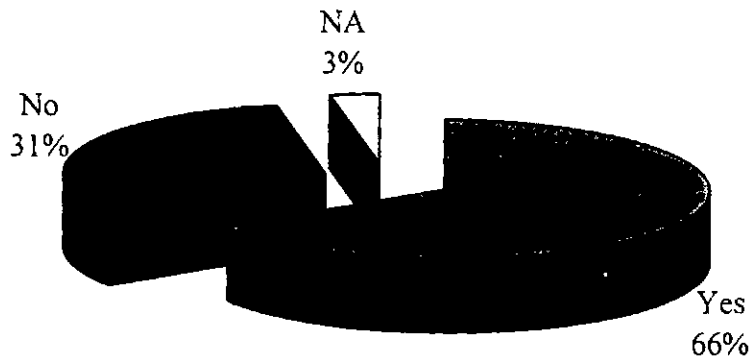
From the parents interviews it can be inferred that most parents support their daughters by providing the essentials needed for the school. Where moral support seems to be lacking for the girls at school based on the responses. At the same time parental support seems to be challenged by the environment of a culture that marries off girls early.

#### 4.7.5 Girls Asked to Marriage

Girls' respondents were presented an item investigating whether their parents have ever asked them to stop school and get married. Their reactions on being asked to marry were also sought.

**Figure 12**

*Distribution of Girls Respondent Who were asked to Get Married*



From Figure 12, it can be noted that 66% of the respondents have ever been asked to stop school and get married. Their reactions were mainly legal steps through the police and chief.

One of them said,

*I reported to the police and the headmaster and they came and talked to my parents and tell them the important of school especially of girls.*

Another said,

*When my parents advice me to leave school I took them to the chief and the chief took them o the police and later to the court.*

Another girls said,

*I was taking information to the headmaster and the headmaster came to our home to advice my parents*

Other girls used persuasive means to convince their parents.

One of them said,

*I persuaded my parents to rethink their decision and see the importance of education.*

Another girl said,

*I refused because I am too young and also I did not finish school.*

Putting all the findings together on teachers' and parental support as responded by the teachers, pupils, and parents, it is clear that teachers support girls through guidance and counseling and that girls are cooperative in sharing their personal insights. However, from pupils' point of view, parents support their daughters. This contradicts the high number of girls respondents asked to get married by their parents and thus the position of the pupils can be the same as that of parents who give financial support but the moral support is lacking and thus it affects the academic performance of girls.

#### **4.8 Girls' Aspiration to Study Beyond Primary School**

Under girls' aspiration, teachers' respondents were presented an item that sort to establish girls' vision to study beyond primary school.

**Table 5**

***Whether Girls Have Aspiration to Study Beyond Primary School***

| Response | n  | %   |
|----------|----|-----|
| Yes      | 11 | 73  |
| No       | 4  | 27  |
| Total    | 15 | 100 |

From Table 5, it can be noted that 73% of the respondents said that most girls have an ambition to study. They argued that from the way some girls show seriousness in the school through hard working most girls have desire to go beyond primary school. They attributed the vision to having foregone cultural practices and the admiration of teachers and working class present in the area.

While teachers and pupils agreed that teachers' support is very high, their views on parental support seemed to be conflicting as teacher argued that parents do not support their daughters at school while the pupils believed that their parents support them. The differences can be viewed on which type support and the effect on those who do not feel supported has on others. At the same time it was revealed that parents requesting their daughters to get married is a common phenomenon that interferes with their aspirations to be in school and perform well.

## **4.9 Suggestions in Order to Improve Girls' Academic Performance in Primary Schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division.**

An open-ended item was constructed to inquire from the respondent some of concrete suggestion to the school, parents, church and the government. The following were suggested.

### **4.9.1 Teachers' Suggestions**

#### **4.9.1.1 Suggestions to the Schools**

The respondent suggested that more guidance and counseling should be given in order to support girls. And to discourage cultural practice such as early marriage and female circumcision, schools should hold seminars with elders, parents and teachers.

One of them said,

Teachers should support girls. They should also counsel the girls on the importance of education.

Another suggested,

*Should provide guidance and counseling of the girls. And also give girls the encouragement to continue with the studies.*

Yet another added,

*To organize seminars and workshops to educate girls on the disadvantages of early marriages.*

A teacher suggested,

*Help girls to know their ambitions and if possible to offer guidance and counseling*

On cultural practice one had this to say

*Schools should discourage the girls undergoing the female genital mutilation.*

Another on the same line suggested,  
*Discourage circumcision.*

Other suggestions were adding facilities for girls and engage girls in development programs and award girls.

#### **4.9.1.2 Suggestions to the Parents**

Teachers suggested that parents should realize the importance of education and therefore they should support and motivate their daughters academically. Above all parents should not allow cultural practices that interfere with girls' education.

One said,

*Parents should help pupils to continue with their education through supporting them academically.*

Another said,

*Parents should know and understand that education is a right and every child is entitled to it.*

A teacher suggested,

*Parents should take keen interest in girls performance, guide and counsel girls always and motivate them.*

Other suggestion were on cultural practices such as circumcision and early marriages

One said,

*Parents should stop circumcision for girls and those who want to marry schoolgirls should be taken to court.*

Another suggested,

*Parents should be educated to stop circumcision and punish the parents who encourage their girls to undergo circumcision..*

A teacher with the same opinion noted,

*Parents should not allow their children (girls) to be initiated.*

A teacher had this suggestion,

*Parents should refuse to give out their daughters who are still at school for marriage.*

Other suggestions were: to encourage girls to go to school and parents need to be educated on the importance of educating both sexes.

#### **4.9.1.3 Suggestions to the Church**

Most teachers suggested that the church should organize seminars and workshop with the stakeholders and discuss ways of dealing with early marriage.

A teacher commented,

*Church should call for the youth meetings and advice girls or through church service to educate parent on the value of education.*

Another suggested,

*The church leaders should educate their followers on the importance of education particularly for girls*

Yet another suggested,

*The church should offer guidance and counseling. And they should sponsor girls to motivate them.*

Another teacher suggested,

*The church should assist girls by sponsoring those who cannot pay the school fees.*

A teacher had this to say,

*Church should build boarding facilities for girls so as to achieve maximum performance.*

#### **4.9.1.4 Suggestions to the Government**

The following suggestions were made to the government in order to improve girls academic performances in Kacheliba Division: pass laws that discourage female

circumcision, enforce laws that support girl-child against early marriage, to sponsor girls to pursue higher education and also to allocate funds for sponsoring victims of early marriage.

One teacher suggested,

*Through mass media government should discourage early marriage. They should support school by arresting those who encourage early marriage.*

A teacher had this to say,

*Government should guard girls and give maximum security to girls i.e. enforce strong laws on impregnating schoolgirls and early marriages.*

Another suggested,

*The government should come in and arrest parents who forcing girl child to be married.*

Another added,

*The government should pass laws that support girl-child.*

#### **4.9.2 Pupils' Suggestions**

Pupils too had different suggestions to the schools, church, government and the church.

##### **4.9.2.1 To the Schools**

The pupils had some suggestions to the school in order to improve the academic performance of girls in primary school in Kacheliba Division.

One said,

*Increase the number of teachers and provide guidance and counseling*

Another noted,

*To encourage teachers to give girls advise as they continue with their learning.*

Yet one boy said,

*In school I would like the teachers to teach girls about the diseases which causes people to die*

Others had something to say on girls' circumcision.

One said,

*To teach the dangers of circumcision to the girls especially when giving birth.*

A boy noted,

*The schools need to discipline the girls and to advise them how to refuse circumcision.*

Another added,

*To teach about the disadvantages of circumcision.*

Other suggestions to the schools included: To build a boarding school to help those who come from far, separate the girls from boys and give them advice: advise all girls to continue with the school as they keep on working hard, and provide such academic tools like books etc so that girls improve their performances.

#### **4.9.2.2 Suggestion to Parents**

Pupils suggestions to the parents in order to improve girls' academic performance included giving girls enough time to study, guide their children and stop early marriage and circumcision, teach good morals, allow their daughters to be in boarding schools and to provide the essentials for school.

One of them said,

*Parents need to give their children enough time to study*

Another noted,

*Parents must offer great caution to their children at home until the school open so as to succeed.*

Others had suggestions against circumcision as it leads to early marriage.

One of the said,

*Parents should discourage circumcision of girls and that is the only way to overcome early marriage.*

Another observed,

*To discourage the circumcision of girls because it undermines education and encourages early marriages.*

Also another added

*To stop early marriage and circumcision to their daughters.*

A pupil said,

*Parents must give guidance to the children, for example to stop early marriage and circumcision.*

And more on parental support one pupil suggested,

*Many give their daughters support of telling them that the fruit of education is sweet.*

Another said,

*I like the parents to take care of girls and to teach them how to behave.*

#### **4.9.2.3 Suggestions to the Church**

To the church the boys' respondents suggested that the church should provide more schools for girls, teach good moral and stop early marriages and circumcision.

One said,

*To preach against cultural activities such as female genital mutilation*

Another added,

*To teach youth the about the disadvantages of circumcision*

A class eight pupil suggested,

*The church should set a school for girls in order to teach girls to obey what God says that our body is the temple.*

Another added,

*Church must provide us with a sponsor for both girls and boys*

#### 4.9.2.4 Suggestions to the Government

In order to improve girls' academic performance, the pupils mainly suggested that the government should continue free primary education and enhance a law that protects girls against some cultural practices.

One said,

*Government should continue free primary education for girls, ensure girls education and to build.*

Another suggested,

*The government should pass the law on circumcision of girls.*

Another added,

*Government to take care it rules to all the parents to return their daughters to schools and to provide single schools for girls*

#### 4.9.3 Parents' Suggestions

Parents responded to the suggestion to schools so as to improve girls' academic performance.

One parents suggested that,

*...Day schools for girls should be abolished, and to avoid chance of missing school no matter what are the reasons otherwise missing classes encourages early marriages. Also, church should build boarding school...girls needs to be taken care of...they are not naturally strong to demand their rights.*

One of the parents interviewed said that,

*...Boarding schools should be built so that girls stay away from parents so that parents do not influence girls to marry early.*

Another parents suggested that,

*...Female circumcision should be stopped and all those who circumcise girls should be punished. Also early marriages of girls who are still in primary school should be abolished.*

One of the parents said,

*...It is good to separate girls from boys. They feel shy when they are mixed with boys, they cannot compete with boys nor participate well at school*

A parent suggested,

*...Parents need to be educated to support their daughters at school and to ensure that they really mean to educate them.*

From the quoted interview with the parents, it can be concluded that parents suggested boarding school for their daughters, to discourage early marriages and circumcision.

#### **4.9.4 Head Teachers' Suggestions**

A head teacher had this suggestion,

*...There is need of providing guidance and counseling to the girls. And also to sensitize parents during parents' meeting the importance of education and also to arrest parents involved in early marriage*

Another stated,

*...Parents need to be sensitized on importance of girl's education citing the examples of some learned Pokot women. Parents also needs to be asked to reduce work load for girl child as most of the girls are the ones performing most of the work at home.*

*Also to build boarding schools for girls, discard cultural practices such as early marriage and girls' circumcision.*

One of the head teachers suggested,

*...Parents need to be educated by role model on child equity, avoid female genital mutilation among the Pokot, and eradicate high dowry payment of girls.*

From the quotes of the head teachers it is clear that there is need to educate parents on values of girls education, provide guidance and counseling, and discourage circumcision and early marriages

From the suggestions given from all the respondents, suggestions were common. Some of the main ones are, to abolish cultural practices such as circumcision and early marriage through persuasive and legal means through educating parents regarding the values of gender equity in education, it will ensure parental support for their daughters in primary school preventing early marriage and increase their academic performance.

From the findings, some points were common on the responses of the teachers, pupils, parents and head teachers to the effects of early marriage on academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba. Some of the points were: girls performs poorly, girls lack of motivation to study and even to go beyond primary school, poor parental support for their daughter in school and the existence of early marriage as one of cultural practices interfering with girls academic performance.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendations to the study.

### 5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary schools in Kacheliba Division.

The study was guided by the following questions

- i. What are the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary schools in Kacheliba Division?
- ii. What are some of the concrete suggestions on how discourage early and improve girls' academic performance in primary schools of Kacheliba Division?

The study used both survey and case study designs. Survey design gave room for self-report on perceptions, attitudes and values while the case study design was help in conducting interviews. The study was carried out in three primary schools in Kacheliba division. The sample groups included the teachers, pupils, head teachers and parents. There were 77 respondents of whom, 15 were teachers, 49 pupils, 10 parents and 3 head teachers. The instruments used to elicit data were questionnaires and interview guides. The questionnaires were fast, economical and gave room for time to understand before responding.

The responses were presented using tables and figures, analyzing them according to frequencies and percentages.

The main findings of the study were:

- i. Most of the girls in primary schools were not well supported by their parents.
- ii. Poor academic performance of girls in primary schools as compared with that of boys.
- iii. Marriages of girls who had not completed primary school among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division were found to be common.
- iv. Most of the boys still supported early marriage as opposed to the girls.
- v. The interference of cultural practices such as circumcision and early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary school.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

Early marriage affects the academic performance of girls in primary schools in Kacheliba Division. As it was established early marriage was found to be common among girls of primary schools. Due to the occurrences of these marriages, most girls who were still at school, their parents had already asked them married and others knew cases of their colleagues who got married before completing primary school. At the same time most of the boys supported early marriage while the girls opposed. Therefore, early marriages present some effects on academic performance of girls in primary schools. Some of the effects of early marriage on academic performance are that, it interferes with the concentration, demoralizing girls as they lack motivation to study and they lack parental support essential for positive academic performance. Owing to early marriage, the

participation of girls is tampered with, since many girls leave school to get married. Consequently, girls at school become a minority and thus even though they remain at school they are demoralized and their participation in class is equally affected and ultimately their performance. Although on some instances early marriage has been said to influence positively based on the experience of those who got married, if they seem to suffer in their marriage, the negative influence outdoes the positive one as in most cases the girl is not given the freedom to choose when and who to marry.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the research, it emerged that early marriage affects the academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot of Kacheliba Division. Therefore, there is great need for combined efforts with all the stakeholders in order to improve academic performance of girls in Primary schools in Kacheliba Division through the following:

- The government needs to involve the local community as it comes up with the laws against cultural practices such as female circumcision and early marriages.
- There is need for the schools, church and the NGOs to work with the local administration and the community in order to ensure girls' rights to education and freedom to choose when to marry.
- The government, the church and the NGOs need to involve the Pokot community in eliminating cultural practices especially early marriage and sensitize the parents the values of gender equality in education in the light of rights of girl-child.

- The government, the church and NGOs need to construct more boarding school and continue ensure free education especially for girls so that they too can have enough time to study.
- The government needs to invest in regional development that will lead to employment opportunities for school leavers to motivate girls in schools.

#### **5.4 Areas for Further Research**

The researcher focused on the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary of Kacheliba Division only. However, the following areas could be considered for further research.

- i. The effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary schools in other Divisions of West Pokot
- ii. The effects of circumcision on girls' academic performance in primary schools in the same Division

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## APPENDIX 1

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA/USA (Nairobi Campus)

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### Title of the Study

**Effects of Early Marriage on Academic Performance of Girls in Primary School Among the Pokot, Kenya**

### **Questionnaire for Teachers**

#### **Dear Respondent,**

This questionnaire is designed as an instrument for a study on the effects of early marriage on academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot.

Please, take time to complete this questionnaire as honestly as possible. All information you will provide will be held confidential. Your responses will be very helpful for the success of this study. This study is done in partial fulfillment of my course of studies at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education (Tangaza College)

#### **Instructions**

Please

- Tick  where appropriate
- Provide brief information where necessary.

#### **Section A**

Background Information

Gender:  Male  Female

Marital status:  Married  Single  Divorced  Separated  Widowed  Other

**Section B**

**Key**

SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree UD=Undecided D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree.

| # | Statement  | SA | A | UD | D | S |
|---|--|----|---|----|---|---|
| 1 | As a teacher I put effort to know what girls go through  |    |   |    |   |   |
| 2 | Girls share their personal insights and experiences about themselves                                 |    |   |    |   |   |
| 3 | Many girls are not motivated to perform well   |    |   |    |   |   |
| 4 | Girls performs poorly compared with the boys   |    |   |    |   |   |
| 5 | Many parents support their daughters in school   |    |   |    |   |   |
| 6 | Many primary going school girls get married before finishing it                                      |    |   |    |   |   |
| 7 | Parents force their daughters to marry before completing primary school                              |    |   |    |   |   |
| 8 | Cultural practices such as early marriage contributes to poor performance of girls in primary school |    |   |    |   |   |
| 9 | After initiation (circumcision) many girls see school as irrelevant.                                 |    |   |    |   |   |

**Section C**

1. Do girls in your school have vision to study beyond primary school?  Yes  No

Give reasons for your answer \_\_\_\_\_

2. After initiation (circumcision) do you the girls continue to perform the same as before?  Yes  No

If no give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

3 Have you ever encountered girls who have been rescued from early marriage? Yes

No

If yes, how did you help them? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do the girls react when a girl terminates her primary school to get married? Yes

No

How? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you know cases whereby girls in primary school are married or engaged and still continue with the education? Yes No

If yes, how was their performance? \_\_\_\_\_

6. In order to improve academic performance of girls in primary schools in your division what are some of the suggestions would you give to the following?

School \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Government \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for your responses and honesty**

## APPENDIX II

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA/USA (Nairobi Campus)

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Title of the Study

**Effects of Early Marriage on Academic Performances of Girls in Primary Schools Among the Pokot of Alare Division, Kenya**

### Questionnaire for Boys

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed as an instrument for a study on the effects of early marriage on the academic performance of girls in primary school among the Pokot of Alare Division.

Please, take time to complete this questionnaire as honestly as possible. All information you will provide will be held confidential. Your responses will be very helpful for the success of this study. This study is done in partial fulfillment of my course of studies at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education (Tangaza College)

### Instructions

Please

- Tick  where appropriate
- Provide brief information in the spaces provided below, where necessary.

### Section A

Background Information

Age:  6-10  11-15  16 and above

Class \_\_\_\_\_

### Section B

1. Do you think girls need to go to school?  Yes  No

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do girls perform better than boy in your school? Yes No

Give reasons to your answer \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think parents support their daughters who are at school? Yes No

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have some of your classmates; girls left school to get married? Yes No

If yes, how many within the last one year?

5. Do you think girls should get married before completing at least primary school?

Yes No

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do your teachers help you with through guidance and counseling?

Yes No

7. What are your views on girls who leave school to get married?

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

8. In order to improve academic performance of girls on primary schools in your

Division, what are some of the suggestion would you give to the following?

School \_\_\_\_\_

Parents \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Government \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for your responses and honesty**

**APPENDIX III**

**SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA/USA (Nairobi Campus)**

**CHRIST THE TEACHER INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION**

**TANGAZA COLLEGE**

Margaret Wanja Wamaru. CMS

P.O. Box 15023

00509-Langata

Nairobi

E-mail: cmslangata@wananchi.com

Title of the Study

**Effects of Early Marriage on Academic Performance of Girls in Primary School Among the Pokot, Kenya**

**Questionnaire for Girls**

**Dear Respondent,**

This questionnaire is designed as an instrument for a study on the effect early marriage on Academic performance of girls in primary schools among the Pokot.

Please, take time to complete this questionnaire as honestly as possible. All information you will provide will be held confidential. Your responses will be very helpful for the success of this study. This study is done in partial fulfillment of my course of studies at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education (Nairobi Campus)

**Instructions**

Please

- Tick  where appropriate
- Provide brief information in the spaces provides below, where necessary.

**Section A**

Background Information

Age:  6-10     11-15     16 and above

Class \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B**

1 Do you think girls needs to go to school?  Yes     No

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

---

2. Do your parents encourage you to work hard at school? Yes No

How? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you happy with your performance? Yes No

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Have some of your classmates (girls) left school to get married? Yes No

If yes, how many within the last one year?

---

5. Are you happy when some of girls leave school to get married? Yes No

If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have your parents ever asked you to stop school in order to get married? Yes

No

If yes, what did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

---

7. Do you think girls should get married before completing at least primary school?

Yes No

Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do your teachers help you with through guidance and counseling?

Yes No

9. In order to improve academic performance of girls in primary schools in your division what are some of the suggestions would you give to the following?

School \_\_\_\_\_

Parents \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Government \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for your responses and honesty**

## APPENDIX IV

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. Do you see the importance of primary education for girls? Give reasons  

---
2. What are some of the difficulties you face in educating girls?  

---
3. Do you support your daughters in their education? How?  

---
4. At what age should the girls marry?  

---
5. What remedies would you suggest to help girls improve their academic performance  

---
6. What practical suggestions can you give to the Government, Church, NGOs and parents in order to improve girls' performance?  

---

## APPENDIX V

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. How is the performance of your school in general?

---

2. How is the performance of girls as compared to that of boys?

---

3. Are there girls from your school who married recently? If there were, how many and which classes were they? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think early marriage contributes to poor performance of girls in primary school among the Pokot?

How? \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. How do you help girls to remain in the school and perform well?

---

6. What are some of the suggestions that can help to discourage early marriages in your school and among the Pokot? \_\_\_\_\_

---

## APPENDIX VI



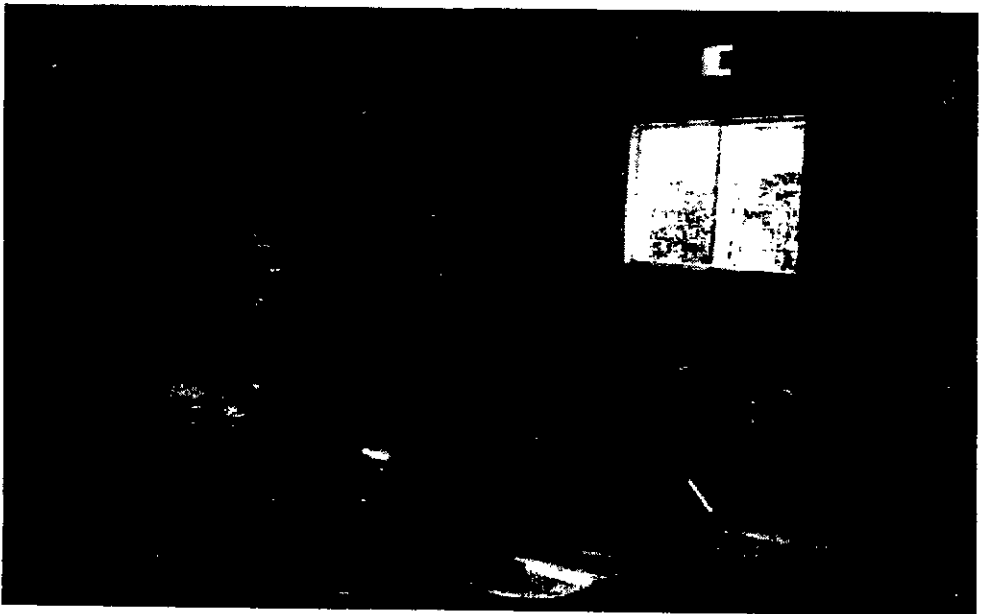
A photograph showing initiated girls who are about to be integrated in the community and later be married.



A photograph of some girls together with the researcher. These girls never went to school.



A photograph showing girls in the boarding serving meals for their colleagues. The Catholic Church runs the boarding section.



A photograph showing some of the girls in class with their teacher

# APPENDIX VII

## WEST POKOT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

### LEGEND

- District boundary
- ..... Divisional boundary

5 0 5 10 15 20 Km



ALALE DIVISION

KACHELIBA DIVISION

CHEPARERIA

DIVISION

SIGOR DIVISION

KAPENGURIA  
DIVISION

LELAN  
DIVISION



Saint Mary's University of Minnesota/USA Nairobi Campus

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Tangaza College  
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Nairobi, Kenya

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[xteach@kenyaweb.com](mailto:xteach@kenyaweb.com) (email)

6<sup>th</sup> December 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

**Wamaru, Margaret (0134)** is a fourth-year full time student in good standing at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education. In May, she will be graduating with a B.Sc.Ed. As part of her final semester, she is enrolled in a research seminar in education, during which she is to conduct research and gather informational data regarding various issues, leading to the writing of a major paper. Her lecturer for this course, and the person responsible for directing her research, is Ms. Angela Mwenda, one of our lecturers.

Christ the Teacher Institute for Education is an institute in the School of Education of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota / USA. It is also an institute within Tangaza College, one of the constituent colleges of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

In order to accomplish her work, I respectfully request that you allow Wamaru, Margaret the courtesy of having access to your institution for the purpose of gathering data, all of which will be shown to and discussed with you.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request. Please contact me if I can provide additional information, clarification, or amplification of anything above.

Sincerely

*Br. Brendan Foley*

Br. Brendan Foley

Dean of Studies

Christ the Teacher Institute for Education

