

Factors influencing retention of girls in public secondary schools in Kisumu West District-Kenya

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Abstract:

The retention of girls in public secondary schools in KWD has been low. Each year about 11.37% of females drop out of school in KWD, this rate is higher than the national rate of 8.9%. Based on this scenario, there was need to determine causes of low retention of girls in KWD, with a view of reducing dropout rates and keeping them in school for a full educational cycle. The purpose of the study was to determine the factors influencing retention of girls in KWD, and specifically to determine the influence of home factors, school factors, community factors, environmental factors and personal factors on the retention of girls in public schools in KWD. This study was conducted through a survey research design of a reconstructed cohort of students who joined form one in 2007, on a sample of 336 respondents selected through convenience, purposive and snowball techniques from the 28 mixed and girls' secondary schools in KWD. Data was collected using questionnaire, interview and document analysis techniques and analyzed through percentages and ANOVA techniques and reported in tables and figures. The study established that home related factors and personal factors influence the retention of girls, but that community factors, environmental factors and school factors do not influence the retention of girls. The study concluded personal is the most significant factor that lower the retention of girls in secondary schools in KWD because it has the highest lone effect (26.45%). Hence to improve retention of girls in secondary schools effort and energy should be directed to truancy, attitude of girls towards school, rate of pregnancy and management of monthly periods. The study recommends that ministry of education sustain the reform that have so far seen schools become better environments than homes of the students, and that the ministry of education build more boarding schools for girls at lower rates so that they are in school longer than at home. The study also recommends that awareness education be conducted to change their attitudes and that the government to provide sanitary towels to all girls of age in al public secondary schools. The study further recommends that further research be done: (i) effects of political factors, (ii) influence of government policies and (iii) the influence of globalization on retention of girls in public and privet secondary schools.