



**IMPACT OF GENDER ROLES ON EDUCATION IN  
HAMISI DISTRICT WESTERN KENYA**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF  
ANTHROPOLOGY, GENDER AND AFRICAN STUDIES IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GENDER AND  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NAIROBI.**

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**DECLARATION**

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other University.

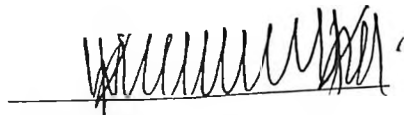
  
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Rose Muga

24<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2010.

Date

The project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university supervisor.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Wilfred Subbo

24<sup>th</sup> / 11 / 2010.

Date



## **DEDICATION**

To my daughter and son Lorraine Asige and Clive Liagas

And

My late brother Douglas Musungu



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This work could not have been completed without the invaluable assistance from a number of people to whom I am deeply indebted. My gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. Wilfred Subbo for his patience, valuable criticism and incisive guidance in writing this project. His ideas and challenges enabled me to complete the project.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study discusses the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi District, Western Kenya. The principal objective of the study was to investigate whether gender differences impact negatively on the education of boys and girls in Hamisi District. The study examined this by focusing on the entry of boys and at form one level, attendance of school for both boys and girls, retention of the boys and girls in school and their completion of their education.

The study was guided by the social theory which focuses on the fact that social and values form a fundamental part of the context in which women's decisions about education are made. Relevant data was collected through various methods. Direct observation, survey technique, informal interviews and secondary sources were among the methods used. The data collected through the survey technique was analyzed quantitatively while the data from other sources was summarized and analyzed qualitatively. A total of 60 informants, selected randomly participated in the study.

An analysis of the findings indicates that gender roles impacts negatively on the education of both boys and girls in Hamisi District Western Kenya.

The study concludes that gender roles impact on both boys and girls at different levels. In comparison, girls are in most cases negatively affected by gender roles as compared to boys who are not so much affected.





## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses background information, statement of the problem, study objectives, research questions, justifications, scope and limitation of the study.

### 1.1 Background To The Study

The study took place at Shamakhokho mixed secondary school in Hamisi district of western province. The study sought to investigate the impact of gender roles on the education of girls and boys in a mixed secondary school. This came about because of the fact that there is a high drop out of girls from secondary schools as compared to that of the boys. The study therefore sought to find out why this is so.

In the earlier times, missionaries introduced education mainly as a hand maid for evangelism. They needed to give girls education mainly for the advancement of the Christian families as wives and mothers.

### 1.2 Statement of the problem,

The difference in gender and the roles given to each of them have different impact on both boys and girls. Girls are mostly the ones who are affected by this impact.

Smoke, (1977) and Suda (1990) found that most rural women in western province particularly Kakamega are faced with societal definite barriers that impede their educational achievement.

They have remained confined to the domestic sphere where they take low status jobs in the formal market. This is the case with girls in Hamisi. There are forces in the society that limit girls in accessing education. These forces are found in family, community and the schools attended by the girls. Socialization forces in the society and the girl's self-image have an impact on her access to education. It becomes critical to examine these forces.

This study was there're interested in evaluating the differences in the level of education accessed by both boys and girls. Particularly important, there is need to establish the impact of



education on boys and girls in relation to their socialization process. What are implications on the modern society in terms of trying to pull both boys and girls on the same level in accessing the education? What strategies can the modern society put in place in order to ensure there is gender balance and access of education? It is assumed that this situation resulted from the social role, patriarchal order of the society, economic strength and the self-image of both boys and girls. What lessons can be learnt from this and what steps can be taken to rectify the situation?

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Do gender roles impact negatively on the girl child?

Does socialization help in widening the gap between girls and boys?

Does this gap negatively impact on the girl Child's education?

Does patriarchal system impact on the girl child's education?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The study sought to explore the impact of gender roles in the education of girls and boys

#### **1.4.2 Specific objectives**

1. To establish whether gender differences impact negatively on the girl child's Education.
2. To determine whether patriarchal system has an influence on the girl child's education
3. To find out whether the socialization of the girl child has an impact on her education.

### **1.5 Justification of the study.**

The findings of this study may help the local administrators of education in improving the academic standards of education in the locality.

The findings may be used in helping improve academic standards of the girl child.

It may help in letting the local administrators of education know what problems face girls in school so that they can try to improve the school environment to enable the girl child achieve her educational goals.

It may also help in reducing the work load on the girl child to help her access education.

### **1.6 Scope**

The study took place in shamakhokho with the key informants being students, teachers and parents with the aim of describing how gender roles impact on the education of the girl child.

### **1.7 Limitation**

The use of survey method of collection of data required active participation and cooperation from the participants to enable generate adequate information to be representative of the school under study. However the availability and willingness of the respondents to participate in the study was not guaranteed.



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the literature review whereby it brings out the literature that is relevant to the study carried out. It discusses what other scholars have said in relation to gender and how they related the differences in gender to the education of the two genders. i.e. boys and girls.

#### 2.2 Historical Background

There is a lot of literature referring to gender roles and its impact on education, hence its effects on the entrance into the career market. Most of the literature leads to the point that values and norms of a given society play a vital role in determining the roles a woman and a man should undertake. The roles have an effect on the education of both boys and girls. The literature that relates to the gender roles and its effects on their education will be reviewed.

The areas cited to help in this discussion are invariably patriarchy, social role, economic status and self image.

#### 2.3 Patriarchal System

Culture has always drawn a line between women and men in almost all societies world over. In writing about Britain, Souhami (1986) says that women had credible status only in so far as they were wives, mothers and daughters of men. Marriage and motherhood were considered to be every woman's true pre-occupation as 'education would be wasted on them, responsibility would overwhelm them and work would make them ill.

Mattieus (1987; 2007) presents a woman quoted as lamenting that the only career she was educating her daughters for was marriage as it was the only lasting happiness a woman could have.





What girls in society become should be attributed to the opinions of the parents and the whole family. It is this that affects girls as they try to access education. Hence they end up in social welfare work while boys secure prestigious jobs traditionally reserved for them.

Rousseau (1972-reprint) summed up a woman's education and up-bringing in the following words 'a woman's education must be planned in relation to man, to be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his lie pleasant and happy; these are the duties of women for all men and this is what a woman should be taught while she is young'. According to this writer it is clear that socialization plays a significant role in the education ladder of both boys and girl. In this case if a people's culture regards one gender as more superior to the other this is likely to affect even the education level of the two groups.

The recent policy initiatives have focused on the attainment of education for all (EFA) and in particular Free Primary Education (FPE). The key concerns that led to the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003 included access, equity, retention, quality and relevance with attention on internal and external efficiency within the education and training system. But to date there is still the problem of retaining especially girls in the education and training system. It is this concern that necessitated this proposal where the research sought to determine the impact of gender roles on education.

#### **2.4 Social Role**

In stable societies it is normal for children to learn their future roles by imitating the adults of their community. Girls take the roles of fetching wood, drawing water, taking care of their siblings and generally being home makers while boys take on the role of protection and being the bread winners in the family. Gilman (1971:27) sums up the roles of girls in society "the little girls' first story books and primers for example hardly ever show a woman as working



or active outside home..... the little girl is expected to shape herself in the image of maternal housekeeping”.

The difference in the roles of both the boys and girls adversely affect their education ladder. A society that needs to develop the talents of its entire people's needs should concern itself with equal enrolment of both boys and girls and aim at retaining them in the education system until completion. The philosophy of social justice as articulated by John Rawls (Kymlicka, 2002:64-65) argues that all human beings have expectations of certain “primary goods” necessary to sustain a decent life. Social contract is premised on the notion that none of us comes into the world as the property of another or as their subject.

Sivard (1985) says that equality of education for women suffer not only from lack of access to schooling but restrictive stereotypes outside the school and in the educative process itself. Stereotype of what is natural and acceptable for each sex creates subtle barriers to the full development of intellectual abilities even when academic access is unlimited.

Were (1990) states that girls by nature and their make-up are attracted to all sorts of fancy things that distract them from their studies. As a result many of them drop out of school in search of leisure or apparent comfort thus not completing the educational ladder.

Eshiwani (1985:91) says that in Africa for every female student in the university, there are seven males. In science the average lay out is for every seven males is one female. Eshiwani (1971:28) has also observed that the skills taught to boys and girls are the same but there is a mixture of myth, tradition and reality about what a girl's role and boy's role should be. In light of this, there have been many hindrances to girls' education.

## **2.5 Economic Status**

The economic level of a family will determine the level of one's education. Among the poor or less fortunate families, preference is given to one gender at the expense of the other. In Kenya today poverty is widespread with over 58 per cent of the population living below the



poverty line. Consequently, the inability of the poor to meet educational costs for all their children is a barrier to the education of the girls. In many societies, parents regard schooling girls to be less affordable than that for boys. In their view, the direct costs (e.g. tuition and textbooks) hidden costs (e.g. uniforms and supplies), and opportunity costs (e.g. girls' household tasks, agriculture responsibilities) of educating girls outweigh the benefits.

Muteshe (2006:39) states that Kenya has implemented a policy of education for all and is seeking to meet its commitments to provide free primary education for all. However, a quantitative increase of women and the girl child in education does not necessarily translate into gender equality or the end of gender discrimination in education. For within Kenyan educational institutions barriers of access, inadequate facilities, the institutional culture of schooling, the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and the reproductive roles on the girl child and women continue to constrain their full access and success within education.

## **2.6 Self –Image**

The image of girls in society contributes a great deal to their access of education. The girls' self-image go hand in hand with socialization and specifically the way the society in general view girls. Girls are viewed as the weaker sex. They are looked at as those to provide service to the males in the society. This translates into the girls themselves believing that this is actually what they are. Hence many ignorant parents neither understand nor appreciate the meaning of the need for education for the girl child. This in itself limits the access of the education of the girl child.

Freidan (1963) found that in fiction, the working woman is usually portrayed as frustrated and unhappy until she finds the right man and retires into home-making. The image of a woman is brought out as young, frivolous, almost child-like, fluffy and feminine, passive, gaily content in a world of bedroom, kitchen, sex, babies and a comfortable home hence the most important goal a woman is permitted is in pursuit of a man who will make her happy in



life. A woman's mind is crammed full of food, clothing, cosmetics and furniture, the world of thought and ideas, the life of the mind are missing. This is how most girls view themselves hence they end up dropping out of school before completion. The society's view of the girl child and her own self image has had great impact on the education of the girl child.

## **2.7 Theoretical frame work**

The purpose of any theory is to describe, explain and predict relationships between variables affecting a given phenomenon. The phenomenon for the study is the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi District, mainly in secondary school. The study used the social theory that contend that social images and values form a fundamental part of the context in which women's decisions about education are made. This may co-exist or conflict with access of education by the girl child which defines the educational level that is appropriate or inappropriate for girls.

The social theory also explains that culture has always drawn a line between women and men in all societies world over. The society has taken the patriarchal system where men have most of the power and influence. In this case men in society will decide and assign the roles of both men and women. The roles are carried out according to the wishes of men. The study will use the social theory because it deals with two genders that make up the society. The explicit training girls receive relegates them to the domestic world (Epstien 1971) while the one boys receive relegates them to the public domain thus exposing the, to the outside world. Maeceby and Jacklin (1975) say that female subjugation stems from the socialization process.

Girls tend to comply more readily to directives from their counterparts the boys. From their cultures, children derive a set of expectations about themselves that become a crucial part of their self images, that there are certain pre-concieved norms to which members of a society





must conform that there is what is womanly. Hence a female should be willing to accept the rule and domain of the male.

Sex status is primarily and inevitably what determines much of the course of the life of either a boy child or a girl child.

The female status limit the range of other levels of status she may require in life, while that of the male opens widely the range of other status he may require in life.

This is the case of boys and girls in Hamisi District the area under study.

Individuals will become aware of what is expected of them and will tend to modify their actions accordingly. They will become conscious of the general attitudes of the community, and judge and evaluate themselves in terms of this generalized other.

In this way conduct is regulated in terms of expectations and attitudes of others. Mead (1934) argued that the community exercise control over the conduct of its individual members, therefore the roles and expectations of these individuals. Mead accepted that a society has a culture, and this culture suggests appropriate types of behavior for particular social roles. For instance a culture may specify that the role of a girl child is to cook, fetch water and firewood in a home and that of the boy is to herd cattle. Therefore people tend to act in ways that are consistent with the expected behavior in a particular role. From Mead's view social institutions such as the family have an existence in the sense that particular social roles are attached to them. Thus the social institution family consists of the social roles of mother, father daughter and son. In relation to this the social theory was used in this study because it gives the difference culturally between the roles assigned to boys and those assigned to girls which will directly affect their access of education either positively or negatively.



## **2.8 Relevance of the theory**

All social theories are intertwined in the social relation they describe. In a social theory there is the realization that culture puts people part of a gender system or class system in a specified historical era.

The social theory identifies categories of a community and specifies relations among categories in term of power, prestige and specialized functions within the community. It then explains how this categories and relationships function, come to be, and what keeps them going. The social theory is therefore relevant because it identifies the two distinct genders- male and female. It gives certain powers, prestige and specialized functions to one gender and put the other gender at a lower level.

The theory is relevant to the study in the sense that the patriarchal system has influenced the way activities are carried out in the society to the extent that education as one of the activities is controlled by the system. Men in the society will decide how much education a woman should receive in a family.

## **2.9 Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses will guide the study.

Gender differences have an impact on the girl child education.

Patriarchy has influence on the girl child's education.

Socialization has an impact on the girl child education.



## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the methods that were used in finding out how gender roles impact on education of boys and girls in Hamisi District.

Survey and interview methods were used in finding out how gender roles impact on education.

The chapter also discusses the units of analysis, sample population, sampling method. It discusses ethical considerations and the problems encountered during the study and the solutions to these problems.

It also describes the study site, sampling methods that were used in data collection and methods of data analysis.

This section describes the study site, sampling methods to be used in data collection and methods of data analysis.

#### 3.2 Research Site

The study was conducted in Shamakhokho division within Hamisi District. The former is one of the four divisions forming Hamisi district a new district that was carved off Vihiga District last year. The district is found in western province.

Shamakhokho division of Hamisi District is a densely populated area and subsistence agriculture is vastly practiced in this area. Maize crop is widely grown and it forms the staple food in this area. Tea as a cash crop is grown in the area although there are no factories within the district. This area experiences heavy rainfall throughout the year due to the presence of the Kaimosi forest which has remained intact for quite a long time due to the traditions of these people. They reserve forest areas for circumcision purposes.



The informal sector in Shamakhokho Division is low because of the low level of economic development. The road network is poor and most of the area lacks telecommunication facilities. Electricity is lacking in most of the areas of this location. The location is served by two health centres and one hospital that is over utilized. Parts of the location have piped water and the rest don't have.

### **3.3 Research Design**

The research design was cross sectional i.e. it took a short time. It was also descriptive where the respondents responded to a prepared questionnaire describing the impact of gender roles on education.

### **3.4 Study Population**

The study populations were students in the school.

#### **3.4.1 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis was individual students.

### **3.5 Sample Population**

This included the following groups:-

25 Girls

25 Boys

5 Teachers

5 Parents

The sampling population selected was used because that was a number that would give a good representation of the school that would yield desirable results.

### **3.6 Sampling Procedure**

The study used class registers to sample students who would take part in the study.





### **3.7 Data collection**

The research used the following methods to collect data. Survey methods where a structured questionnaire with both open ended and closed ended questions to be administered to the sample population were used. The study used direct observation method to reinforce the survey method. The also used key informants for example D.E.O A.E.O, e. t.c who will give information and statistics in the school under study. Survey method was used because it was an easy method of finding out how gender role impact on education in Hamisi. The respondents only needed to respond to a prepared questionnaire by answering the questions provided in it. Interview of key informants were used because these would give the true record of the enrolment in the school that was used for the study. The key informants gave information about the school attendance , performance and even records of those who dropped out of the system before completion. They were also aware of the problems that made the students not complete school.

### **3.8 Data processing and analysis**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. Qualitative method included descriptive method presented in form of themes and sub-themes. Quantitative method used simple bar graphs, tables and percentage to present the findings.

### **3.9 Problems Experienced in the Field and their Solutions**

Informants were hesitant to give full information fearing that they would be victimized for not doing their work. This was the case with the teachers and local administrators. These facts rendered my work regarding the study quite difficult.

Solution:

They were assured this study was purely academic.

Respondents were suspicious especially male parents and male teachers who feared that the information given would be used to make girls benefit more from education than boys.



Solution:

They were assured that the information given would not advantage one group and disadvantage the other. This was an academic study for the researcher. Some respondents were afraid that one gender especially the girls would be freed from their social roles assigned to them and this would throw the burden to the parents who in turn would be overloaded.

Solution:

They were given an assurance that the social arrangements and the role assignments to the youth was not going to be interfered with.

Girls were afraid that the information they were going to give would be used to victimize them and subject them to punishment for failing to attend to school regularly.

Solution

They were assured no punishment was going to be given to them. The study was purely for academic purposes.

Most informants particularly parents were not willing to give the information needed freely because they thought even though it was a study they were going to benefit the researcher, therefore they asked to be paid.

Solution:

The researcher bought small provisions e.g. sugar, tea leaves, salt and soap to encourage them to give the information needed.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

The respondents that were used in the study were handled as per the requirement of their customs.

The researcher informed the informants the nature of the study to be carried out. She let them know that the research was purely for academic purpose. The researcher also obtained verbal consent from the participants before administering questionnaires or interviewing the key



informants. The researcher gave a consent letter seeking the consent of the participants. The researcher also re-assured the respondents that the information obtained from them would be treated in full confidence. The researcher assured the respondents that the study was not going to change the status quo of the community.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 GENDER DIFFERENCES AND ITS IMPACT ON THE GIRL CHILD'S EDUCATION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the gender differences and its impact on the girls child's education. The attempts to show the impact of gender on the education of the child includes how many girls are admitted in form one, how many are retained in school after some have dropped out and how many complete school at form four level.

#### 4.2 IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE OF SCHOOL

The difference in gender has an impact on education in Hamisi District. Most boys come to school on regular basis except for a few who will miss school for one reason or another. The few boys who miss to attend school do it because of the following reasons: some may just decide to take a break off the school routine. Such boys will be engage in what they consider leisurely things like hanging around shopping centres' just to waist time. Others may decide to take part in loading 'matatus' while others just sit at home.

A few other boys may miss to attend school because they have lacked school fees. While other may not have school uniform only such boys are the one who come from needy families and therefore they find it difficult to make ends meet. In such cases boys may even end up dropping out of the school system. Others may fail to attend school because they have been send on errands during school time.

On the other hand most girls do not attend school on regular basis because of the following reasons: some girls may be asked to stay home to take care of their siblings when their mothers are absent from home for one reason or the other. For instance when a mother is attending a funeral away from home or she is visiting for two or three days. It is the duty of the girl in the home to assume the role of the mother so that she takes care of her siblings while the mother is away. It was found out that some girls who miss to attend school

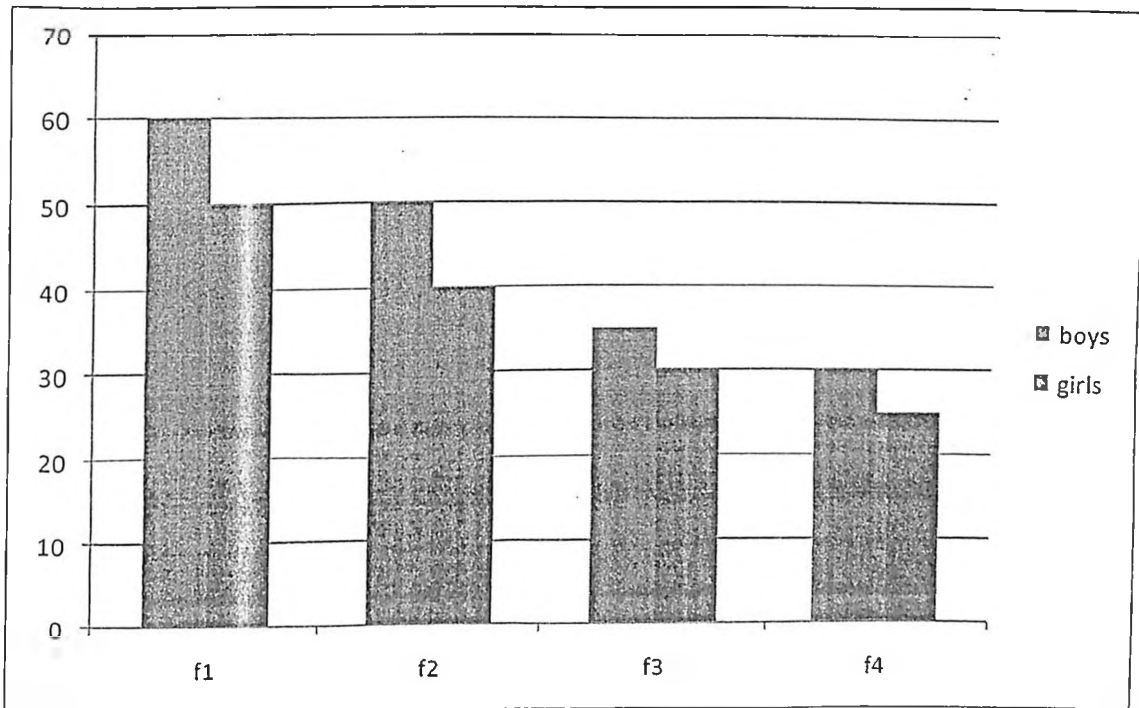




particularly on Wednesdays and Fridays are send to the market to sell wares so that the family can earn some income for the family's upkeep. These girls end up missing school on these two days almost every week. They therefore attend school on three days. Some of the girls who also miss to attend school do it because they have not paid school fees. According to the findings, most parents in this area prefer to complete paying school fees for their sons first before thinking of paying for their daughters. Other girls will miss school because they are helping their parents with domestic chores. Some even miss school because they are working on farms belonging to neighbors in order for them to raise their own school fees and at the same time raise money that will help in keeping the family.

Figure 4.2.1

A comparative bar graph showing students' attendance in Shamakhokho secondary school



Source: class registers in the school

Question 4 in appendix B was responded to by five respondents. Out of the five, three informants said the general attendance of girls in relation to boys in the school was that boys have a high attendance than girls. One informant said that girls have a high attendance than



boys. One informant said both boys and girls have an equal attendance. From this, it was deduced that the general attendance of girls in relation to boys in the school is low. Thus the girls have a low attendance compared to boys who have a high attendance.

Table 4.2.2 attendance of school boys and girls.

**Informants N=S**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Boys	3	60
Girls	1	20
Both	1	20
Total	5	100

**4.3 Response to Class work**

From the study it was found out that girls always came back to school with much of their homework undone. The reasons the teachers gave for this were as follows:

Girls are pre-occupied with domestic chores when they arrive home after school i.e. cooking for the family, fetching wood and water, taking care of the young ones as their mothers work.

For the boys most of them would come back to school with their homework done.

The reasons given for this were as follows:

The boys had time to sit and do their homework even after helping their parents with herding the family cow(s).



Unlike the girls who after fetching wood and water for instance, had to come back home and prepare supper for the family or take care of the younger children as their mothers prepared a meal for the family in the evening.

To an extent that by the time the girls were through with helping their mothers and now wanted to settle down and do their school work the little paraffin in the lamp had been used up therefore the lamp went off and the girls were forced to go and sleep.

Five people took part in the interview and three picked answer (a) (boys) for those who came with their work done when take-away homework was given. One informant picked on (b) girls and one said none

**Table 4.3.1 response to class work**

**Informants N = 5 Teachers**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Boys	1	10%
Girls	3	80%
None	1	10%
Total	5	100%

The reasons that were given for this were that most girls came with unfinished homework because the previous evenings they were busy cooking for the family. Some said they ran short of paraffin while others said they were busy taking care of the young ones in the home.

The few boys who came with unfinished homework gave the reason that, they went to bed early while others said there was shortage of paraffin.



#### 4.4 DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

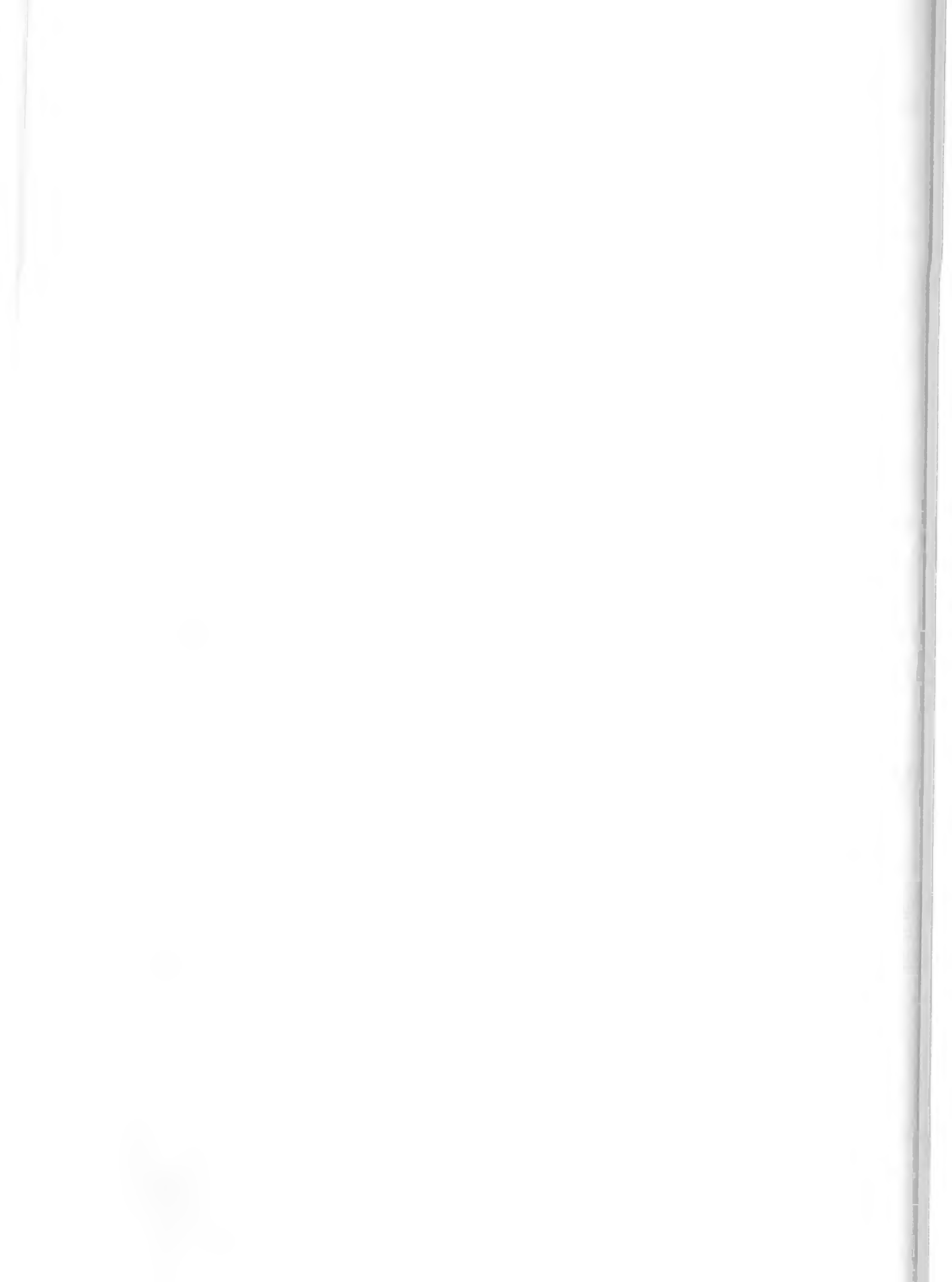
Dropping out of school is another impact of gender roles on education that was found out, it was found out that in most cases a big number of girls drop out of school compared to boys.

This is due to the following reasons.

Some girls got pregnant while in school and were forced to drop out of school while others dropped out of school due to lack of fees or even materials needed+ for school. In this case when poverty strikes there is no enough money to keep all the children in school, the girls are forced to drop out of school because they feel mature enough to get married. As compared to boys a few boys drop out of school for the following reasons; some get out as child labourers to work on people's farms or herd cattle. Some look for odd jobs like touting, a few drop out of school because they feel mature and would like to go out and look for odd job and feel independent.

Four informants gave the reason that girls drop out of schools due to pregnancy and early marriages. One informant said that they drop out of school just to leisure around. Three informants said boys drop out of school for the truancy and touting. Two said that the boys drop out to do manual jobs in order to earn some money.

In the third question, 90% of the informants said girls dropped out of school due to pregnancy and early marriages. 10% of the informants said boys dropped out to do manual work to earn money.





**Table 4.4.1** showing the drop out of boys and girls from school

**Informant N= 5 Teachers**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Girls	4	90%
Boys	1	10%
None	0	0%
Total	5	100

From the study it was revealed that girls have a high drop out from school as compared to boys. At the age of 15 most girls begin to get pregnant and drop out of school and to a lesser extent due to lack of school fees and academic performance. In this case from the findings of the study, it was found that some parents cannot retain their daughters in school due to lack of fees.

Therefore at the end of the first year in secondary school, the child is not able to continue with her education. The drop out at form two level for girls is due to pregnancy and for boys it is because they feel mature and therefore long for independence in order to earn their own money.

**Table 4.4.2.drop out of school**

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Pregnancy & marriages	3	60%
Trouncing	1	20%
Touting & manual work	1	20%
Total	5	100%



## **4.5 PERFORMANCE**

From the study that was carried out it was revealed that 60% girls came to school with unfinished homework, compared to 40% boys who came with unfinished homework.

The reasons given were that boys have time to do their homework while girls occupy themselves with domestic chores like cooking etc that occupy them up to late hours. By the time they think of the school work, they are sleepy and they end up going to bed with their class assignments undone. From the survey carried out it was found that undone class work translates into poor performance of the students in the final examination and this is where the most boys take the top positions while most girls are low performers. This performance is also linked to distribution of gender roles to the boys and girls.

In this case girls find themselves in the low performers category due to the fact that when they are free from school, they are busy performing domestic chores while the boys use that time to finish and even go as far as revising their school work which in essence boosts their performance both in the internal and national examinations.

## **4.6 SUMMARY**

Gender roles in Hamisi District- western province impact on both boys and girls at a different level. In comparison girls are mostly negatively affected by gender differences as compared to boys who are not so much affected. Even when they are affected it is easier to absorb them back into the education system than it is for the girls because when girls drop out of school due to pregnancy or some other reasons, they switch off the academic issues such that even when you try to bring them back on the board, it is not easy for them to adapt and continue with school. It is clear from this study that girls are indeed the most affected by the impact of the gender roles on education. Majority of the girls end up not benefitting from education as



such. They are crucial because their traditional gender roles directly put them in a position where they don't benefit much from education, and they end up being illiterates.

Too many girls especially in Hamisi, have always lagged behind as far as education is concerned. Girls, who constitute a large percentage (over half) of the rural population, are socially burdened in Hamisi. Their activities make them benefit less from education in comparison to the boys who benefit a great deal from it. Impact on education is a direct consequence of the traditional gender roles, given to girls and boys in the society.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 PATRIARCHIAL SYSTEM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE GIRL CHILD'S EDUCATION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the patriarchal system and its influence on the girl child's education. It endeavors to bring out the patriarchal system exercised in the area where the research was carried and how this impacts on the education of the girl child. The attempt to help test the hypothesis that patriarchal system influences the education of the girl child will be shown through areas like preferences of the boy child, the privileges that are given to the boy child and the general view that is held by the society about the boy and the girl children. The impact of this and their education will be explored.

#### **5.2 PREFERENCE OF THE BOY CHILD**

Preference of one gender to the other could have negative implications on education as it were. It is clear that if a culture regards one gender as more superior to the other, this is likely to affect the educational level of the two groups. Generally societal perceptions and values are reflected in individuals and how they handle issues. In relation to this, the people in Hamisi seem to prefer to give education to the boy child as compared to the girl child. From the study it was revealed that quite a number of parents that quite a number of parents would prefer to keep their sons in school in a case where they would find themselves in a fix such that they cannot have both their sons and daughters in school. Out of the five parents interviewed four preferred to retain their sons in school. Only one informant said he would prefer to retain his daughter in school in case of a crisis. Thus four informants chose (a) for



sons for question three in appendix C and only one chose (b) for daughters. None preferred to keep both sons and daughters in school in case of a crisis.

Reference is on table 5.2.1 below

**Informant N= 5 Parents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Daughter	4	90%
Sons	1	10%
Not stated	0	0%
Total	5	100%

In response to question four in appendix C which was administered to five respondents, all the five preferred to have their sons go to school while the daughters remain at home in a case where there was a problem at home for instance sickness of the mother or where both parents were going on a journey and therefore they needed to withdraw one of the children from school to take care of the home and the younger children while the parents were away. This questionnaire was administered to five respondents and all of them preferred to withdraw their daughters from school temporarily for the purpose of taking care of the home. The reasons they gave were varied. 60% said the reason for this was that daughter were keen in taking care of the young ones and the home generally. 20% said it was because if girls missed school it would not be as serious as it would be if their sons missed school, since the sons needed an education to get well paying jobs to be able to take care of their families. Daughters would find men in the name of husbands to take care of them. The remaining 20% simply said it is the culture that dictated that boys should be educated and not girls, because girls were home makers something that did not need an education.





### 5.3 PRIVILEGES GIVEN TO THE BOY CHILD

Privileges given to one gender as opposed to the other could result in a negative impact on the affected group. That is to say if one group is favored by certain situations there is likely to be a difference in the impact of education on both the boys and the girls.

Out of the parents who took part in the research as informants, three of them picked item (a) in question three that is sons. This means incase there is no enough money to keep your children in school, the sons would be retained in school. Two informants preferred to retain their daughters in school in a case where there was no enough money and one of the two either son or daughter needed to drop out of school.

Question four was responded to in a similar manner. All the five informants preferred to have their daughter remain at home and take care of the young ones at home in the case where the mother was sick and therefore unable to take care of the young ones or both parents were going on a journey and they needed somebody to remain at home. They all preferred to withdraw their daughters from school temporary so that they could take care of the home.

In question five in the same appendix C, all the five informants also picked on item (i) (daughter) in response to the fact that they use them to fetch water, cooking, going to the market and taking care of their siblings. None picked item (ii) sons.

This means that in question three, the parents preferred to retain their sons in school. This therefore means 60% of the informants were in favor of retaining sons in school while 40% preferred to retain their daughters. In question four, all the five informants preferred to withdraw their daughters temporarily from school to take care of the home if the parents were not able. This means 100% informants preferred to use their daughters while 0% preferred to withdraw their sons from school to be left to take care of the home. In question five, all the

five informants picked item (i) (daughters) while none picked item (ii) sons. Therefore this means 100% informants responded to the fact that they preferred to use their daughters in fetching water, cooking and going to the market.

#### **5.4 SUMMARY**

In drawing the conclusion, the findings show that the impact of gender roles on the education of boys and girls in Hamisi District, Western province brings out the results that most informants would prefer to have the boy child retained in school. This is seen from the way the informants responded to questions three, four and five that spelt out which child would be used in the home if the parents were absent or sick, which child would be used to perform certain chores in the home and which child would be withdrawn from school in a case where school fees was not enough. This brings out the fact that there are certain privileges given to the boy child in the area that was under study. It also brings out the view that is held by the community about the boy and girl children in this community. It means the community values the boy child more than it does the girl child, and therefore gives certain privileges to the boy child than the girl child.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6.0 SOCIALIZATION OF THE GIRL CHILD AND ITS IMPACT ON HER EDUCATION

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the socialization of the girl child and its impact on her education. It attempts to bring out the kind of socialization given to the girl and boy child in the area where the research was carried out and how this impacts on the boys and girls in this community. The attempt to test the hypothesis that socialization influences the education of the girl child will be shown through areas like; the society's socialization of the girl child. The impact of this will be explored.

#### 6.2 THE SOCIETY'S SOCIALIZATION OF THE GIRL CHILD

The kind of socialization given to the children could have an impact on their education. If a child is socialized in a way he/she believes in the stereotype of what is believed to be natural and acceptable for each sex, this could create subtle barriers to the full development of intellectual capability and even academic access of the child-thus it could limit this two. In the study that was carried out; twenty five boys as well as twenty five girls responded to question six in appendix A. eighteen boys said that parents/ guardians encourage boys to go to school. Seven boys answered that both boys and girls are encouraged by parents /guardians to go to school. Twenty five girls responded to the same question, four girls said parents and guardians encourage both boys and girls to go to school while twenty one said parents/guardians do not encourage both boys and girls to go to school. On further questioning verbally, they said parents/ guardians encourage only boys to attend school. They further said this kind of socialization get into their heads and they grow up knowing that boys are the ones who are supposed to go to school while girls stay at home helping in settling domestic



chores, going to the market and taking care of their siblings. This means, 28% boys answered that both boys and girls are encouraged by the parents/ guardians to go to school. While 72 % said that only boys are encouraged to go to school. 16% girls said parents and guardians encouraged both boys and girls to go to school while 84% said parents/ guardians encouraged only boys to go to school.

From these findings it is clear that most parents and guardians encourage boys to go to school while the same number discourage girls from going to school directly or indirectly.

### **6.3 SELF IMAGE**

The way an individual looks at himself/herself is something very important. This is because it could have negative or positive implications on this individual in relation to the level of education this person would like to achieve. It is clear that if an individual regards himself or herself as inferior or superior, this is likely to affect the educational level of the two groups. Generally self esteem is reflected in the way one approaches social, academic or even political issues. This translates into the fact that those with low self esteem which results into an individual's self image, would end up thinking that they would not go far if they ventured into something while those with a high self-esteem would think that they would go so far if they ventured into the same thing. This is the case with the boys and girls in Hamisi District where the self image of the boys and girls in the area has played a big role on the level of education each of them attains.

In the study carried out 50 students took part i.e. twenty five girls and twenty five boys. Fifteen girls responded to question 5 by saying that they would like to go up to form four level eventually become primary school teachers or secretaries. Four responded by saying they would like to go up to diploma level and only six girls said they would like to go up to university level. Twenty five boys responded to the same question , thirteen boys said they

would like to go to university level, twelve said they would like to go up to diploma level, and none said they would like to go up to form four level or even primary school teacher training college. From this it is clear that in this community the self image of the girls lead them to aim at a low level of education while boys aim at a higher level of education. An interview held which involved some boys and girls revealed that boys look at themselves as people who will take care of the home and family for that matter they need to work hard in school and achieve to be able to do this. The girls said they are usually reminded of their role as mother and wives. Thus right from the word go, girls know that they are growing up to be good homemakers and wives. From the interview some of them also revealed that if a well to do man comes around in such of a wife a girl would be asked by her parents to drop out of school and get married to the man, the argument being the man is wealthy enough to take care of the girl. Some of the girls also said from what they have been made to believe since childhood, women are meant to be married and bear children-they drop out of school prematurely to get married if a suitor comes by.

Table 6.3.1 level of education intended

**Informants N= 25 Boys**

Boys	Level	Frequency	Percentage
	University	13	52
	Diploma	12	48
	Form four and primary school college	0	0
	Total	25	100





Table 6.3.2 level of education intended

**Informants N= 25 Girls**

GIRLS	LEVEL	Frequency	Percentage
	University	6	24
	Diploma	4	16
	Form four and primary school college	15	60
	Total	25	100

**6.4 SUMMARY**

In drawing the conclusion, the findings show that socialization has an impact on education on education in Hamisi District Western Province. From the study carried out in this district, it shows that most informants have been socialized to believe that boys are the ones to advance their academic level while girls should not due to the fact that they are home makers and that there is no need of them having a high level of education since this is not necessary in running a successful home. The study also revealed that self image impacts negatively on educational level of the boys and girls in Hamisi District. The boys were seen to have a positive image of themselves in that they would like to go for the highest level of education. That is to say a good number of them view themselves as people who can advance up to the university level compared to the number of girls who feel they can make it to the university. Most of the girls viewed themselves as people who should only get basic education and become primary school teachers and secretaries. When asked what they would like to become, the boys gave varied answers. Some said they would like to become engineers while others said permanent secretaries and even doctors. It is from these reactions that the conclusion that self image has a positive impact on boys and a negative impact on girls in Hamisi District is drawn.



### 7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the conclusion that has been drawn from the study that was carried out. It also highlights the recommendations that have been made after the study was carried out. These recommendations will help in improving education standards and in empowering the boys and girls in Hamisi.

#### 7.2 Conclusion

The study sought to determine the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi District Western Province, Kenya. The study concludes that gender roles have a diverse impact on boys and girls as far as education is concerned. The traditional gender roles make girls benefit less from education, in comparison to other provinces in the country.

Any government and non-government efforts to enable the youth in this area benefit from education should be given. If the education level in the country has to be improved then these boys and girls are groups that need to be targeted in order for them to realize the importance of education.

The study ultimately concludes that there is need to fully equip the youth with education that will empower them so that they can be useful people in society. It will help them be self reliant and independent. This will in turn translate into a nation of literates who are able to support themselves and their families in future.

The idea is to have youths who are able to support themselves hence a nation with people who are self reliant as a result of the education they have received. After all it is believed that education is supposed to change one socially, economically and mentally.



### 7.3 Recommendations

As a way forward in ensuring that gender roles do not interfere with the education of boys and girls in Hamisi District, the following recommendations are particularly critical.

1. Parents should be sensitized on the importance of education for both boys and girls in order for them to be put on the same level and benefit from education equally.
2. The academic standards of the girl child should be improved so that both boys and girls attain the same level of education which in turn translates into better social lives.
3. The administrators of education in the area in which the study took place need to investigate and get to know the problems facing girls in school in order for them to step up the school environment to enable girls achieve their educational goals just like boys.
4. The work load assigned to the girl child needs to be reduced to enable her access education fully so that she can enjoy the benefits.
5. Local administrators of education should work out modalities of improving the academic standards of education for both boys and girls in the locality for them to be able to match competition from counterparts from other provinces.
6. The young boys and girls need to be guided and counseled on the importance of education in their own lives. They need to know that education will give them a good foundation in life. It will enable their social, economic and mental ability to be stepped up.



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## 9.0 APPENDICES

### 9.1 APPENDIX A

#### Introduction letter

**Dear Sir/ Madam,**

You have been selected as one of the few for the purpose of undertaking a study on the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi. Attached to this letter is a questionnaire. You are requested to give your sincere response to the questionnaire items. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer, and your genuine response will be considered as it is. Your positive participation is highly regarded, as it will contribute to the success of this study, and in the long run help in according equal level of education to both boys and girls in our society. Your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Muga Rose

UNIVERSITY OF...  
1997



# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

## Instructions

1. Do not write your name anywhere in this paper.
2. Information provided will be treated in confidence.
3. Tick, circle or fill in what fits you.
4. Your participation will be highly appreciated.

1. I am 1. Male .....

Female .....

(Tick whichever is applicable)

2. Who pays your school fees?

i) Mother .....

ii) Father .....

iii) Guardian .....

3. State whether you have ever been sent away from school for any of the reasons below:

a) Failure to pay fees .....

b) Lack of uniform .....

c) Failure to bring certain items required by the school .....

4. Show by (yes) or (no) as indicated below whether you have missed school because your parents needed your assistance at home

a) Help in the house 1. Yes ..... 2. No .....

b) Help in the market 1. Yes ..... 2. No .....

c) Help in the shamba 1. Yes ..... 2. No .....

d) Herding 1. Yes ..... 2. No .....

e) Taking care of the younger siblings 1. Yes ..... 2. No .....

5. What level of education would you like to reach? I would like to go up to  
.....

6. Parents/ guardians encourage both boys and girls to go to school

i) Yes ..... ii) no .....

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study.



## 9.2 APPENDIX B

### Introduction letter

Dear Sir/ Madam,

You have been selected as one of the few for the purpose of undertaking a study on the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi. Attached to this letter is a questionnaire. You are requested to give your sincere response to the questionnaire items. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer, and your genuine response will be considered as it is. Your positive participation is highly regarded, as it will contribute to the success of this study, and in the long run help in according equal level of formal education to both boys and girls in our society. Your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Muga Rose



.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the study



### **9.3 APPENDIX C**

#### **Introduction letter**

**Dear Sir/ Madam,**

You have been selected as one of the few for the purpose of undertaking a study on the impact of gender roles on education in Hamisi. Attached to this letter is a questionnaire. You are requested to give your sincere response to the questionnaire items. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer, and your genuine response will be considered as it is. Your positive participation is highly regarded, as it will contribute to the success of this study, and in the long run help in according equal level of formal education to both boys and girls in our society. Your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Muga Rose



# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

## Instructions

1. Do not write your name anywhere in this paper.
2. Information provided will be treated in confidence.
3. Tick, circle or fill in what fits you.
4. Your participation will be highly appreciated.

1. What do you do for a living?

.....

2. Besides paying school fees and providing other items required by the school, in which other way do you motivate your daughter to attend school?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. In the case where you find that you don't have enough money to keep all your children in school, which one would you retain in school?

- a. Sons
- b. Daughters

4. When there is a problem at home for example mama is sick or both mama and papa are going on safari, which child would you prefer to withdraw from school temporary to take care of the home?

- i) Daughter
- ii) Son

5. Which of your children do you use for fetching water, cooking, going to the market and taking care of the siblings?

i. Daughters

ii. Sor(s)

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the study.