

INFLUENCE OF BOYS' RITE OF PASSAGE ON INTERNAL EFFICIENCY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAROK SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, NAROK COUNTY, KENYA.

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Abstract

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) and the Basic Education Act, 2013 provide for free and compulsory basic education. However, some children in Narok South sub-county are not able to enjoy their right to education due to school dropout and repetition. This study sought to establish the influence of boys' rite of passage on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-county. The objectives of the study sought to determine the influence of boys' rite of passage on internal efficiency in public secondary schools. The study also sought to find out the relationship between boys' rite of passage and internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The data was collected from 31 public secondary schools where 31 school principals and 124 students were interviewed. The data was collected through questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis. Data was analyzed using Poisson regression, Pearson's Correlation coefficient analysis and descriptive statistics. The study concluded that boys' circumcision as a rite of passage had a significant influence on internal efficiency in public secondary schools. There was statistically significant relationship between boys' rite of passage and repetition, transition and students' dropout in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The study is significant to the government, parents and stakeholders in addressing the challenge of wastage in education in Kenya.

Key Words: *Internal Efficiency, Rite of Passage, Repetition, Transition, School dropout*

I.Introduction

Education in Kenya is a right to every child according to the Constitution (2012). The Basic Education Act, 2013 provide for free and compulsory basic education (ROK, 2012). Article 28 of the United Nations Convention (UNC) on the children rights states that, every child has a right to education no matter his or her circumstance (UNESCO, 2008). The Government of Kenya has stated its commitment to making this a reality (Republic of Kenya, 2009). However, some school aged children in Narok South sub-county are not able to enjoy their right to education due to low internal efficiency in the education system.

Ngware (2000) observed that internal efficiency refers to whether education systems achieve their internally set objectives as measured by retention rates, promotion rates, cohort wastage rates, utilization factor, optimum institutional size, unit costs and graduation rates. Achoka, (2007) agreed that internal efficiency is assessed by the number of graduates constitutes appropriate indicator for the measure of efficiency in education (Achoka, 2007). According to Ombongi (2008) the notion of internal efficiency can be derived considering the relationship between inputs and outputs when pupils flow through the grades structure of an educational cycle. Multi-repetition is a strong predictor of dropping out from school. Other effects associated with repetition are increased educational costs, reduced intake capacity and diminished quality of education through overcrowding (Ngware, 2000). Dropping out is a gradual drifting away from the mainstream of school life. Such drifting away is a product of various factors. Repetition and absenteeism are some of the major predictors of dropping out (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2006).

Educational systems in developing countries have been noted to have high levels of inefficiency in schools (Verspour, 2008). This is evidenced by high wastage rate in form of repeating and dropping out (Brown, 2012). It is reported that low budgetary allocation to the education sector lowers the level of school internal efficiency (RoK, 2012).

According to Verspour (2008) the level of inefficiency is caused by the negative perceptions held by some students towards education, which due to high level of educated unemployment causes poor attitudes towards regular schooling. Parents become disillusioned with the expected educational benefits. Studies have shown that, high repetition rates in rural schools are directly affected by students' achievement in mathematics and language (Hanushek, Link, & Woessmann, 2013). Cultural practices which expose girls for marriage in exchange of a bride price at an early age before completing school may increase the level of school dropout (RoK, 2012). Kampicha (2013) in a study to establish the factors influencing internal efficiency in public primary schools in Moyale district noted that circumcision influenced dropout. However, earlier studies have not established the influence of cultural practices that affect boys on school dropout, repetition and completion rate.

The objectives of the study sought to determine the influence of boys' rite of passage on internal efficiency in public secondary schools. The study also sought to find out the relationship between boys' rite of passage and internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County.

II. Research Objectives

- (i) Determine the influence of boys' rite of passage on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County
- (ii) Find out the relationship between boys' rite of passage and internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County

III. Research Hypotheses

- (i) Boys' rite of passage does not have statistically significant influence on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County
- (ii) There is no statistically significant relationship between boys' rite of passage and internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County

IV. Literature Review

The rites of passage has been associated with diverse aspects of internal efficiency such as progression of students from one level to another level. In a study focusing on social-cultural factors influencing transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok County, Odhiambo, Shinali, & Kipeen (2016) examined the influence of rites of passage on internal efficiency components. The study used a sample drawn from primary school students, form one students, primary and secondary school teachers in Narok County. The study results found that male circumcision hampered progression from primary school to high school. In this context, the study found that rites of passage and cultural practices associated with it such as *moranism* was cited by some of respondents as the reasons for failure to join high school.

This was attributed to the boys who had failed to join high schools being lured by respect accorded to boys who maintained the cultural practice. Odhiambo et al., (2016) further revealed that some boys preferred *moranism* lifestyle instead of proceeding to high school.

In South Africa, Ngcobo (2013) examined the schooling experience of the initiated Xhosa young men in secondary set up. The study adopted qualitative research approach in which the individual and group interviews were used for the purposes of data collection. The context of the study was a mixture of initiated students and uninitiated students within a secondary school set up. In relation to the internal efficiency aspects, Ngcobo (2013) indicated that initiated Xhosa students performed poorly and repeated classes more often compared to their uninitiated counterparts. This was attributed to behavioral challenges amongst the initiated Xhosa students as they felt a need to be treated as adults by their teachers and fellow students hence influencing their relationships. There were also incidences of students running away from school to attend and participate in the Xhosa initiation rites that are held in June and December. This had the effect of some of the students missing mid-year examination resulting in class repetition. The study concluded that the initiated male students led to internal inefficiency as they spent a lot of their time trying to prove their masculinity aspects.

The behavioral aspects of the initiated men and their commitment to educational outcomes is a factor with an influence on the internal consistency in schools. In a study focusing on the determinations of performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), Waringu (2011) sought to examine the influence of initiation of boys and academic performance. The study used a target population composed of standard seven and eight pupils as well as a structured questionnaire for the purposes of data collection. The study results revealed that the students who had been initiated before undertaking their KCPE exams were largely associated with failing the exam. This was attributed to loitering within the shopping centers and errant behaviours leading to time wastage for academic purposes.

Focusing on Gatanga division, Nyambura (2009) undertook a study that sought to link primary school boys' circumcision and academic performance aspects. The study used a quasi-experimental research design and a target population composed of forty seven primary schools in Gatanga division. The study noted that schools with large proportions of circumcised boys also registered lower mean score in the KCPE exams. Nyambura (2009) attributed these results with the behavioral challenges exhibited by the circumcised boys including indiscipline and truancy tendencies. This is in contrast to the uncircumcised boys that were noted to be respectful to their teachers, obedient, humble and self-respecting in nature. Other behavioral challenges associated with circumcised boys was bullying other boys that were derogatorily referred to as "*ihii*" meaning uncircumcised. The circumcised boys also felt superior compared to their uncircumcised counterparts leading to low commitment in educational pursuits. (Nyambura, 2009) further noted that circumcised boys spent a huge chunk of their time socializing with school drop outs and watching videos which had an impact on time dedicated for education practices.

The rite of passage continues to be a major contributing factor in some communities on school drop outs especially after primary level education. In a study on causes of school dropout in Saboti Sub County of Trans Nzoia county, Cheneket (2017) examined the causes of school drop outs amongst the boys in the area. The study was undertaken through use of the descriptive research design and utilized a target population made of pupils and teachers

within primary schools. Amongst the social cultural factors leading to school drop outs, 57.1% of the respondents indicated that circumcision was a leading cause of school drop out in the area. This was attributed to the circumcised boys feeling they don't fit in a school set up and was noted to be more prevalent amongst the older boys.

While in Kenya, a majority of studies such as Cheneket (2017), Nyambura (2009), Waringu (2011), and Odhiambo et al., (2016) have focused on internal efficiencies within primary schools, Chang'ach (2013) examined the same within high school level. Chang'ach (2013) undertook a study sought to examine the influence of Keiyo traditional circumcision on aspirations for higher education amongst secondary school boys. The study was based in Keiyo South District in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The study results revealed that secondary school boys who had undergone traditional Keiyo circumcision had comparatively and significantly lower aspirations for higher education compared to the uncircumcised school boys. These results were attributed to the theory of personal constructs in which the people interpret their surrounding based on their personal constructs.

V. Research Methodology

The study adopted correlational research design. The data was collected from 31 public secondary schools where 31 school principals and 124 students were interviewed. Stratified random sampling was used to select the students while purposive sampling was used to select the principals. The data was collected through questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis. The data collecting tools were validated to ensure quality. Data was analyzed using Poisson regression, Pearson's Correlation coefficient analysis and descriptive statistics. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Ethical principals relevant to this study were observed to protect the rights of the respondents.

VI. Research Findings and Discussions

The first hypothesis in this study was "*there is no statistical significant influence of boy's rite of passage on the level of internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County*". The results of the Poisson regression are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Influence of boys' rite of passage on Internal Efficiency

Internal Efficiency	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	P
Repetition rates	0.027	0.067	1.371	0.002
Transition rates	0.022	0.074	2.005	0.001
Dropout rates	0.052	0.084	1.054	0.002

N= 31, LR Chi-square = 10.43, $P \leq 0.04$, $R^2 = 0.50$, Critical T = 2.0595

t_c (1.371, 2.005, 1.054)

t = (0.002, 0.001, 0.002) respectively.

The results showed that the model on influence of boys' rite of passage on internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County was fitting ($\chi^2 = 10.43$, $P < 0.04$). Thus the conclusion was that the independent variables had a significant influence on the dependent variable. Results of the Poisson Regression showed that boys' rite of passage had statistically significantly influence on internal efficiency in public secondary school in Narok South Sub-County. Specific aspects of internal efficiency including repetition rates ($P \leq 0.002$), transition rates ($P \leq 0.001$) and dropout rates ($P \leq 0.002$) were significantly influenced by boys' rite of passage.

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The data collected provided evidence to prove three internal efficiency indicators including transition, repetition and dropout were influenced by boys' rite of passage as a selected Maasai cultural practice. This could be as a result of the fact that, boys' circumcision was a popular cultural practice among the Maasai community. Circumcision represents a rite of passage from childhood to young adulthood where the initiates are trained to be independent and to be respected in the community. The initiates were given a right to construct their own house and separate from their parents as a symbol of being independent and mature. The preparations that were associated with ceremonies for the rite of passage affected school attendance and retention. The boys after circumcision feel they are mature and they were not willing to receive instructions from others. Some parents encouraged the boys to get married after the rite of passage order to get wealth through dowry.

This study sought to find out the relationship between boys' rite of passage and level of internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub- County using Pearson's Correlation coefficient analysis and the results summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Relationship of Circumcision on Internal Efficiency.

Statistics	Dropout Rate	Repetition Rate	Transition Rate
Pearson Correlation	.010*	.003*	.0013*
Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.002	.004

Note: Critical Pearson's $r = 0.388$, $N = 31$

$t_c(0.010, 0.003, \text{ and } 0.0013)$

$t=(0.003, 0.002, 0.004)$ respectively

The Pearson's correlation coefficient for the relationship between boys' rite of passage on dropout rate, repetition rate and transition rate was found to be 0.003, 0.002 and 0.004 respectively. These coefficients are positive and statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Based on these results, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus boys' rite of passage had statistically significant relationship on the three indicators of aspects of internal efficiency namely dropout rate, repetition rate and transition rate in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. During the period of circumcision, initiation is marked by special symbolic activities such as seclusion from community, oaths of secrecy, induction into certain age groups societies and blood friendship. This leads to retardation in learning and thus the learner may repeat or even drop out of school.

The evidences from administered questionnaires and interviews supported the study findings which indication that, rites of passages existed in the community and had both directly and indirectly affected students' transition, repetition and dropout rates. It was evident that, boys' circumcision was highly valued in the Maasai community as a cultural way of life. The study established that, circumcision process was carried out during specific period for specific age groups in the community. Circumcision as a rite of passage interfered with school calendar thereby leading to school dropout where students forgo schools to undertake this rite of passage. The circumcision ceremony took a period of between one to three months which affected the school attendance through absenteeism and school dropout.

The culture of circumcision for boys is greatly valued among the Maasai community (Achoka *et al.*, 2013). The boy child goes through rigorous cultural education during this seclusion period which puts young boys at crossroads thus affecting their academic performance and

aspirations for higher education. After this many adolescents change in their behaviours, they learn their roles as adults and adopt them. Many begin to despise their teachers especially the female teachers. At this stage, they learn what is expected of them, cultural aspects bestowed on them gives and controls how they live. It directs them on what to do and what they should desist from doing. The cultural induction provided under the initiation curriculum puts the 'man' above the 'woman' competing with the girl therefore poses a serious challenge to the boy who has been indoctrinated to believe that they are superior to the girls (Lanyasunya, 2012). Unable to prove this superiority in class, the boy student in the mixed boarding school seems to give up their aspirations for higher education. Thus, traditional circumcision, as a cultural rite impedes on the boys aspiration for higher education.

According to studies conducted, not all children from the Maasai community are affected by circumcision as a rite of passage. According to Lanyasunya (2012), students from background of enlighten parents are not affected by effects of the rite of passage as the parents have realized the importance of education to their children and the development of the whole society in general. Some members of the community members perform organize for the rite of passage during school holidays, which does not interfere with the general school calendar and timetable (Kampicha, 2014). However, according to Hofstede (2011) the physical wound after circumcision may take long to heal completely and thus, lead to excessive absenteeism and academic difficulties which may make the boys discouraged with schooling.

Based on the study findings that, the boys' circumcision as a rite of passage in the Maasai community had as significant influence internal efficiency, the stakeholders should make efforts towards minimizing the negative influence of the practice on education. The government should encourage male circumcision to be done during school school holidays in order to avoid the likelihood of affecting the school calendar and lay guidelines to regulate the kind of counseling to be given to boys during this stage of rite of passage.

VII. Conclusion

Circumcision as a rite of passage had a significant influence on internal efficiency in public secondary schools. There was statistically significant relationship between boys' rite of passage and repetition, transition and students' dropout in public secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

VIII. Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made.

- (i) There is need to carry out parent sensitization programmes among the Maasai community on the importance of education to their children. This would help them arrange for boys' rites of passage ceremonies in a way that may interfere with their children schooling program.
- (ii) Government, community leaders and other stakeholders should sensitize on the community on the importance of education to their children for the development of the whole society. This can be done through school meetings, general village meetings and mass media including local radio stations.

- (iii) There is need to investigate on the influence of girls rite of passage on internal efficiency.

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