

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE RETURN TO SCHOOL EDUCATION GUIDELINE IN KENYA.
A CASE STUDY OF EMBU WEST DISTRICT, EMBU COUNTY**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution:

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my family: Stanley (dad), Rachael (mum), Jael, Wilfred and Caroline Waigwa (siblings) for always being there for me through the good and tough times, unconditionally and for believing in me. Cyril Gachewa, my brother in love for the prompt response at such a short notice. For the undying patience, despite the length of time it took to complete this project – for nurturing me back to health.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
DEO	District Education Officer
EFA	Education for All
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KDHS	Kenya Demographic and Health Survey
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development formerly Kenya Institute of Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHEST	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
PDE	Provincial Director of Education
QAS	Quality Assurance and Standards
SAGAs	Semi Autonomous Government Associations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund formerly United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

The Return to School education guideline that provides a chance to girls and young mothers who for some reason find themselves pregnant while in school. The research objectives were:- To investigate if school administrators, teachers and headteachers are familiar with the Return to School education guideline; To investigate if the Return to School education guideline is currently being implemented; To investigate if there are any challenges experienced in the process of implementing the Return to School education guideline and To elicit views on the Return to School education guideline. The researcher used sampling method. The researcher assembled, classified, edited and arranged the data collected. The researcher also thoroughly checked the data for completeness, consistency, accuracy and uniformity. Thereafter, the data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The analyzed data was presented using the charts, tabulations and graphs.

From the data analysis and presentation:- it is clear that there is need for the return to school education guideline. Cultural practices, female genital mutilation, early marriages, poverty, child labour, finances, diseases especially HIV and AIDS play some influence on the implementation of the guideline. However, infrastructure seemed not to play any role in the implementation of the guideline.

From the findings:- 60% of the respondents have an idea about the implementation of the return to school education guideline whether formerly or informally. Cultural practices have an influence on the implementation of a guideline. 73.3% believe that female genital mutilation plays a role the implementation of the return to school education guideline. Poverty that affects most families in Kenya also influences the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya according to 86.6% of the respondents. 100% of the respondents believe diseases have a role to play in the implementation of the return to school education policy. 15 and 8 of the respondents say that HIV and AIDS and other lifestyle diseases play a role in the implementation of the guideline respectively. The guideline would be a reprieve to students. The Return to School Education Guideline is an important and positive effect in the life of the girl child and her education and therefore highly recommended.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Education is the process by which the mind develops through learning at a school, college or university (Husen and Postlethwaite, 1985). Education is a concept, referring to the process in which people (students) can learn something (Oxford, 2006). Education is the entire process of developing human abilities, potentialities and behaviour (Gage and Berliner, 1980). Education is one of the fundamental rights of individuals according to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December, 1949.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provide a framework for the entire international community to work together towards a common end – making sure that human development reaches everyone, everywhere. If these goals are achieved, world poverty will be cut by half, tens of millions of lives will be saved, and billions more people will have the opportunity to benefit from the global economy. The MDG number two and three aim at achieving universal primary education and promote gender equality and empower women respectively.

Education For All (EFA) goals aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by the year 2015. EFA goal number two aims at ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

The New Constitution spells out the following Article 43(1) Every person has the right to education; Article 53: Every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education; Article 54 (1): A person with any disability is entitled (b) to access educational institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are integrated into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person; Article 55: The State shall take measures, including affirmative action programmes, to ensure that the youth (a) access relevant education and training; and Article 56:

The State shall put in place affirmative action programmes designed to ensure that minorities and marginalised groups (b) are provided special opportunities in educational and economic fields.

All these goals and rights are meant to emphasize the need for education and also to give a platform to educate children, to ensure that their futures are bright. Basic education is important because if a child manages to go through primary or basic education only then can they be able to survive in life with the basic knowledge that they gain.

There is an adage that states “educate a man, you educate an individual, but educate a woman, you educate a nation”. The statement summarizes the essence of education and more specifically to the girl-child and indeed, to every educable human being and as such call for special attention to be focused on the education of the girl-child. Children are the future leaders of tomorrow and mothers are guardians of the future, and the first aim of the family and society at large should be to raise healthy and productive individuals who are psychologically, physically, socially and mentally well developed. This may be achieved through the education of the girl-child who is the mother of tomorrow (Offorma, 2009).

The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen years of age. This period is made up of early childhood (infancy), primary schooling (childhood) and secondary school (early and late adolescence). During this period the child is totally under the care of an adult who may be her parents or guardians and older siblings. She is very dependent on the significant others, those of whom she models her behavior, through observation, repetition and imitation. Her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage.

Generally in Kenya, a child belongs to the community. Traditionally the children were raised by the community which meant anyone of the members of the community could discipline, warn, teach and advice. Many of the gender roles were taught by members of the community if not immediate family members such as a mother, an aunt or grandmother. In the modern society the reverse applies and especially when it comes to sensitive issues such as disciplining unless it is a close knit society. For example, currently, one cannot discipline a neighbour’s child for

misbehaving because it could land them into trouble with the law. Nowadays the community hardly participates unless a child is in danger i.e. in cases of abuse and assault.

In Kenya, education is mandatory for all children of school going age. Every child is entitled to provision of education which shall be the responsibility of the government and parents. Every child is entitled to free basic education which shall be compulsory in accordance to Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child. Again, every child shall be protected from economic exploitation and any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with a child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual or moral development. No person shall subject a child to female circumcision, early marriage or cultural rites, customs or traditional practices that are likely to negatively affect the child's life, health, social welfare, dignity or physical or psychological development (Children Act, 2001).

All over the world, people have practices that develop over the years and there were good reasons for each. However, even culture has to change with time. Many of the communities in Kenya, practiced and still practice female circumcision and early marriages persist. In Tanzania, there is a law criminalizing the female circumcision practice but little is done to stop the practice. Same case applies to Kenya, very little, if any, is done to stop female circumcision, despite the Bill that is currently in parliament seeking to outlaw Female Genital Mutilation. The greatly affected girls are those from Rift Valley, because up to date circumcision is still being carried out (Kamau, 2011).

Some NGOs have come to the rescue of the girls who run away from home because they do not want to undergo the ritual. The NGOs do so by creating safe houses for the girls, sort of, temporary homes, where the girls stay as they attend school. In some East African countries, some law enforcers have even found a cash cow. They go into extremes, of physically checking the girls for evidence of the cut and others charge such hefty prices depending of the family's economic status so as not to enforce the law, depending on whether it has been termed as illegal in that particular country. In some parts of Kenya, circumcision is forced on girls, some of whom have lost their lives because the act was done crudely leading to death due to bleeding (Kamau, 2011).

The Kenyan Girl-Child is the female child of a family. Society expects the world from the girl child. At the same time the girl child is faced with many challenges in life. These challenges are such as early marriages, pregnancy, female circumcision, poverty, child labour, daily chores, ailing relatives, lack of infrastructure, insecurity, menstruation and preferential treatment of the boy-child. Up to this date, the community would rather not discuss some of the contentious issues but rather sweep them under the carpet.

Sex other than describing gender, refers to the physical activity between two people which may end with sexual intercourse. In many African societies, sex is ambivalent. Communities talk about sex in low tones and when they do talk about it, it is under set circumstances, such as initiation ceremonies, circumcision and rites passage amongst others and only the designated members of community had a right to talk about it, for example, an aunt, grandmother, paternal uncle or a particular selected member of society.

Currently, sex is still being discussed in low tones. But this is fast changing. With introduction of technology, a general change in the people's way of life and infiltration by the western culture, sex education is taking a whole new shape. Churches, non-governmental organizations, social workers, religious leaders, governmental leaders, teachers and parents as well have joined hands to teach sex education. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) is under task to incorporate sex education in the curriculum. It involves sex introduction, healthy relationships, safe sex, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases. In Kenya, this is taught in basic education and also in tertiary institutions. Nowadays, sex education and HIV/AIDS conferences, seminars and meetings are organized in churches during holidays to educate teenagers, parents/guardians and the youth. A day is set aside annually by most company and state corporations to conduct interactive forums for their employees and in the world at large there is the world AIDS day, marked annually on 1st December, to advance this advocacy.

Back to the girl child, despite all this education, in her day today activities, she is faced with many challenges and situations. A girl may find herself pregnant in the middle of a school year. This may happen because she consented to having sex, or was coaxed to having sex. In some circumstances, the girl may find herself in some predicament, where she gets sexually abused or

harassed by neighbours, strangers, parents/guardians, relatives or family friends. In some cases the pregnancy may be due to incest or pedophiles (persons who are sexually attracted to children). A girl may also be raped. If the girl does not know what to do to prevent pregnancy, such as emergency prophylactic drugs, or get to the nearest health centre, then she may end up pregnant or worse even with a disease.

Notably, a lot of effort is being made to educate the girl-child especially in Kenya. The civil rights groups and non-governmental organizations have joined the government in encouraging and trying to safeguard the education of the girl-child. As a result such a guideline as the Return to School Education Guideline was found necessary. This guideline born in the Ministry of Education aimed at retaining girls in school despite motherhood.

Return to School Education Guideline

The Return to School education guideline that provides a chance to girls and young mothers who for some reason find themselves pregnant while in school. It basically prescribes that a girl, upon realizing that she is pregnant, whether it is in the middle of a school year or term, should stay in school for as long as is possible, be allowed leave to deliver her baby, after which, if she is strong enough, she can return to school and complete her schooling.

The admission back to school should be done unconditionally. The Headteachers, District and Municipal Education Officers should assist girls to be readmitted to other schools to avoid psychological and emotional suffering. Intensive guidance and counseling should be provided to the affected girl, parents, teachers and other girls in the school (MoE, 1998 – cited in CSA 2008).

Once a girl is found pregnant, the parents should be summoned to the school to receive some counseling after which they should take their daughter home. In reality this situation is contrary. Headteachers, teachers, guidance and counseling teachers and matrons should be understanding when handling cases of this nature, and avoid instances of traumatizing the girls. The school should keep in touch with such girls and their families so as to monitor what is happening and provide the necessary moral, emotional and spiritual support.

Counselling for both the girl and parents should not be discontinued especially when she has been allowed back into the school system (*Ibid.*). In reality, and in some cases, parents may refuse to attend counselling sessions. They may also be uncomfortable doing so within the school that their daughter has just left. In such cases, or when faced with such circumstances, the school administration should seek alternative measures for such counseling sessions, such as meeting the family at a neutral ground perhaps their home, or within a church premises, they may also seek the help of religious leaders or social workers.

The parents should seek readmission of their daughter to school after the baby is weaned and the girl is strong enough to return to normal activities. Headteachers should provide the necessary help in this regard. In case of any problem, the Provincial, District and Municipal Education Officers should assist. Other girls in the school should be counselled on consequences of irresponsible sexual behavior, adolescent sexuality, boy/girl relationships, negative peer influences, building self-confidence and self-esteem. The persons who make girls pregnant should be exposed. For example, teachers and other adults in the community should face legal action. Boys should be given counselling so that they can take responsibility for their actions (*Ibid.*).

Many girls miss opportunities in education and other spheres of life for the mere fact that they are girls. In the society, a girl may be sold off to cover a family's debt. In some circumstances they are wedded at such tender ages and to older members of society who are able to pay bride price thereby increasing the wealth of the girl-bride family. Female circumcision does not make it easy for the girl child either. For example in the Maasai community, men say that it is hard for an uncircumcised girl to prove that she is a woman and the children she bears will be seen as unclean. All these practices are done at the expense of the education of the girl-child.

Girls at times are expected to stay home, to do their daily chores, to take care of younger siblings, assist in jobs to help their families' financial situations and care giving to ailing relatives. This means they miss several lessons and depending on the prevailing circumstance and situation, this could mean they never go back to school. Some girls stay home during menstruation. This is because they cannot afford sanitary towels. Considering the menstrual

cycle takes a minimum of two to seven days of the week a girl then misses several weeks of school in a year. This advertently affects their performance especially when they are in an examination class.

When it comes to such issues as pregnancy in school, being able to stay in school to complete education during pregnancy and even after the pregnancy and lactation period, most communities especially in Kenya would rather shelve the issue to gather dust rather than discuss it. Culturally, it was and is still considered a taboo to talk about sexuality and sexual maturation unless at certain ceremonial periods i.e. circumcision period and even then this task amongst other issues were left to grandmothers and aunties.

The Embu West District falls under the Embu County and the district was carved recently from the larger Embu District which is the home to the Eastern Province Headquarters. The Aembu are a Bantu people inhabiting the Embu District of Kenya. To the east of the Aembu community are to be found their cousins, the Mbeere people, of Mbeere District. Previously, the Aembu and Mbeere were in one district, Embu District, and were just referred to as the Aembu people. To the west, Embu district neighbours are the related Kikuyu in Kirinyaga and Nyeri districts. The Ameru people of Meru District border Embu to the north and to the south are more Agikuyu people from Murang'a and Kamba neighbours from parts of Kitui District.

The Aembu community are believed to have entered their present area of inhabitation from points further south, where they had settled early on after the initial Bantu expansion from West Africa. The migration to Mount Kenya was perhaps due to conflicts there, such as slavery. It is believed that they migrated as far as the Kenyan Coast, since the Ameru elders refer to Mpwa (Pwani or Coast) as their origin. The conflicts there, perhaps slave trade by Arabs, forced them to retreat northeast to the interior of Kenya, and they settled by the slopes of Mount Kenya. They were to refer to this location as the place of the Lord, the owner of the snow ("*Nyaga*") or ("*Njeru*" meaning white) — hence the name "*Mwenenyaga*" or "*Mwenenjeru*".

Embu mythology claims that the Aembu people originated from *MbuiNjeru* in the interior of Embu, close to Runyenjes town. The mythology claims that God (Ngai) created Mwenendega

and gave him a beautiful wife by the famous Mbui Njeru waterfall — hence her name "Ciurunji". The couple was blessed with wealth, and their descendants populated the rest of Aembu. The Aembu are cash crop and subsistent farmers who also rear cows, goats and sheep. A man's riches were formerly judged by how many wives and children he had. The Aembu were fierce warriors who, although rarely raiding other tribes, always stood firm in defense of their territory and people. Many occasions are on record where the Aembu had to fiercely repulse Kamba and even the dreaded Maasai invasions. They also rose against the British in the Mau Mau fight for Kenya's independence. The fact that the tribe was and continues to be considerably small explains their relatively small impact on the history of Kenya.

The Embu West district demand for education is 6.0% (MoE, 2011). Within the Embu West District, it is easy to access most of the schools since they are based within the Embu Municipality which basically means most schools are within urban town.

It is due to these circumstances that the researcher found it necessary to look into the return to school education guideline with the aim to understanding its emergence and whether it is being enforced. It is with this in mind that the researcher delved into investigating the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya and specifically within the Embu West District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been a lot of talk and publications on the girl child, challenges facing the girl child during their education, such as: culture, female genital mutilation, poverty, infrastructure and diseases and the responsibilities that come about with each challenge. One of the major challenges affecting the girl child during education is pregnancy and eventually drop out from school. All this happens under the watchful eye of the parents, headteachers, teachers and the community at large. At this point, the people playing a part in the girl child's life should be able to assist them in any way possible. In a school situation, the headteacher, should be able to use the return to school guideline to assist the girls child, if they are aware of the guidelines existence. They should be able to tackle the challenges that they come across. Therefore, this

study assessed the implementation of the Return to School education guideline in Kenya, more specifically in the Embu West District, Embu County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which the Ministry of Education is able to implement the Return to School education guideline through its guideline implementers at the grass-root level such as Teachers, Headteachers, Education Officers and Quality Assurance Officers. This would mean that the implementers have some comprehensive knowhow of the guideline to be able to work with it. The study was to try and find out whether the education guideline has any impact and if the impacts are positive in young girls' lives. The purpose is to find out if there are any challenges faced in the process of being implemented and if there are any views that the implementers and other stakeholders would like to suggest.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives were:-

1. To investigate if school administrators, teachers and headteachers are familiar with the Return to School education guideline.
2. To investigate if the Return to School education guideline is currently being implemented.
3. To investigate if there are any challenges experienced in the process of implementing the Return to School education guideline.
4. To elicit views on the Return to School education guideline.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions were:-

1. As the School Administrator, Teacher, Headteacher, are you aware of the Return to School education guideline?
2. Is the Return to School education guideline currently being implemented?
3. What challenges are experienced in the process of implementing the Return to School education guideline?
4. What are your views on the Return to School education guideline?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will benefit the following:- The Ministry of Education as the implementing body of the guideline on return to school education guideline. The Ministry, specifically the arm of quality assurance and the Semi Autonomous Government Associations (SAGAs) will be to learn of the challenges faced during the implementation of the guideline, the positive and negative reports and the areas that need improvement. The study will be used in future by researchers as reference or towards developing more information on the same.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study intended to cover the sixty (60) primary schools, twenty two (22) secondary schools, and three (4) colleges within the Embu West District. The study covered two (2) Quality Assurance Officers and two (2) Education Officers within the district/province.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher, on the one hand, anticipated that time and cost would be a constraint to the study. On the other hand, the spinal health concerns of the researcher would pose a problem in the process of the research study thereby making it difficult to reach each and every respondent especially those located in the remote areas of the larger Embu District.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Child is a human being under the age of eighteen. A child also means a human between birth and puberty. A child is also referred to as a minor.

Culture is a way of life. It is the total range of activities and ideas of a group of people with shared traditions, which are transmitted and reinforced by members of the group. It is the attitudes and behavior that are characteristic of a particular social group or organization.

Early marriage is marriage or cohabitation with a child or any arrangement made for such marriage or cohabitation.

Education policy refers to the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems. It focuses on the practical consequences of educational policy decisions and alternatives. It examines the relationship between educational policy and educational practice and sheds light on important debates and controversies within the field. It blends best educational research with the world of practice, making it valuable for education.

Female circumcision is also referred to as female genital mutilation. This means the cutting and removal of part or all of female genitalia and includes the practices of clitoridectomy, excision, infibulations or other practice involving the removal of part or of the entire clitoris or labia minora of female person.

Feminism is a theory that men and women should be equal politically, economically and socially. This is the core of all feminism theories.

Feminist is a person who believes in men and women being equal.

Gender is a range of characteristics distinguishing between male and female, particularly in the cases of men and women and the masculine and feminine attributes assigned to them.

Depending on the context, the discriminating characteristics vary from sex to social role to gender identity.

Girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen years of age.

Guideline refers to rules or instructions, given by an official organization stating the steps to be taken in the event of something specific happening.

Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures needed for the operation of a society or enterprise, or the services and facilities necessary for an economy to function. The term typically refers to the technical structures that support a society, such as roads, water supply, sewers, electrical grids, telecommunications, and so forth, and can be defined as "the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions.

Policy is a principle to guide decisions that is created with the aim of achieving a rational outcome. A policy acts as a guide to governing objectives.

Return to School Guideline is an education guideline that is meant to govern the return to school of student mothers. It is supposed to ensure that once the girls discover they are pregnant – they stay in school until it is time to deliver and return to school after delivery.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher hoped to conduct the study with the following assumptions:- That the education guideline on Return to School does exist, that it is familiar to the respondents and that it is being implemented in the various schools and institutions all over the country and specifically within Embu West District. That cooperation from the school management would be forthcoming. That throughout the research period the researcher would be accorded cooperation by the respondents.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Education is the process by which the mind develops through learning at a school, college or university. Education is a concept, referring to the process in which people (students) can learn something. Education is the entire process of developing human abilities, potentialities and behaviour. Educational planning is meant to forecast or project an ideal outcome. Educational planning is the process of determining the objectives of education, educational institutions, or educational programs and the means (activities, procedures, resources, etc.) for attaining them.

Educational policies fall under educational planning. The ultimate purpose of planning is to design educational policies and programmes and diverse items such as curriculum content, design of physical facilities (i.e. classroom area, playground area, library etc), methods of exploiting new sources of revenue, costs implications of alternative educational technologies (Chinkos and Wheelles, 1968.). Primarily, it was a means to harmonize or coordinate the projected manpower needs of national economies and was initiated in the early 1960s. A major influencer of educational planning up to date is the economy and varies across different kinds of sociopolitical systems (Husen and Postlethwaite, 1985).

The World Bank and UNESCO are promoters of education planning and its conditions of success or failure have not yet been the subject of extensive and systematic inquiry even though the international institute for educational planning has made some promising and instructive regard. Educational planning has disadvantages such as trying to project the future, with little concern for challenges in the implementation process, neglecting the conditions under which implantation is carried out and the fact that technical solutions are issues for non-technical issues (*Ibid.*).

Educational planning covers such a policy as the Return to School education guideline. It is a guideline that is meant to cover something that may happen sometime in the future. A guideline that will provide step by step process of what should happen should a girl be found pregnant, the process of retaining her in school, dealing with the trauma that follows once the pregnancy is showing, stigma from society, students, parents even, prenatal and post natal care, learning how to take care of the infant and her general health, and the process of returning to school after motherhood.

This process requires a lot of support. Support in such a case would come from parents, siblings, relatives, father of the child, church members, the community, social workers, support groups and above all school students and the administration as well. If matters start getting worse, the provincial, district, municipal and quality assurance officers as well as the chief should intervene so that the new mother gets a smooth transition from motherhood to being a student again. Although the student mother cannot be completely protected from the trauma that follows her being a mother at a tender age, such support may help her feel somewhat comfortable, regain her self esteem and composure.

Feminism is a theory that men and women should be equal politically, economically and socially. This is the core of all feminism theories. This theory does not subscribe to differences between men and women or similarities between men and women, nor does it refer to excluding men or only furthering women causes. A feminist is a person who believes in men and women being equal (Oxford, 2006).

Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical discourse. It aims to understand the nature of gender inequality. It examines women's social roles, experience, and feminist politics in a variety of fields, such as anthropology and sociology, communication, psychoanalysis, economics, literary, education, and philosophy. While generally providing a critique of social relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests, and issues (Crossman, 2012).

Feminist researchers embrace two key tenets: research that focuses on the condition of women in society and research must be grounded in the assumption, that women generally experience subordination. Themes explored in feminism include oppression, patriarchy, art history, discrimination, objectification (especially sexual objectification), stereotyping and contemporary art and aesthetics. Feminist theory is most concerned with giving a voice to women and highlighting the various ways women have contributed to society (Crossman, 2012).

Cultural feminism is the theory that states there are fundamental personality, differences between men and women, and that women's differences are special and should be celebrated. This theory supports the notion that there are biological differences between men and women. It looks at the different values associated with womanhood and femininity as a reason why men and women experience the social world differently. It does not focus on elimination of patriarchy but rather seeks to create an alternative female consciousness where existence of gender differences are stressed by the identification, rehabilitation and nurturance of women's qualities (*Ibid*).

Socialist feminism integrate issues of gender and class, i.e. unite concepts of patriarchy and capitalism, seeks to eliminate both class and gender oppression. Socialist feminists highlight how motherhood and the gendered division of labor many assert grows "naturally" from women's role as mothers is the source of women's exclusion from the public sphere and creates women's economic dependence on men. They assert that there is nothing natural about the gendered division of labour and show that the expectation that women perform all or most reproductive labour, i.e., labour associated with birthing and raising children but also the cleaning, cooking, and other tasks necessary to support human life, deny women the capacity to participate fully in economic activity outside the home. In order to free themselves from the conditions of work as a mother and housekeeper, socialist feminists such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman saw the professionalization of housework as key. This would be done by hiring professional nannies and housekeepers to take the load of domestic work away from the woman in the house. She also recommended the redesign of homes in ways that would maximize their potential for creativity and leisure for women as well as men, i.e., emphasizing the need for rooms like studios and studies and eliminating kitchens and dining rooms. These changes would

necessitate the communalization of meal preparation and consumption outside the home and free women from their burden of providing meals on a house-by-house scale (*Ibid*).

Marxist feminism is a sub-type of feminist theory which focuses on the social institutions of private property and capitalism to explain and criticize gender inequality and oppression. According to Marxist feminists, private property gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political and domestic struggle between the sexes, and is the root of women's oppression in the current social context (*Ibid*).

Cultural, Socialist and Marxist feminism acknowledge the differences between men and women at the same time appreciating the different roles the man and woman play in life in general. The return to school guideline aims at emphasizing that once the girl-child enters into motherhood, they should be given a chance to balance between raising a child and education with as much support as possible despite any challenges that they may encounter in their day to day lives.

2.2 Empirical Review

The 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report indicates that of an estimated 72 million children out of school, 54% of them are girls (UNESCO, 2010). In Kenya, the girl-child education remains elusive with 31% of the school drop-outs associated to pregnancy - along with early marriage, poverty and preferential treatment for boys - being major factors in the higher dropout rate for girls. According to the recent demographic survey, 40% of adolescent girls without any education are either pregnant or have already become mothers (KDHS, 2008-2009). In Kenya, out of every 100 girls, 76 complete their primary education at class 8, compared to 87 boys. While only 35 percent of girls between the ages of 16 and 20 are in school, 50 percent of boys the same age attend school and by age 19, 48 percent of young women in Kenya have had a first child. Stigma and discrimination by teachers are reported as two of the main reasons teenage mothers abandon their education (CSA Report, 2008). In Kenya, a leaning assessment study covering 72 districts confirms that a child's literacy and numeracy competencies increase with the increase in mother's level of formal schooling, (UWEZO, 2010)

Therefore, the Ministry of Education (MoE) came up with a Gender Policy in Education whose overall goal is to promote gender equity and equality in education, training and research, to contribute to the economic growth and sustainable development in Kenya. The objectives of the Gender Policy in Education is to establish mechanisms to eliminate all gender disparities in education, training and research in relation to access, enrolment, retention, completion, performance, transition, quality and outcomes (Gender Policy in Education, 2007).

In the day today activities in a society, there are many factors that affect the way of life. Some of these factors affect development and currently they may even affect the education process in a community. Such factors as cultural practices i.e. early marriages; female genital mutilation; poverty leading to child labour, daily chores; infrastructure; and diseases and the situations that follow such ailing relatives, HIV/AIDS, orphans. Some of these factors overlap in practice.

These practices negatively affect the education of the girl child and in one way or another affect the process of returning back to school.

Cultural Practices

Culture is the way of life of a community. This is the way in which a community conducts itself, what the community practices, beliefs, attitudes and values day in day out season after season, generation after generation. Cultural believes have brainwashed some parents to believe that girls who are at the same level of education with boys are a disgrace to the community because they may end up not getting married. Others justify the denial of education to girls to prevent them from bringing shame to the family through early pregnancy.

In African society, the women had the role of transmitting any form of knowledge to the girl child. The women included grandmothers, mothers, aunties and other mothers of the clan where necessary. They were trained in the female roles in society, they were taught how to cook, clean, amongst other things. The women became the role models to the girls. They taught the girls how to behave in public, how to carry out various chores around the homestead and the clan area. In traditional African societies the extended family and kinship systems took the

responsibility for transmitting important information to children and adolescents, usually by means of initiation ceremonies. The traditional initiation ceremonies varied across ethnic groups but their general purpose was to train an age group to fit into the next age group, for example, adolescents for adulthood, to inform them of important issues such as the traditional norms for premarital sexual behavior, mate selection, marital duties.

In the Rift Valley, for example, in the Samburu Community, the women do not wear the distinctive large flat necklaces of the Maasai. Instead, they are from a young age given single loop bead necklaces by admirers, chiefly young Morans. These gifts are given frequently and generously by young Samburu men, and the necklaces soon merge to form a thick collar. The Samburu believe that by the age of 15 or 16, a girl should have enough beads to support her chin. This is considered a sign of having reached marriageable age. As such young girls are beaded by young men. When this happens it signifies that the girl is committed to a certain young moran and they are free to engage in sexual activities. Furthermore, the young girl is expected that during such activities, she should protect herself from getting pregnant. If she happens to get pregnant, crude methods such as pressing the stomach with heavy gadgets, stepping on her tummy, or using the elbow to inflict pain are used to procure an abortion. If she manages to hide the pregnancy, and gives birth to an unwanted child, the child is taken away and left in the wild, to die or is killed using a blunt object. However, beading does not necessarily guarantee the young girl marriage to the specific moran who beaded her (Samburu Culture, 2011).

Another example near the Embu community is that of the Kikuyu people of Kenya. The Agikuyu believed a child belonged to the community and could be disciplined anywhere anytime by any member of the community. That is how discipline was instilled in the community. Fast forward, upon initiation, *Ngwiko* was practiced by newly circumcised girls and men – a non penetrative stimulation of sexual organs before marriage. It permitted sexual release but also reduced the risk if pregnancy (Kenyatta, 1971). Kikuyu girls were instructed by girls of the next older cohort on how to sleep with a man without getting pregnant. *Ngwiko* was an institutionalized and socially accepted for fondling without sexual intercourse, which served to teach adolescents to exercise self-control, and to allow youths to have a certain amount of

intimacy while avoiding premarital pregnancy and the severe punishments associated with it, such as excommunication (Population Research and Policy Review, 1995).

More specifically, the Embu Community, the common ground is that a child belonged and belongs to the community and it was the duty of the community to raise the children as a whole. The girl child spent most of the time with the mother, aunties and grandmother. This is where she was taught her life duties and responsibilities which included fetching water/firewood, tilling the land and cooking. The grandmother had the greatest role in the development of the girls as compared to the mother who had the least influence on the girl as compared to the aunties. The elder sisters/cousins also had a role in the development which came about when they were attending to their chores. FGM as its known now was the gate way to maturity and all the girls had to through it. It was the role of an auntie to take the girl through this period and she was known as a *Mutiri*. *Mutiri* means supporter. The girl would stay with the auntie who had to teach and show the girl the way of life as well as preparing her for marriage. The elder girls also came in again when the girl had undergone the cut and they stayed around them especially during the night dances where the young girl would be exposed to the young men. After a young girl meets a man, the aunties would again have a role in scrutinizing the young man and advice her accordingly. The grandmother continued with her pivotal role of advising the girls (Thaara, 2011).

Culturally, once the girl had undergone the cut – which was during her teenage years - she was considered ready for marriage. This meant if a suitable man came along and chose a girl, she could be married off once the agreed upon bride price was paid. This meant that she had to assume the role of a wife solely, which, immediately disqualifying her as student. This meant that her education ended at that point. It included not going back to school ever.

Society is currently trying hard to fight some of these practices. Education is becoming a must even for mothers. That is why such an education guideline is necessary not only for the young girl but also adults and hence the government is encouraging adult education for the older members of society. Although there are incidences of the older members of the community joining basic school, some even in primary school.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting, is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the range of procedures which involve "the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reason". It is estimated that approximately 138 million African women have undergone FGM worldwide and each year, a further 2 million girls are estimated to be at risk of the practice. Most of them live in African countries, a few in the Middle East and Asian countries, and increasingly in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America and Canada.

The procedure is traditionally carried out by an older woman with no medical training. Anesthetics and antiseptic treatment are not generally used and the practice is usually carried out using basic tools such as knives, scissors, scalpels, pieces of glass and razor blades. Often iodine or a mixture of herbs is placed on the wound to tighten the vagina and stop the bleeding. The age at which the practice is carried out varies, from shortly after birth to the labour of the first child, depending on the community or individual family. The most common age is between four and ten, although it appears to be falling. This suggests that circumcision is becoming less strongly linked to puberty rites and initiation into adulthood.

The World Health Organization has classified FGM into four types. As well as the term Female Genital Mutilation, there are a number of other terms or names used to describe the practice, perhaps most common, female circumcision or female genital cutting (FGC).

The majority of cases of FGM are carried out in 28 African countries. In some countries, (e.g. Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan), prevalence rates can be as high as 98 per cent. In other countries, such as Nigeria, Kenya, Togo and Senegal, the prevalence rates vary between 20 and 50 per cent. It is more accurate however, to view FGM as being practiced by specific ethnic groups, rather than by a whole country, as communities practicing FGM straddle national boundaries.

FGM takes place in parts of the Middle East, i.e. in Yemen, Oman, Iraqi Kurdistan, amongst some Bedouin women in Israel, and was also practiced by the Ethiopian Jews, and it is unclear whether they continue with the practice now that they are settled in Israel. FGM is also practiced among Bohra Muslim populations in parts of India and Pakistan, and amongst Muslim populations in Malaysia and Indonesia. As a result of immigration and refugee movements, FGM is now being practiced by ethnic minority populations in other parts of the world, such as USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. FORWARD estimates that as many as 6,500 girls are at risk of FGM within the UK every year. These statistics indicate that FGM knows no boundaries, communities, religion, clan or social status.

Depending on the degree of mutilation, FGM can have a number of short-term health implications: severe pain and shock, infection, urine retention, injury to adjacent tissues, and immediate fatal hemorrhaging. There long term implication such as extensive damage of the external reproductive system, uterus, vaginal and pelvic infections, cysts and neuromas, complications in pregnancy and child birth, psychological damage, sexual dysfunction and difficulties in menstruation. In addition to these health consequences there are considerable psycho-sexual, psychological and social consequences of FGM.

The roots of FGM are complex and numerous; indeed, it has not been exactly possible to determine when or where the tradition of FGM originated. The justifications given for the practice are multiple and reflect the ideological and historical situation of the societies in which it has developed. Reasons cited generally relate to tradition, power inequalities and the ensuing compliance of women to the dictates of their communities, custom and tradition, religion; in the mistaken belief that it is a religious requirement, preservation of virginity/chastity, social acceptance, especially for marriage, hygiene and cleanliness, increasing sexual pleasure for the male, family honor, a sense of belonging to the group and conversely the fear of social exclusion and enhancing fertility. Many women believe that FGM is necessary to ensure acceptance by their community; they are unaware that FGM is not practiced in most of the world.

FGM within the Embu community as discussed earlier on, was the gate way to maturity and all the girls had to through it. It was the role of an auntie to take the girl through this period and she was known as a *Mutiri*.

Poverty

Poverty is the state of being poor. Most people in Africa and in Kenya live below the poverty line, which is a dollar a day. Poverty line is the official level of income that is necessary to be able to buy the basic things a family needs such as shelter, food and clothing. However, education is key to ending poverty. Despite all these, parents even in the poorest circumstances everywhere hope that their children will get an education.

Despite the impressive economic growth, Kenya is among the world's 30 poorest countries, ranking 152 out of 177 countries on the 2006 Human Development Index. Inequalities are wide with the top 10 per cent of Kenyans earning 44 per cent of the national income, whilst the bottom 10 per cent earns less than one per cent. Kenya's poorest regions, including North Eastern Province, have twice the relative poverty headcount of its least poor regions. Years of drought in this region have had a serious impact on the well-being of children, increasing malnutrition rates, morbidity and mortality, (UNICEF, 2007).

Due to these economic constraints, families opt to try and educate the boy child instead of the girl child. In most cases the girl child stays behind due to their economic status. In various cases, children are born and weaned off prematurely so that the mother can go back to her casual job so as to sustain her family's income. Such children are left in the care of young girls who may be inexperienced. Due to poverty, food becomes a luxury leading to malnourished children and in some circumstances when these children go to school they can hardly concentrate but thanks to the school feeding programmes enabled by the Ministry of Education, children can stay longer in school.

In one instance, the girl will not be able to buy sanitary towels, meaning she misses several days (4-7 days) of the month which is too much absence when compounded annually and especially if

the girl is in an examination class. In some communities, girls opt for prostitution to get a few coins to enable them buy sanitary towels. In the other instance, the girl child is required to help out with the economic status by participating in the work that the mother performs such as joining her in washing clothes for her employer, cleaning buildings and homes, cooking, some even join in tilling land and now even mining and curving. The little income that is earned, goes into providing basic needs of that family. This alleviates the sting of poverty even for a bit.

Girls are married off to richer members of the community who can pay pride price, as a way of adding to the income of a family and improve their income status. In such cases, the girl child does not approve the man she is being married off. Some of these men are old enough to be their grandfathers or their fathers. When such a girl becomes pregnant at such a young age and eventually she gives birth to her child, it leads to excessive bleeding because her body is not fully formed and fistulas which may eventually lead to death. In the mean time, most bride prices paid under such circumstances, don't last and most parents have nothing else to show for what was paid to them.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the basic systems and services that are required for the smooth running of an education system. This means there should be accessible and safe roads leading to the schools, some kind of building or shelter for the school, clean water and power supply. Accessible safe roads and paths leading up to the school, meaning that the girls should feel comfortable going to and coming from school. The buildings or make shift school shelters should be safe for conducive learning. They should have proper lighting, enough air supply and be spacious enough. Girls are sensitive to health issues and water comprises part of that. There is need for clean water to drink, to use in the toilets and to clean the classrooms they use. Accessibility to good quality education may be a concern especially in nomadic communities in Kenya. Considering the nomadic communities keep moving every now and then, the government is making a lot of effort to provide mobile schools and even libraries. The basic thing here is that the girls gets to and from the available education centre without any danger to her.

Diseases

Diseases and ill health also affect the girl child and her education. In many instances if the parents or guardians of the child get sick, she will most likely miss school to take care of her loved ones. This is especially if the girl is amongst the eldest, or if she is an only girl in that family. This means they take up the daily chores such as cleaning, cooking, washing clothes and taking care of the siblings if there are any and most importantly administering drugs to the convalescent. Her returning back to school will largely depend on how long the loved ones take to get better. The situation gets worse when a patient dies, especially if the patient is a mother, forcing the girl to take over her responsibilities. This forces the children, most probably the girl, to take up odd jobs in order to play their parents role.

There is an adage that states that “All of us are affected or infected with HIV and AIDS”. We know of someone who has died from complications or has lost a loved one to the disease. In our school daily situations, this lingers on. Teachers and students continue to miss school. This is due to the effects of the disease, or attending clinics and therapy sessions. This leads to lost man hours and missed lessons for students.

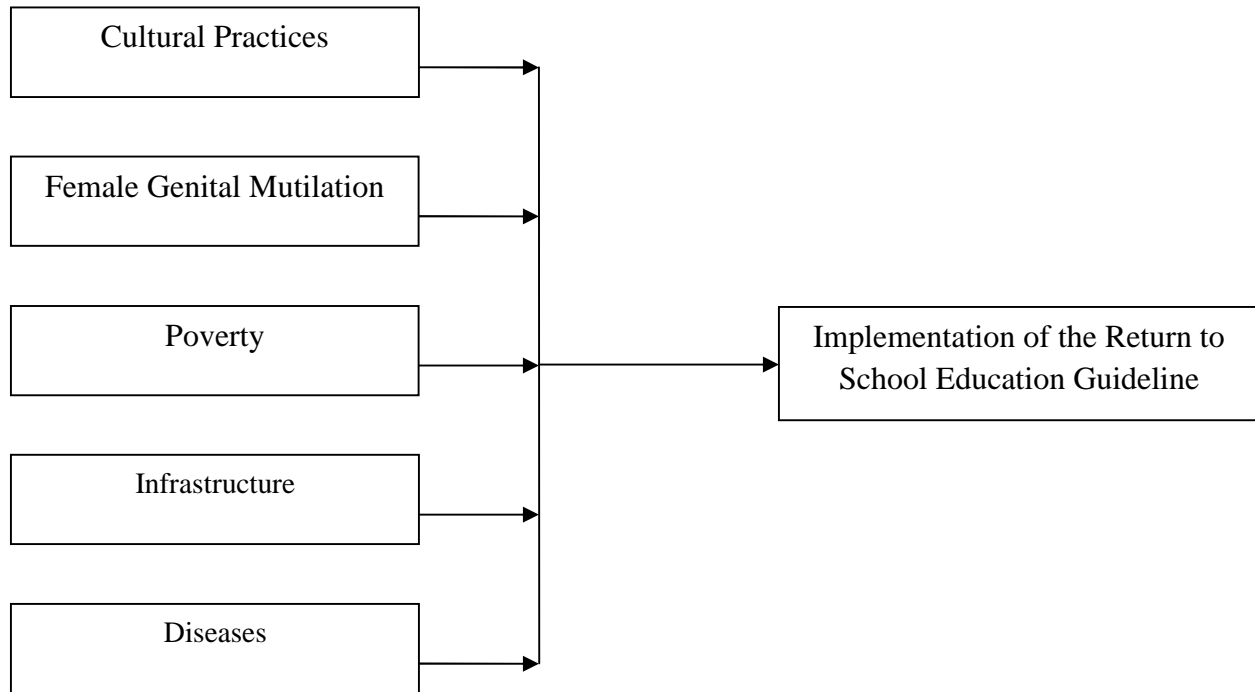
According to the KDHS Report, 2008-2009, HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country in women is 8.0% in women and 4.3% in men. The prevalence is highest in Nyanza province (13.9%) while Eastern province has a prevalence of 3.5%. The Embu community has a prevalence of 3.0% compared to the Luo community which has a prevalence of 20.2% which is considered the highest in the country. In another study, HIV/AIDS prevalence amongst people aged 15 – 24 years of age, is 4.1% in females while that of males is 1.8%, UNICEF, 2009. This may have changed over the years.

Lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, blood pressure, cancer amongst other diseases affect parents and guardians. When they are unwell and unable to attend to their daily chores, most of the time it is the girl child who is required to monitor them and ensure their treatment schedules are adhered to especially in circumstances where a care taker has not been appointed such as a trained nurse, a nanny, house help or a relative.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable



Source, Researcher (2013)

2.4 Summary and Conclusion

A combination of poverty, disease and backward cultural practices continues to deny the girl-child her right to education. Even with the introduction of free primary education, access to education is still remaining a wide dream to many Kenyan children. Despite the introduction of free primary in the country which accounted for an increase in enrolment, a sizeable number of children, especially girls, still find themselves out of school owing to a number of reasons. Such reasons are: demand for their labour in the homes such as assisting in looking after their young siblings; child marriages, doing house chores, death of mother, and looking after the sick member of the family (Mwangi, 2004).

Currently the girl child is compounded by many changes. There are various phenomena that she faces such as sexual abuse from her spouse or a know friend or relative. Sexual harassment even from her seniors, people who are meant to play a pivotal role. Incest takes place almost daily even though it is unbiblical. Pedophiles prey young children and especially men. Rape also characterizes daily life especially in Kenya communities and being a girl child does not make things any easier.

Some of the girls are forced into marriage and when they refuse, they are threatened with death. The girls are forced into marriage at a tender age in quest of dowry from the husbands. Some parents justify the denial of the girl-child's right to education to prevent them from bringing shame to the family through early pregnancy. Yet others believe that women who are at the same level of education as the men are a disgrace to the community because more often than not, they will not get married and if they do, it will be to a foreigner. For such parents, early marriage is the best way to prevent this and at the same time preserve traditions.

When a girl is married off and is pregnant, there are various issues that she faces. Such issues as stigma from her age mates who are still in school yet she is not. In some cases, the girl gets married with little or no knowledge on sex education and how to take care of herself. In some instances, whatever she may be taught may not apply to her case or situation. She goes into marriage blindly not knowing how to please her husband, contraceptives and so on. Eventually when she gets pregnant she will have no knowledge on how to take care of herself. She may suffer fistula complications during child birth due her undeveloped body or even bleed to death. Antenatal and postnatal care may be a luxury especially depending on the distance to the hospital or nearest dispensary or health care centre.

In her young marriage the young girl faces HIV/AIDS. She may be mistreated due to her inexperience. Her education is curtailed. In other words the girl child has many troubles facing her in the current environment. The girl child needs a lot of support to help change her status. This help may come from her mentors, her parents, the church, the community, her siblings and the government and its supporters such as non-governmental organizations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

A Research Design is a framework or structural blueprint for conducting the study. It entails the procedures necessary for obtaining the required information and its purpose. It is meant to determine possible answers to the research questions and provide the information needed for information making.

The researcher adopted a case study research design that was aimed at finding out the implementation of the return to school education guideline in the Embu West District. The case study was meant to give a deeper insight and better understanding of the issues faced by the government and specifically the Ministry of Education in the process of trying to implement some of its policies such as the one under study.

3.2 Target Population

The Target Population is the entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observation characteristic. The study adopted the census method to get feedback from the respondents. Basically, the researcher intended to conduct a census of the whole target population. The Embu West District has sixty (60) primary school, twenty two (22) secondary school, and three (4) colleges. The study also covered two (2) Quality Assurance Officers and two (2) Education Officers within the district.

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Total Number
Primary Schools	60
Secondary Schools	22
Colleges	04
Quality Assurance Officers	02
Education Officers	02
Total	90

Source, KNEC (2012)

3.3 Sample, Sampling and Sampling Population

A sample is a smaller group carefully selected from an accessible population. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. Sample population is the list of units from which sample is taken. The researcher used simple random sampling where 20% of each group of the targeted population was selected meaning the researcher visited 12 primary schools, 4 secondary school and 2 college making a total of 18 institutions and 1 Quality Assurance Officer and 1 Education Officer.

Table 2: Sample

Sample	Total Number
Primary Schools	12
Secondary Schools	04
Colleges	02
Quality Assurance Officers	01
Education Officers	01
Total	20

Source, Researcher (2013)

3.4 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Data Collection is the art or procedure of collecting raw data. This may be primary data (collected by the researcher in person for a particular study) or secondary data (obtained from already existing documentations). Data Instruments are the tools used to collect the data while Data Procedures are how the researcher intends to get the data from the field. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to collect and gather the data required for the study.

(i) Questionnaire

A questionnaire was the first data instrument with a list of structured and unstructured; open and closed ended questions aimed at getting information from education administrators. The researcher used this instrument because it gave the respondents ample time to fill in the questionnaire and get elaborate information. The researcher's procedure was to distribute questionnaires to the targeted population within the Embu West District. For those respondents who were absent or unavailable for some days, a covering letter with a copy of the said questionnaire was issued and left behind for them to fill in when they returned. A period of a week was given to fill the questionnaire. To avoid misplacement, the questionnaire was issued against a check-list. The date of collection was also indicated to the officers to avoid delays. For the few who did not submit on the deadline given, the researcher made an effort to follow up and collect them at the various institutions.

(ii) Interviews

The researcher's second instrument was an interview guide to be used in interviewing head of institutions and education officers who might be having a tight schedule and may not have time to fill in questionnaires.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The researcher tested the data gathered for accuracy or any errors. Validity is the ability for an instrument to measure what it intends to measure. In other words, validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The researcher used content validity which refers to the extent to which a measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic under study.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

The researcher assembled, classified, edited and arranged the data collected. The researcher also thoroughly checked the data for completeness, consistency, accuracy and uniformity. Thereafter, the data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The analyzed data was presented using the charts, tabulations and graphs.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

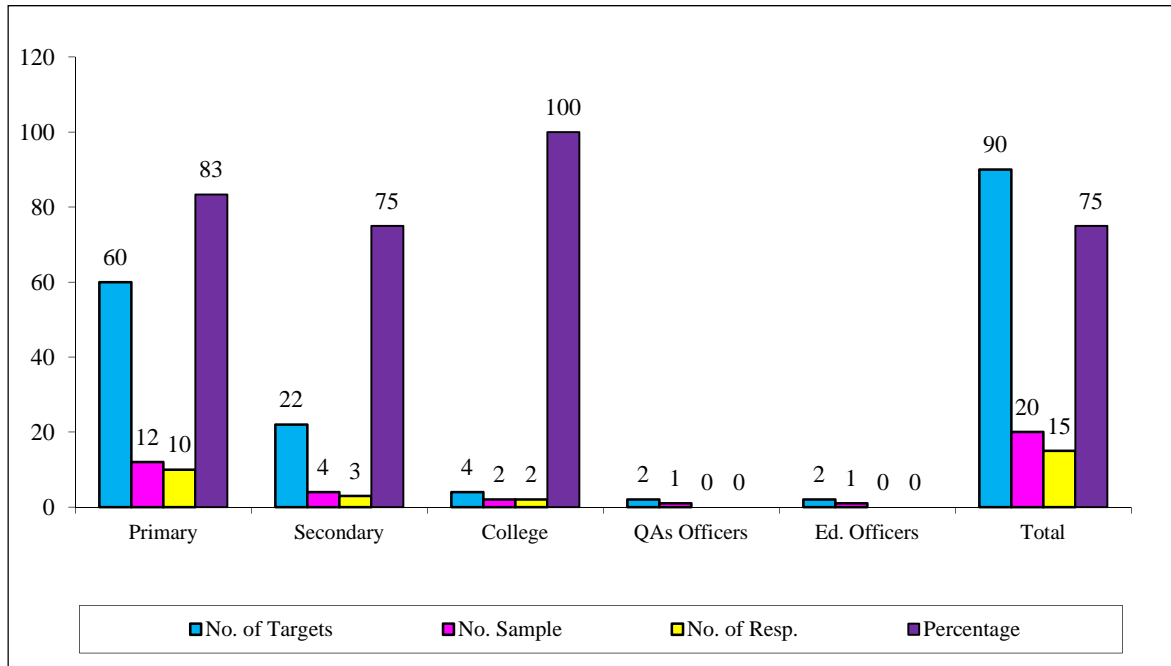
4.1 Rate of Response

The targeted population was 84 institutions, 2 quality assurance officer and 2 education officers. The sample was 20% of the target population which was 18 institutions, 1 quality assurance officer and 1 education officer. Only 10 (83.3%) primary school heads responded, 3 (75%) secondary school heads responded and 2 (100%) college principals responded. None of the quality assurance and education officers responded because they were out in the field since the research was conducted during the school and post school national examinations period which runs for over a month i.e. October to December. Further confusion came about due to the change in term dates and was further complicated the changes in the examination timetable where the examination dates were pushed forward by about three weeks. Table 3 and chart 1 explains the categories of respondents.

Table 3: Rate of Responses

Category	Targeted Number	Sampled Number	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Primary Schools	60	12	10	83.3
Secondary Schools	22	04	03	75
Colleges	04	02	02	100
Quality Assurance Officers	02	01	00	00
Education Officers	02	01	00	00
Total	90	20	15	75

Chart 1: Rate of Responses



Source, Researcher (2013)

The response rate was seventy five percent (75%) and the researcher therefore, considered this as adequate for the generation of analysis and findings.

4.2 Presentation of Data Analysis

The data collected from respondents was assembled, classified, edited and arranged. It was presented in charts, tables and graphs.

Length of Service

Each category of the length of service was well represented as shown in the table. There is an indication that amongst the respondents, there was a representation of each distribution on their length of service. This deduces that all categories of length of service were fairly represented.

Table 4: Response on Length of Service

Category	Number of Responses	Length of Service			
		1-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	Over 30 years
Primary Schools	10	3	4	1	2
Secondary Schools	03	0	0	2	1
Colleges	02	0	0	2	0

Source, Researcher (2013)

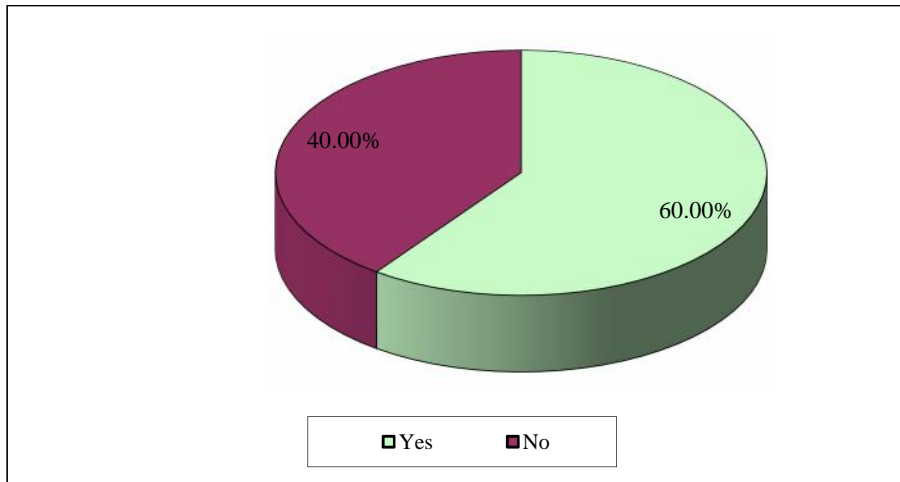
Familiarity with the Return to School Education Guideline in Kenya

The following table and chart shows the familiarity with the Return to School Education Guideline. 9 respondents, 2 of whom were college principals, affirmed that they were familiar with the guideline on return to school. The rest suggested that during their length of service, they have dealt with situations of students being pregnant but were not aware that there was an actual guideline that stipulates how to deal with such situations.

Table 5: Response on Familiarity

	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	60
No	6	40
Total	15	100

Chart 2: Respondents on Familiarity



Source, Researcher (2013)

The respondents were glad to hear about the guideline and would want to learn more. Most respondents suggested that the guideline was a positive thing in the life of a girl child and that it should be made popular in each and every possible way i.e. through the media, through ministerial statements and publications, seminars for the heads and teachers as well, especially those involved in guidance and counseling.

Responses on Implementation

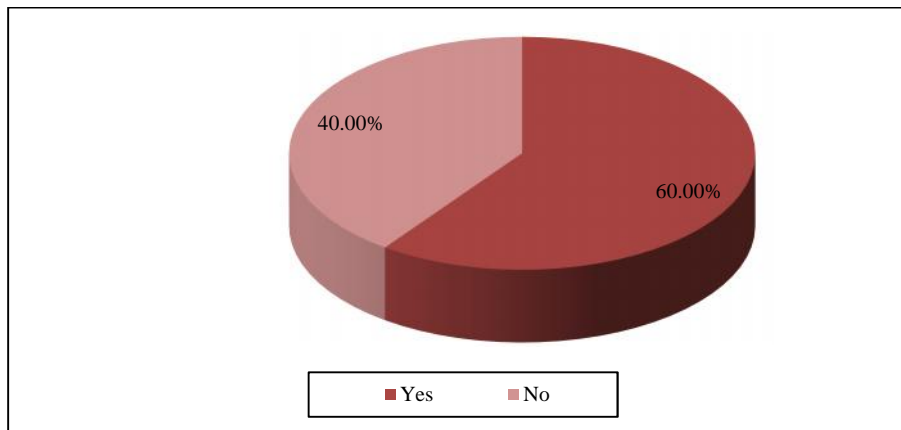
The 9 respondents said they have all implemented the guideline on return to school though not under the actual guideline. They were involved in the process of counseling the girl, her friends, classmates and the parents. It was difficult especially to the parents. Most respondents suggested that the most important thing about such situations is communicating. Once the sad news reaches the parents, and all is explained to them, constant communication should be made to make them understand the situation in terms of how to cope, what is expected of them and the educational circumstances of the young mother. In most cases, the initial reaction is anger and denial mostly directed to the teachers. At times, blame games may follow. Next thing should be to seek support for the young mother, even if it is from fellow classmates since the young mother is around her classmates for most of the pre-birth period.

6 of the respondents said they have never heard of the guideline although they have dealt with the situation of young mothers. 5 have interacted with others who have implemented the guideline while 1 was not aware of having interacted with someone who had implemented the guideline.

Table 6: Responses on Implementation

	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	60
No	6	40
Total	15	100

Chart 3: Respondents on Implementation



Source, Researcher (2013)

Influence of Cultural Practices on Guideline Implementation

Even with a lot of changes in the way of thinking amongst community members, some members still believe in cultural practices and find it hard to let them go. As a result some of those practices affect the education process. Such practices cited were female genital mutilation which in most cases is forced on the girl child and is done in secret. Nowadays, it is even done in private hospitals and clinics and even the child's closest friends never get to find out. Early

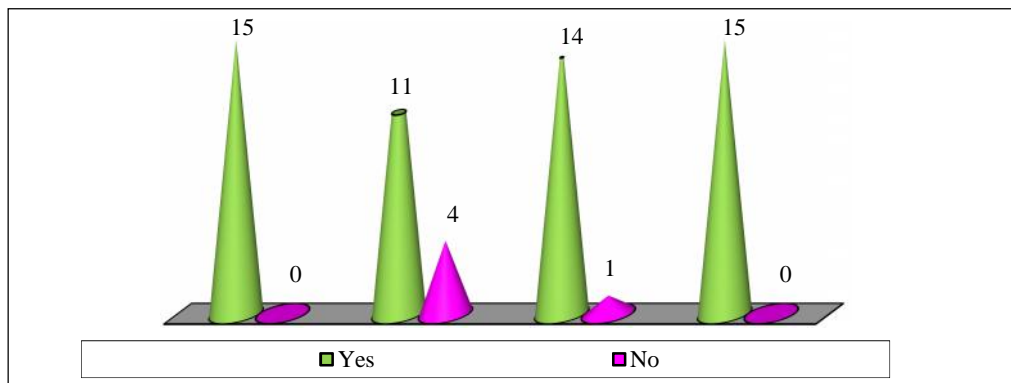
marriages are a rare case, but it still happens. The teachers articulated that this happens mostly in anger, and where the parents do not want to face the stigma and the shame and therefore they force the young child to get married. In some cases, the reason for being married off is because the parents cannot provide for the young mother during pregnancy and her offspring.

Gender assigned roles in the community also affect education systems. The way a community brings up a child influences how they act even in a school set up. In such roles, hard chores like tilling the school land is assigned to boys while home related activities are flocked by girls such as knitting, cooking despite an effort by the government to encompass both girls and boys in either roles for self reliance. Generally, all the respondents agree that culture and cultural practices have a major influence in the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya and the school system in general.

Table 7: Influence of Cultural Practices on the Guideline Implementation

	Yes	No
Cultural Practices	15	00
FGM	11	04
Early Marriages	14	01
Gender roles	15	00

Chart 4: Influence of Cultural Practices on the Guideline Implementation



Source, Researcher (2013)

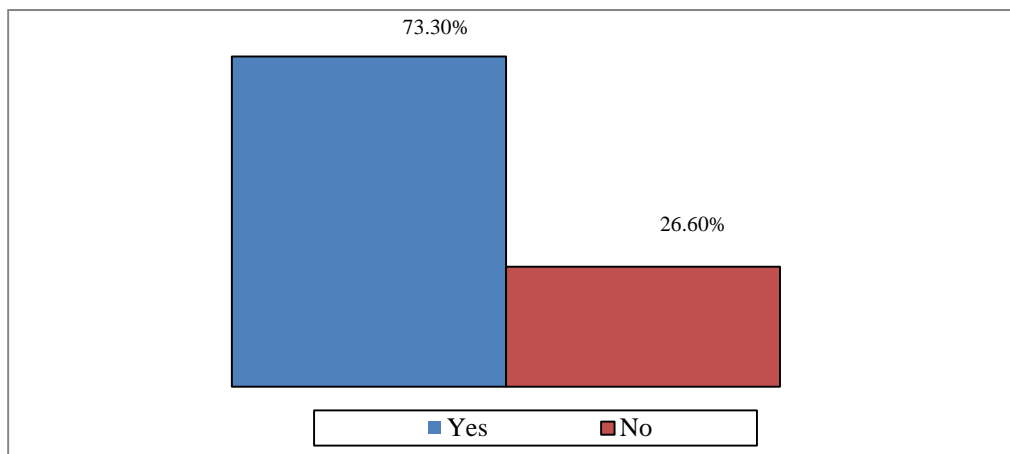
Influence of Female Genital Mutilation on the Guideline Implementation

Female Genital Mutilation influences the guideline implementation. Headteachers affirm that most of the girls who undergo the cut are deemed to be ready for marriage. Most of them do not even return to school. Others consider themselves to be too mature to be in school. Others simply have a superiority complex, become big headed while others become permissive to that kind of life. Some suffer infections when their wounds are not well taken care off which keeps them out of school. Other suffer stigma when their peers find out that they have undergone the cut while in some cases stigma is due to the female genital mutilation not being done while their peers have already undergone the cut. 4 of the respondents stated that female genital mutilation does not affect the implementation of the guideline.

Table 8: Responses on Female Genital Mutilation on Guideline Implementation

Attributes	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	11	73.3
No	04	26.6
Total	15	100

Chart 5: Responses on Female Genital Mutilation on Guideline Implementation



Source, Researcher (2013)

Most respondents stated that as much as there is a campaign to completely eradicate female genital mutilation, it is still being practiced in secrecy. Most respondents felt that it would be of great importance if the vice was eradicated since later in life most girls suffered fistulas or bled to death during child birth. In any case most felt that the practice did not serve any helpful purpose. Most respondents pledged support, safe environment and houses for the students who would find themselves in such a predicament.

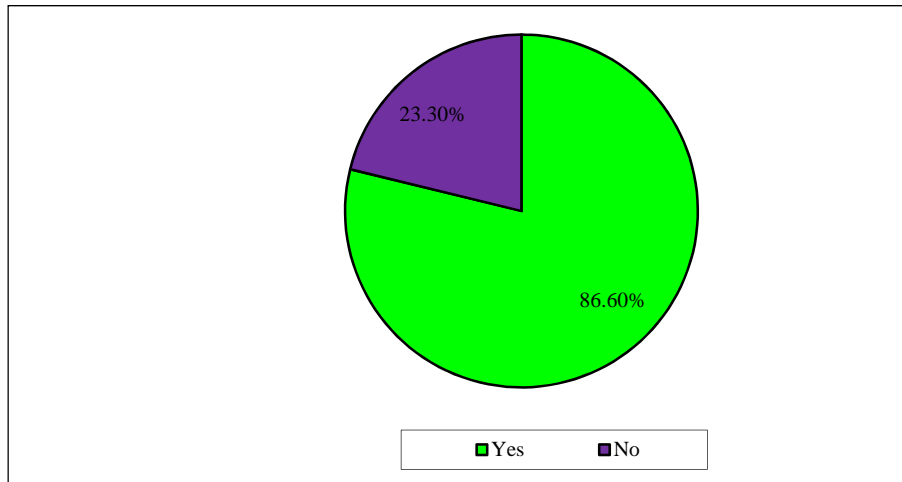
Influence of Poverty on the Guideline Implementation

Poverty is associated with child labour in a girl child's life. This means that due to poverty the girl child is asked to go out and undertake odd chores to help alleviate the family poverty situation. Such chores are working in the firms, child care, washing utensils, clothes, cooking, taking care of invalids, cleaning and so on. Poverty is also associated with lack of finances. When some undertake these chores and they earn some meager wages they consider themselves employed, earning money and soon it gets into their heads and they become unruly, others end up doing drugs and indulging in alcohol and unbecoming behavior. 13 respondents agree that poverty has a major influence in the implementation of the return to school education policy. Most respondents suggested that due to poverty, the girl child is unable to afford basic need such as food, shelter and clothing. Meaning that the child's school fee is in arrears. On the side, respondents thought that when she stays home she is most likely to fall prey, into the wrong hands of predators who are out to ruin their lives as she tries to make ends meet.

Table 9: Responses of Influence of Poverty on the Guideline Implementation

	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	13	86.6
No	02	23.3
Total	15	100

Chart 6: Responses of Influence of Poverty on the Guideline Implementation



Source, Researcher (2013)

Influence of Infrastructure on the Guideline on Implementation

Many of the respondents thought that infrastructure had nothing to do with the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya. Some did not understand the relation of infrastructure to the implementation of the guideline.

Table 10: Responses on Infrastructure on the Implementation Guideline

Attributes	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	00	00
No	15	100
Total	15	100

Source, Researcher (2013)

Influence of Diseases on the Guideline Implementation

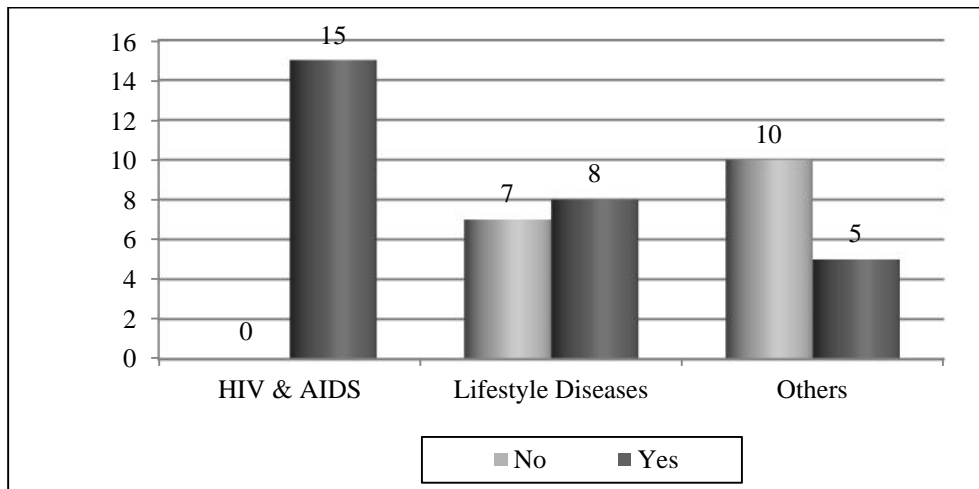
There are many diseases affecting the implementation of the guideline. Such are lifestyle diseases such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure. Others are HIV, AIDS and related

opportunistic diseases. When the parents or guardians get ill, most of them insist on the girl child remaining behind to take care of them. The respondents agreed that any ailing relative, guardian, sibling of the student would affect the guideline implementation. This mostly affects the older children in a family set up and first borns.

Table 11: Responses of Influence of Diseases on the Guideline Implementation

	Yes	No
HIV & AIDS	15	00
Lifestyle Diseases	08	07
Others	05	10

Chart 7: Responses of Influence of Diseases on the Guideline Implementation



Source, Researcher (2013)

Education of Other Administrators on the Return to School Education Guideline

The respondents expressed an interest in learning about the guideline. Yes, all respondents affirmed that they would go ahead and educate other administrators on the return to school education guideline. They articulated that it was an important policy and all effort should be made to popularize the guideline.

Challenges Experienced in the Process of the Guideline Implementation

Yes, there are many challenges experienced in the process of implementing the return to school education guideline. 9 of the respondents who said they have heard of the guideline stated there are various challenges faced. However even those who have never heard of the guideline or dealt with such situations agreed that there must be some challenges. The table stipulates challenges in order of frequency.

Table 12: Responses on the Types of Challenges Faced

Challenge	Respondents
Lack of support from the people they live with	15
Young mothers i.e. teenage mothers who may know little about child care	15
Stigma and trauma from the entire motherhood experience	15
Young mothers being denied a chance to return to school by a guardian/husband	14
Lack of child care when the mother returns to school	13
Unable to catch up in their school work	12
Unable to fit back into the peer groups/loneliness	11
Lack of food and school fees	11
Lack of a balance between school and raising a child	9

Source, Researcher (2013)

From the table above it is clear that there are challenges faced in the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya.

Likely Solutions to the Challenges Experienced in the Implementation of the Return to School Education Guideline in Kenya

There are many solutions to the challenges experienced as there are the challenges. The solutions may vary from challenge to challenge. From the responses, it was clear, that there is need to make the guideline a policy, need to popularize, improve it and make it more solid.

Table 13: Responses on the Solutions to the Challenges Experienced

Solutions
Teaching life skills to prepare for motherhood eventually
Adequate time should be provided to provide time for the baby to be weaned
Curriculum changes and revisions should not be made so often to help the young mother catch up
Guidance and counseling for both young mother and guardians/parents
Seek support for the young mother either through a community health worker or guidance teacher
Create special institutions where mothers would feel more comfortable
Create more awareness for the guideline so as to help young mothers
Need for sex education, transmitted diseases and consequences and scenarios that may arise

Source, Researcher (2013)

Recommendations on the Return to School Education Guideline

Various recommendations were made by the respondents. The most outstanding one was that the guideline is paramount, should be popularized after improvements and contributions .

Table 14: Responses on the Recommendation on the Guideline

Recommendations
Provide for legal registration of the guideline
Make the guideline and enforceable policy to make it binding
Make the guideline popular by using the media, religious bodies and politicians to solicit support
Acquire more support from the government and the ministry specifically
Returnees to be guided and counseled to help build emotional support and stability
Seminars for school administrators, teachers, head teachers and guidance and counselors
Encourage support for the guardians/parents/husband to support the young mother
Need for sex education, transmitted diseases and consequences and scenarios that may arise

Source, Researcher (2013)

Recommendations on the Process on Implementation of the Return to School Education Guideline

In the process of implementing the return to school education guideline the respondents suggested that there is need to talk, communicate clearly, need for counseling, need for education on the guideline amongst other responses.

Table 15: Responses on the Recommendation on the Process on Guideline Implementation

Recommendations
Identify needy cases before things get out of hand
Talking to concerned parties involved i.e. girl child, guardians, parents, classteacher
Guidance and counseling
Make the guideline popular by using the media, religious bodies and politicians to spread the word and solicit support
Structured training and seminars from top level upto the village level
Sex education, transmitted diseases and consequences and scenarios that may arise by use of forums, meetings, seminars and conferences in educational and church systems

Source, Researcher (2013)

4.3 Findings

From the data analysis and presentation:- it is clear that there is need for the return to school education guideline. Cultural practices, female genital mutilation, early marriages, poverty, child labour, finances, diseases especially HIV and AIDS play some influence on the implementation of the guideline. However, infrastructure seemed not to play any role in the implementation of the guideline.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The main objective of the study was an investigation into the implementation of the return to school education guideline, a case of the Embu West District, Embu County.

60% of the respondents have an idea about the implementation of the return to school education guideline whether formerly or informally. However 40% of the respondents have never heard of the policy yet they would totally support it.

Cultural practices have an influence on the implementation of a guideline. 100% of the respondents attest to this.

73.3% believe that female genital mutilation plays a role the implementation of the return to school education guideline.

Poverty that affects most families in Kenya also influences the implementation of the return to school education guideline in Kenya according to 86.6% of the respondents.

100% of the respondents believe diseases have a role to play in the implementation of the return to school education policy. 15 and 8 of the respondents say that HIV and AIDS and other lifestyle diseases play a role in the implementation of the guideline respectively.

However, according to the responses (0%) infrastructure seems not to play an important role in the implementation of the return to school education guideline therefore rendering it irrelevant to this study.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher makes the following recommendations. The Return to School Education Guideline is an important and positive effect in the life of the girl child and her education.

The guideline should be made into a policy, or should be legally registered for it to be binding such that anyone not offering a chance for the girl child to advance her education is found to be contravening a law and is liable to some sort of retribution. Some improvements should be done to strengthen it.

The guideline should be popularized in any way possible, through the media, religious bodies and leaders, politicians, ministerial publications amongst others. This is to seek support and create enough awareness for the policy. The government should make an effort to support this guideline through the ministry of education.

As much as the returnees are allowed back to school, support and stability should be offered through guidance and counseling. The guardians, parents and husbands and other people in the girl-child's life should be talked to and counseled. They should be involved in the support for the young mother. If the father of the child is a boy-child systems should be put in place to also support them.

Seminars and workshops should be held every so often to create awareness and introduce new revisions to the guideline so as to keep the schools administrators, headteachers, teachers and guidance and counselors in the loop with the latest changes.

Sex education, transmitted diseases should be taught especially in learning institutions, consequences and measures to take should also be included.

Serious punitive measures should be formulated for any person preying on children. This would serve as an example.

These recommendations will go along way into improving the return to school education guideline and its effect on the lives of young mothers.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes the following regarding return to school education guideline in Kenya. That a percentage of the administrators are aware of the guideline and even they who claim not to know about it have dealt with the situation of young mothers in a school situation. There are many challenges that hinder the implementation of the guideline. However, many believe that the guideline's light should shine bright, to illuminate the path to helping children and offer guidance to teachers to enable them implement.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter to Respondents

Dear Respondent

I am a Post Graduate Diploma in Education student at the University of Nairobi. I am currently undertaking a research project about the Return to School Guideline of the Ministry of Education. This is a guideline was formulated to support education for girls. The guideline simply allows girls especially school going and adolescents who find themselves pregnant while in school to continue with school until when they have to leave school to have the baby and be able go back to school afterwards and complete their education.

This is to kindly request that you answer all the questions indicated in the questionnaire. Do not hesitate to add a foolscap where the space provided is not enough.

Please take note that there are no correct or wrong answers and all the responses given will be treated as confidential. The responses given are intended for the purposes of the research project only and will not be used against anyone.

Looking forward to you favourable consideration. Thank you for your assistance.

Waigwa, Jeddy Mumbi

E40/61723/2009

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Questionnaire to the Education Administrators (Head Teachers, Education Officers)

1. How long have you worked in the Education Sector?
1 to 10 years 11-20 years 21-30 year Over 30 years
2. Are you familiar with the Return to School Education Guideline in Kenya?
YesNo.....
3. If Yes to Question 2, have you ever implemented it?
YesNo.....
4. If No to Question 3, have you heard of another Education Administrator who has implemented it?
YesNo.....
5. Do the following aspects have an influence in the implementation of the Return to School Education Guideline?
Cultural Practices/FGM/Early Marriages YesNo.....
How?.....
.....
.....
Female Genital Mutilation YesNo.....
How?.....
.....
.....
Poverty/Child Labour/Finances YesNo.....
How?.....
.....
.....
Infrastructure YesNo.....
How?.....
.....
.....

Diseases/Ill Health/HIV & AIDS YesNo.....

How?

.....

Others YesNo.....

How?

.....

.....

6. In your opinion, would you educate other Administrators on the Return to School Education Guideline? YesNo.....

7. In your opinion, are you aware of any challenges that are experienced in the process of implementing the Return to School Education Guideline in Kenya?

YesNo.....

8. If Yes to the above question, please state the challenges experienced.

.....

.....

.....

9. In your opinion, what do you think can be done to curb these challenges?

.....

.....

.....

10. Make any recommendation on the Return to School Education Guideline.

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.....

.....

11. Make any recommendations on the process of implementing the Return to School Education Guideline.

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.....

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Appendix III: List of Schools and Institutions Sampled

Institution/School	Visited
Colleges	
St Marks, Kigari Teachers Training College	
Government Training Institute, Embu	
Secondary Schools	
S S Peter & Paul School	
Embu County Mixed Secondary School	
Werus School Complex	
Kangaru Girls School	
Primary Schools	
Kamuthatha Boarding	
Joseph Allamano	
Kathegi	
Mbukori	
Kevote	
Consolata Girls Kithimu	
St Joseph's	
Embu Vision School	
ACK Igumo	
Camp David	
Embu Faith Springs	
DEB Rukira	

Appendix IV: Research Budget

No.	Description of Item/Activity	Total Amount
1.	Stationery	10,000.00
2.	Typing and Printing	10,000.00
3.	Photocopying	5,000.00
4.	Transport	25,000.00
5.	Food and Accommodation	30,000.00
6.	Telephone	10,000.00
7.	Miscellaneous	10,000.00
		100,000.00