

**INFLUENCE OF SELECTED CULTURAL PRACTICES ON GIRLS' PARTICIPATION
IN EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN KURIA
DISTRICT, KENYA**

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Award of a Degree of Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling
of Egerton University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted in this or any other form for the award of a degree in any other university.

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RECOMMENDATION

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my husband Tobias Ochola, my children Dan, Joy Mercy and Gloria. This report is also dedicated to educators and agencies interested in girls' education.

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ABSTRACT

Participation of girls in education seems to be dismal in many parts of the world, and it has become a real concern for many developing countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya included. The dismal level of participation is attributed to the factors that influence girls' enrolment, retention and completion of education at the secondary school cycle. Girl child education provides benefits to the family and the society at large thus factors influencing it should be addressed for the sake of human and societal development. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria District, Kenya. Specifically the study investigated the influence of female genital mutilation, gender roles, societal attitude and early marriages on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level. This was considered crucial as Kenya strives to achieve Education for All by 2015. The study utilized descriptive survey design. 320 girls drawn from three public schools specifically forms 2 and 3 participated in the study. Simple random technique was used to select a sample of 175 for the study. A questionnaire based on the objective of the study was used to collect data that was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), with the aid of the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows version 18. The reliability of the instruments was at 0.77. This was considered an acceptable threshold. The research supervisors of Egerton University established the validity of the instruments before they were administered. The findings of the study revealed that selected cultural practices negatively influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. The study challenges members of the community that still value strong retrogressive cultural practices to reconsider their stand. In effect unless these factors are addressed, secondary school education will continue to be disadvantaged in Kenya school system. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education in Kenya should create awareness to all stakeholders on the importance of the girls' education in the country. It further recommends that a study involving Sub-Saharan African developing nations experiencing low girls' participation in education at the secondary school level be carried out to corroborate the findings.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOG	:	Board of Governors
DEO	:	District Education Officer
EFA	:	Education for All
FAWE	:	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FGM	:	Female Genital Mutilation
GOK	:	Government of Kenya
KCPE	:	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	:	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KIE	:	Kenya Institute of Education
KAACR	:	Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children
MOE	:	Ministry of Education
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organizations
PRSP	:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UNO	:	United Nations Organizations
UNESCO	:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children's Education Fund

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The girl child participation in education has become a real concern to the world particularly the developing countries of the sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya included. Girl child education contributes to family and the community at large, thus the selected cultural practices that influence girls' participation in education need to be addressed. International organizations, Non governmental organization and the government of Kenya have addressed the quality of education in Kenya and particularly for girls. Despite such concern, girls' participation in education in Kenya is still low at all levels as compared to other nations of the world. Dropout and repetition rates are higher for girls than boys in most districts in Kenya, (GOK, 1999). This has been perpetuated by cultural causes, in that the society gives priority to boys' education. For example, biased gender roles, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), early marriages and societal attitude towards girl-child education, have been cited as accounting for the inequalities being realized,(Bala 2006).

Abagi (1995), noted that gender gap in education has its roots in the colonial period as is clearly indicated in history. While most governments attempt to increase girls' participation (enrolment, retention and completion) in education, a lot needs to be done so that full participation is actually realized. Indeed, despite sensitization programmes, seminars and policy statements, many of the good intentions to improve girls' education remain at the theoretical level. According to the Ministry of Education (2007), governments concentrate on provision of education for children, yet some societies still discriminate between sexes on the success to education.

Myers (2000) pointed out that equal opportunity strategies relating to gender have largely fallen off the educational agenda in recent years, unless they relate specifically to improving girls' achievement. In addition, extensive social and economic changes, as well as the impact of second wave feminism in the second half of the twentieth century, have led to shifts in gender roles in western society, most easily evidenced in the ever-increasing numbers of women now engaging in paid work. Wango (2000) observed that despite the recent educational success of girls and women's' increased representation in the workplace, gender continues to contribute to behavior, choices and life outcomes. Francis (2000) found out that gender roles in the family

remain largely unchanged and the most powerful jobs to be overwhelmingly dominated by men. Within education, male and female students continue to construct their gender identities differently with consequences for their learning and school experiences, (Francis 2000).

Francis (2000), further observed that research continues to demonstrate that a hidden curriculum helps to perpetuate, rather than to deconstruct, gender difference. Further, these gender constructions contribute to the subject choices made by students as soon as an element of educational choice is introduced. Such choices hold implications for their future career paths and quality of life. It is imperative that effective strategies for improving both girls' and boys' educational experiences and opportunities be identified and pursued. In the recent past, various governments, International Development Agencies, United Nations (UN), International and National Women's Organizations and Professional Associations of developed policies have come up strongly to oppose the practices.

The Kuria community in Kenya has been resistant to change, it was not until the mainstream churches, NGOs and advocacy groups made efforts to create awareness on the dangers of cultural practices, whose influence was highlighted (Bala, 2006). However, very little progress has been realized, since inequality on the provision of education based on gender seems to persist in many parts of the district. It is very clear that inequality in the provision of education may have negative consequences not only to the individual but also to the community. Education is a means of evaluating the level of achievement for the purpose of training, employment and empowerment, which is the key to development of both the individual and the society. This study seeks to determine the influence of the selected cultural practices such as early marriages, sex roles, Female Genital Mutilation and, societal attitude, on girls' participation (enrolment, retention, and completion) in education at secondary school level in Kuria district. This study intends to explore some of these variables, which may hinder or disadvantage the process of girls' participation in education at the secondary school level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Inadequate education for girls means underdevelopment to the individual and the society in a given nation. In many parts of the world, enrolment shows a decline in the case for the girls. In Kuria district, girls' participation in education at secondary school level seems to be quite low.

Cultural practices such as early marriages, gender roles, societal attitude, and Female Genital Mutilation, influence girls' participation in education in regard to enrolment, retention and completion. Therefore there is need for more research into the selected cultural practices that influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district in Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

- i. Determine the influence of Female Genital Mutilation on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district.
- ii. Establish the influence of gender roles on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district.
- iii. Find out the influence of societal attitude on girls' participation in education, at the secondary school level in Kuria district.
- iv. Determine the influence of early marriages on girls' participation on education at secondary school level in Kuria district.

1.5 Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions.

- i. What is the influence of Female Genital Mutilation on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district?
- ii. Does gender role influence girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district?
- iii. What is the influence of societal attitude on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district?
- iv. Does early marriage influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study may provide information on the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. It highlights some of the negative cultural practices and beliefs that impede girl-child education. The information may challenge the members of the society to reconsider such practices. The report may provide information that can be used by policy makers and educational administrators on problems facing girls' education and ways of improving it at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The findings of this study may assist the government, Ministry of Education and other development partners in the evaluation and filling up the gaps in education for girls, giving them grounds for allocation of more resources for development at the secondary level in Kuria district. The report might form a source of reference to educators, teachers, scholars, educational planners and other agencies interested in girls' education. This might in turn provide sustainable interventions to keep girls in school and enhance opportunity for them to compete favourably well in education.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study targeted Kuria district in Kenya, three girls' public secondary schools in Kuria district. The researcher's interest was limited to selected cultural practices. The variables in the study included, FGM, gender roles, societal attitude and early marriage that influence girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district.

1.8. Limitation of the Study

The study was guided by the following limitations

- i. The selected populations value their cultural practices and it was difficult for them to respond accurately to the questionnaire due to suspicion. However the research er assured them of confidentiality.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

- i. That all girls of secondary school going age had equal opportunity for education at the secondary school cycle.
- ii. That all the respondents gave the required information in an honest and accurate way.

1.10 Definition of Terms

The following terms have been operationally defined as follows:-

Attitude:	Parental and societal feelings about girls' education.
Counseling programmes:	Refers to laid down plan by the school to address counseling needs of the students.
Selected Cultural practices:	It refers to selected cultural beliefs such as societal attitudes towards education, early marriages, gender roles, and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
Early marriage:	Marriage before the legal and universal maturity age or juvenile marriage
Education:	The process of acquisition of skills, knowledge, and attitudes.
Education administrators:	Managers of schools such as, the Ministry of Education, Board of Governors, head teachers, parents-teachers association, among others
Gender Disparity:	Imbalance in gender in the provision of education.
Gender roles	Refers to Kuria cultural expectations of how female and male should act and their opportunities within the society
Influence:	The effect of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level.
Initiation:	Cultural practice of the Kuria Society in reference to Genital Mutilation.
Participation in education:	Refers to involvement in the process of education with regard to enrolment, retention, and completion trends of girls' education at the secondary school level.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of related literature on the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' education, despite the increasing awareness on its dangers. The chapter is composed of introduction, the influence of selected cultural practices such as FGM, sex roles, early marriages, societal attitude towards education on participation of girls in education at the secondary school level, the role of Guidance and counseling at secondary school level and importance of education. It also consists of the theoretical framework and it therefore, seeks to conceptualize this study within the background of existing knowledge.

2.2 Female Genital Mutilation and Education

Bala (2006) observed that the Western world did not allow Female Genital Mutilation to thrive in their communities for whatever reasons, medical, social, or cultural. The British Medical Association exemplified this attitude to Brown, whose professional transgression was later meted with certificate cancellation of his membership in medical societies with which he was affiliated. Later the practice of Female Genital Mutilation was banned in Great Britain.

UNICEF (1992) revealed that FGM is observed at least in 25 countries in Africa, Asia, and Arab world. In countries where the practice exists, most women believe that to be a good woman, one must undergo the operation to be clean and proper for marriage. Among the women in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, FGM is performed to reduce sexual desires and to maintain virginity until marriage. In many countries it begins as a process of emotional and physical isolation as well as rituals that are demeaning to the girl-child. It is evident that FGM brings with it additional traumas due to unhealthy commutations and sexual overtones associated with it. FAWE (1996), reported that education of girls and women in Africa after initiation rite is not favorable, many of them may be forced into early marriage and in cases where they purpose education, school become unfavorable for them.

In some parts of Africa, it is believed that a woman's genital can grow and become unwieldy hanging down between her legs unless the clitoris is excised. Among the Mali, it is believed that

a woman's clitoris may damage the baby during birth and therefore many countries gratify FGM as healthy. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, girls of 12-13 years undergo the rite conducted by an elderly woman called Sowia. Bala (2006), revealed that this involves informal education on how to be a good wife or co-wife, and has nothing to do with formal education. Republic of Kenya (1988), Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower training for the next decade and beyond; noted that these rites infringe on girl's sexual and reproductive rights and bodily integrity.

According to Bala (2004), FGM is universal among the Somali (97%), Kisii (96%), Maasai (93%), Taita (62%), Kalenjin (48%), Embu (44%), Meru (42%), Kikuyu (34%) and Kamba (27%). Generally FGM is practiced in most of these parts of Kenya and the same is reflected in their minimal participation in education at the secondary school level. Children's Act 2001 outlaws various forms of violations against children including FGM. However, the act only protects those in the age bracket of 0-18 years. This implies that there is no legal resource available for an adult woman who might be forcefully circumcised.

A study conducted Ondieki (2012), that initiation ceremonies are a disruptive force that pulls girls out of studies. This is because after initiation, girls and boys are treated as adults, and this lowers their aspiration for education. This kind of socialization reveals that girls feel that schooling lowers their chances of marriage. Furthermore, there is the fear of missing a husband once educated, since many African men are suspicious of educated women. Bala (2006) indicated that inadequate education or poor participation of girls in the process of education is detrimental to national and human resource development, furthermore, the key plan of sustainable growth and development. Those that undergo FGM undergo individual attitudinal change and reject formal education perceiving themselves as adults and schools as the institution for children.

The 1990 UNO declaration on the rights of the child and the Jomtien World Declaration (2000) on the EFA, while ascertain that education remains the single major factor that can narrow the gender imbalance in all areas of development. (World Bank Report, 1994.) Research indicates that girls who have undergone FGM, or whose bride price have been paid, often undergo

attitudinal changes and reject formal education. This is further emphasized in a World Bank Confidential Report (1994) which asserts that FGM has negative repercussions on girl child education as girls may be kept out of school for several days, weeks or months or even withdrawn as a direct result of FGM.

A study by Ondieki (2012), found out that, girls given a second chance for one reason or the other, they would not undergo FGM since it interfered with the education as they report witnessing the school mates dropping out of school and get married after undergoing FGM. This response showed an increased awareness of the dangers of FGM and a slow change of attitude in Kuria district. It is hoped that this change of attitude may in future lead to reduction in the number of girls undergoing FGM in the district.

Among the Kuria community, after initiation girls engage themselves in sexual intercourse, this may result into early pregnancies, school dropout, and early or forced marriages. While the effect of FGM on the formal education of the girl-child is recognized, the informal aspect of the practice in grounding the girl in the culture of her people needs to be investigated further. This is in line with the belief that whoever has no culture is a slave. This study therefore intended to investigate the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Whereas it is important to preserve the benefits of cultural practices, the results of this study revealed that FGM impedes the girl child education.

2.3 Societal Attitude on Girls' Education

Education is considered as a powerful weapon for fighting ignorance, poverty, disease and dominance by strong nations. Myers (2000) noted that most of the nations today are development- minded and are no longer disposed to entrust their future exhaustively to the forces of markets, the whim of the judgment of the colonial rule. The international community has become aware of the need to achieve equality between the sexes and the fact that inequitable Society cannot be attained, if fundamental human rights such as right to education, of half of the human society, (women), continue to be denied and violated. The bleak reality is that the harmful Cultural practices have been performed for male benefit. Female sexual control by men,

economic and political subordination of women, perpetuates the inferior status of women and inhibits structural and attitudinal changes necessary to eliminate gender inequality.

A research study carried out by Wanjiru (2007) in Mombasa on factors contributing to school drop out in public secondary schools revealed that 52.4% respondents valued boy's education better than that of girls. Families which cannot easily afford to send both sons and daughters to school reckon that financial returns on the expenditure for girl's education are a good deal smaller than those of boys. The argument being that girls will eventually leave their parents on getting married, therefore their education is seen as a financial asset to the in-laws rather than blood relatives (UNESCO, 2002).

Oxfarm (2005), found out that at the family level, all the respondents concurred that parents have negative attitudes towards girls' education and that girls suffer from domestic work overload, a situation that reduces their interest in pursuing education. Girls are generally regarded as inferior to the boys. It is a common expectation that girls should be married off as early as 12-13 years of age. The parents therefore do not put a lot of emphasis on their education and consider it "a waste of time" and money. The girls know it, too, and are aware of their parents' perceptions regarding their education. They do not therefore find it necessary to work hard since they know that they will drop out of school early anyway. The study established that societal attitude influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district.

A Study by Ondieki (2012) found out that many of the parents were semi-illiterate and illiterate and therefore did not value education, especially for the girl child. Parents valued FGM more than formal education and that a parent can do anything to make sure that their daughters are circumcised. Even the poor ones sell all that they have to pay for initiation. This parental attitude may have been a contributory factor to girls dropping out of school after FGM as they got married at a tender age, leading to lack of educational advancement and no real future.

UNICEF (2005) noted that girls enroll in large numbers in primary school, and this decreases as they ascend the hierarchy of education. This under representation of girls especially in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning is attributed to many factors both institutional and attitudinal. Ballara (1992) noted that many poor and large families preferred to

educate boys and not girls. They believe that this will provide continuity headship of families and property inheritance. They regard sons as the source of future family support in preference to daughters, whose economic contribution could as well be to a different family, where they get married. Many parents believe that education would make their daughters less amenable to customs and traditions hence disrupt their social stem. Furthermore, parents believe that boys are more intelligent than girls and they are not vulnerable to school dropout due to pregnancies as girls. Therefore the cooperation and support from parents and the community would increase girls' participation and eventual success in education.

Bala (2006) asserts that son preference denies the girl-child good health, education, economic opportunities and the right to choose her partner. This violates the rights under the articles 2, 6, 12, 19, 24, 27, and 28 of the Convention on the children's rights. Son preference refers to the whole range of values and attitudes manifested in many practices. It may mean that a female child is disadvantaged from birth. This may determine the quality and quantity of parental social care and the extent of investment in her development and education. This would lead to acute discrimination, particularly in settings where resources are scarce.

Brock and Camish (1997), noted that, a major deterrent to female take up and follow through educational opportunities (even when these are available) is a near universal fundamental cultural bias in favour of males. The widespread operation of patriarchal systems of social organization, customary early marriage, the incidence of early pregnancy, heavier domestic and subsistence duties of females, a generally lower regard for the value of female life, all combine though differentially in each case, to adversely influence the participation of girls and women in formal education. To this list may be added problems of seclusion and security in some areas. Such long standing constraints result in a dearth of female role models that could challenge the traditional one that is clearly acquired by both sexes at a very early age. The influence of this factor can only be overcome, inter alia by a profound change of attitude on the part of influential males, and in some positions.

UNICEF (2005) observed that in African countries where female education seems to threaten male authority, the solution is to keep the girls' education lower in quality and quantity than that of the boys. Furthermore, education seems to give women a better earning prospect and would

change their economic status. This fact sometimes gives rise to family tension, ambitious attitude in nature because culture dictates that women should depend on men. In spite of the realization accruing from investigating girls' education, their participation still lags behind. Most of the developing countries are at the early stages of analyzing their situation and developing programmes that address the problem of improving girls' education.

Kuria district PRSP, Consultation Report (2004), observed that the district's culture emphasize on cultural discrimination even in the provision of education. This study established the magnitude of such practices in the locale and exposed its influence on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level.

2.4 Gender Roles and Education

Francis (2000), found out that, there is need to address the cultural environment from which cultural practices emerged, in order to eliminate the various justification used to perpetuate them. It is important to eradicate such practices based on the ideas of the inferiority or superiority of sex or stereotyped roles of gender. This kind of environment that denies girls opportunities to access education must be reformed.

Oxfarm (2005) indicated that, gender roles within the families allow boys to continue their education and spend time on homework while girls have to quit school and help their mothers at home. Early marriage, FGM, early pregnancies, and the dowry traditions are expressions of ignorance in rural areas of Tanzania and Zanzibar as reflected on by the Action Aid representative.

United Nations (1967) noted that many parents want children particularly girls to stay at home and help with work. It further observed that girls are frequently over burdened with daily home based chores and are left with very little time to study. Lavy (1992), established that boys have a poor opinion about girls, and by the age of 5 to 6, they learn to attribute power and prestige to the male role. Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children, (2003), noted that, too often girls learn at an early age that they are expected to limit themselves to activities at home. Furthermore, while in school, they are attracted to courses that reinforce their roles as domestic producers and reproducers.

Davidson and Kanyuka (1992), observed that cultural arrangement which puts a man as the head of the family complicates the matter more by giving him power not only to distribute chores but also to approve any other economic activity, schooling inclusive. To him education to daughters may not be a priority. Girls have to learn to work for long hours like their mothers as opposed to boys with less gender-related roles, and keep themselves busy through entertainment and loitering. Abagi (1995) observed that this practice limits girls' access to and completion of education compared to boys'. It is very clear that girls are socialized into appropriate gender roles at their early stages of growth and development. They take these roles at home, in school and in social community.

Swedish International Development Agency, education policy from 2001 states that the overriding poverty reduction and the goal of human rights and democracy gender equality and sustainable development depends on and promotes education, training and competency. The policy holds education of the girls to be one of the most important determinants of development and endorses the Framework for Action on Education for All; (FFA) The policy identifies a number of obstacles to education for all. The constraints prevent girls from attending or completing school includes gender roles. Republic of Kenya (1992), Report on National conference on EFA, found out that the culturally prescribed roles of female make girls more likely to be burdened with daily chores that make precedence over studies than the male colleagues.

Brown (1980) indicates that some children are withdrawn by parents in rural areas to assist in household chores like babysitting younger children, accompanying parents to hospital or public gatherings, collect firewood and water, caring for the sick relatives among others.

The girl – child does most of this work but where there are no girl siblings, the boys are used to perform these tasks. This clearly shows gender disparity in that boys assist at home only when there are no girls, which influence girls' education to an extent of dropping from school due to constant absenteeism (Wanjiru, 2007). The girls have less time to do supplementary reading for school compared to the boys (Wamahiu, Opondo & Nyagah, 1992).

Ballara (1992), noted that cultural beliefs restrict woman's activities to domestic tasks stressing their roles as mothers and homemakers. This leads to lack of confidence, timidity, and

submission to male authority. It is very clear that sex roles expectation of the African Society initiate sex imbalance in school and career, since the girls' role is defined such that, she should be only a mother, a housewife and a home keeper. These roles at best will only require minimum level of education or none at all. In Kuria district, many parents still rely on their children for production and wage activities. Many of them are left at home to help with the care of the younger siblings, farm work, and daily chores.

While in school performance of girls is hampered by gender stereotyped attitudes among teachers, parents and students about the capacity of girls. These stereotyped roles that make girls easily misused in school include preparing tea and lunch for teachers at break time and lunchtime respectively, washing utensils and fetching water for teachers (Eshiwani, 1985). Abagi (1992) also observed that girls waste a lot of teaching time when they are sent to teachers' houses to take books which creates room for sexual harassments. While performing such roles the girls sacrifice their studies hence end up performing poorly in class. This can lead to girls dropping out of school.

Abidha (1998) raised a great concern on unsatisfactory performance and achievement of girls across the education system. The survey carried out in K.C.S.E results in Kenya revealed that girls perform poorly in almost all subjects compared to boys. This becomes even worse as they move up in the education ladder. This is also supported by Fatuma and Sifuna (2006).

The fact that the curriculum fails to address the needs of the girls who acts the role of mothers and are mostly absent from school is a great concern. This makes them also suffer from chronic fatigue, lack of concentration in school and forced repetition in classes. Their academic performance is hence impaired and self image lowered and eventually they drop out of school, (UNESCO, 2002). The findings of the study determined that there is a strong relationship between gender roles and girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district.

2.5 Early Marriage and Education

UNICEF (2005), defined early marriage as a term used to refer to both formal and informal union in which a girl lives with a partner as if married before age of 18. UNIFPA (2006), also defines early marriage as any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years before the girl is

physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder responsibilities of marriage and childbearing.

Bayisenge (2009) identified that, in the context of early marriage in Africa, many women now get married at later ages. In many regions early marriages remain the norm. Early motherhood has been the subject of a growing number of studies, research projects and intervention programmes in Africa. In addition, poverty is a major factor underpinning early marriage, where poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden where one less daughter is one less mouth to feed. Parents encourage the marriage of their daughters while they are still children in the hope that the marriage will benefit them both financially and socially.

UNICEF (2001), reported that, there is strong social pressure on families to conform to the societal attitude. Failure to conform can result into ridicule, disapproval or family shame. Local perceptions on the ideal age for marriage, the desire for submission of wives, extended family patterns and other customary requirements are all enshrined in local customs and religious norms.

Moreover, early marriage is a way to ensure that a wife is protected and placed under male control, she is submissive to her husband, works hard and that the children she bears are legitimate (UNICEF, 2001; Nuor, 2006). On the other hand for many societies the prize for virginity before marriage and early marriage can manifest itself in a number of practices designed to protect a girl from unsanctioned sexual activity. In the North- East Africa and other parts of the Middle East in particular, control includes FGM.

A study done by Oloo (2003) indicates that it is a practice of giving away girls for marriage at the early age of 11, 12 and 13, after which they are expected to start producing children. The principal reason for this practice is to preserve virginity, provide bride wealth, and raise the status of the girls' family. Young girls are likely to have sexual contacts and are thus believed to be virgins upon marriage. Education has become a propelling force for achieving a better standard of living. It is looked upon as a major way to social mobility and has a crucial role to play in deciding the future of each child. He further revealed that in Sierra Leone, where child marriage, though against the law, is still high and has serious implications for the girl child educational development participation. In India, girls stay at home to learn from their mothers,

aunts and grandmothers, who give them enough education on practical apprenticeship and socialization. The main purpose for this training is to equip the girl child for marriage roles, which may not require formal education at higher level.

Wango, (2003) pointed out that, child marriage robs the girl of her childhood time necessary for physical, psychological, social and emotional development. Early marriage inflicts great emotional stress as the girl is removed from her parent's home to her husband's home who may be invariably many years older than her. The husband will have very little in common with the young teenager. It is obliged to have intercourse although physically she is not mature. Girls from communities where early marriages occur are victims of sibling- son-preferential treatment, will probably be malnourished, and consequently have stunted physical growth; this may also have negative influence on their participation in education.

In many societies when girls reach puberty they are well fed, groomed, adorned, and kept in seclusion to make them attractive, so that they can be married off to the highest bidder. The community has very little to do with formal education for girl-child. Since independence, education in Kenya has expanded considerably with primary and secondary schools participation rates at 95% for boys and 31% for girls by 1989 (Women's Bureau 1995). Despite such improvement, education for girls in Kenya is still low at every level, except at the primary level. National figures show that although girls form about 49% of the primary school enrolment they account 34% of secondary level and 25% of University education enrolment.

Maritim (1990), found out that those families with lowest economic structures marry off their daughters early, in order to provide economic support in terms of bride wealth. In most communities, girls are regarded as the objects of exchange of wealth. They are seen as the sources of income in the custom of charging terms for adultery or pregnancy of unmarried women and girls. Those who may not get married immediately, find themselves working as house girls in order to support their families. Odanga (1995) observed that African traditions and beliefs require that girls be married to qualify as good African women. Members of the family usually struggled to socialize daughters to master skills of being good wives hence education is not a priority.

Lack of positive mentors, negative attitudes by the community towards girls' education, poverty and persistent droughts, leave parents unable to afford fees. As girls reach standard four, or between 12 and 14 years of age, they are withdrawn from school to be married off to wealthy old men in the community. Those who remain in school are under constant pressure from their peers and from some community members including their own parents, to drop out of school. The communities also have a higher preference for boys' education, which is perceived to be more prestigious. All the respondents unanimously accepted this view. Girls are also regarded as having less ability compared with boys, hence no need to waste resources on them (Bala, 2006).

Early marriage stands in conflict with objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Mathur, 2003). It threatens the achievement of the first six goals respectively, eradicating the extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (UN, 2007). When the relationship between age at marriage and development is examined it becomes clear that late marriage is a precondition for the attainment of desired development related goals. These can include competition in schools, acquisition of training for employment and attainment of skills and related to roles of citizens, family member and consumer that are a part of a successful adulthood (UNICEF, 2005).

Ondieki (2012) found out that education is the most important institution outside the family involved in socializing young people into all dimensions of adult roles and responsibilities. More years of schooling has been associated with many positive outcomes including later ages for marriages, lower fertility, healthier and better educated children and economic development. However early marriages deprives the children of school age the right to education they need for their personal development, their preparation for adulthood and their effective contribution to future need being of the family and society. Indeed girls who would like to continue schooling may be both practically and legally excluded from doing so. Many parents feel that education undermines cultural practices and it teaches the girl to reject tradition.

Adu (2007) emphasized that, educated women are likely to have a say in decision making, regarding the size of their families and the spacing of their children. While marriage does not have to mean that girls' or boys' education has ended, the attitude of parents in many societies

mean that it often does, husbands of young wives are often older men who expect the wives to follow traditions, stay at home and undertake household and child care duties. A girl may be unable to go against her husband's wishes and invest in the scarce resources in the wife continued education

UNICEF (2005) documented that, some schools often have a policy of refusing to allow married or pregnant girls to return to school. They may believe that it will set a bad example to other children or parents will be angry to see the school go against the traditional practices of early marriage. However, even if they permit girls to return, the school environment can make it difficult for a girl to attend school and perform as a wife and a mother at the same time. Bullying and abuse by teachers, pupils and other parents can further reduce girls' self confidence and sense of security forcing them to give up on school.

Traditionally initiation, circumcision and early marriage should not cause girls to drop – out of school. Many students who drop-out of school especially girls' end up in early marriages and prostitution. A survey carried out among Samburu community indicates that girls are forced into early marriage at a tender age of 13 years. Threats of curses befalling those who refuse to get married make it difficult for girls to resist early marriages. Some continue with schooling after marriage but when they get pregnant, they have to quit school. This however disadvantages the girls as the boys are left to continue with their education (Wanyoike, 2003).

Lewis, (2009), noted when girls dropout of school to get married, there is a knock-on effect to the community as a whole, and for future generations. Evidence suggests that children of young uneducated mother are less likely to have a good start to their education do well in class or continue beyond the basic schooling. Their daughters are likely to dropout, marry and begin the cycle again.

A recent survey on FGM carried out in Kuria district revealed that girls are mostly married off after FGM. Kuria district PRSP, Consultation Report (2004), stated that FGM is generally the nexus of social economy in societies where girls are married for exchange of bride wealth. These beliefs seem to enhance early marriages in Kuria district. Upon this background the researcher found out that early marriage influence girls' participation in education at secondary level of education in Kuria district.

2.6 Family Socio-Economic Background

The relationship between Education and development is well documented and understood. In particular, the education of girls is viewed as essential in the drive by nations to achieve equitable development. In Kenya studies have shown that income of the self employed land owners do increase with the level of education. Education therefore has a critical role to play in addressing issues of gender parity in Kenya. These issues affect individuals, families, communities and society as a whole. Redressing the gender gap calls for sustained efforts and innovative strategies that will ensure full appropriation of the benefits accruing from education including adequate participation in the socio-economic and political life of the society-both boys and girls.

FAWE (1996) observed that education is the basis of enhancement of status of women, and key factor in their effective and positive participation in nation building, policy and decision-making. It is therefore, proper to say that when you educate a woman, you have a nation. While it is the objective in Kenya that education is given to all children irrespective of sex or socio-economic background, education still favors boys in the allocation of opportunities available in secondary schools. Among the characteristics that contribute to low enrolment for school in rural areas in Kenya, gender is certain to be on the list. Studies have pointed out that socio-cultural constraints to female participation in education, for instance, Maritim (1990), noted that, faced with economic constraints, parents particularly in rural areas where 95% of schools are located, are forced to select their children for school. In the process of selection, girls are disadvantaged because boys are deemed as the soundest and longest-term investment and security in old age.

Oloo (2003) found out that the inability of families to meet the school expenses victimizes majority of girls. Parents prefer to educate boys to girls, in times of economic hardships parents pull girls out of school first. Furthermore, sending girls to school is to bear direct and indirect costs as well as to forfeit values of labor undertaken at home. The opportunity costs of educating girls are higher as compared to boys who include lost chore time and forgone earnings. In many countries, dropout rates are steadily falling but they continue to decline by gender where girls are marginalized. In this study locality girls seem to begin school very late and sometimes they are withdrawn at the onset of puberty for the purpose of marriage.

Adu (2007), identified Poverty and destitution as a critical factors influencing girls' education in Wajir and Mandera. Where families do not have adequate financial resources to educate both boys and girls, parents preferred to educate the boys, thus discriminating against the girls. Certain traditional barriers also hinder girls' education. These include taboos that forbid girls to participate in secular education due to the belief that "girls will become prostitutes if taken to school". Girls are also not allowed to express themselves freely as boys are, and they are under strict supervision while at home.

Maleche (1972) observed that the African family has an obligation to meet the social and economic needs of the immediate family and in most cases; it is the girls who are affected. Sometimes parents can choose to discontinue their daughters from schooling to paying fees for their dead brothers' sons. Even when the school fees is available, the school going girls in rural areas are usually victims of extended family's pressure, which is receded for communal work. For example during funerals, and other important functions, the community expects the girls to remain at home and fetch water, firewood, cook and sometimes take care of their younger siblings in the absence of their parents, who may attend the funeral. This can lead to frequent absenteeism and eventual drop out of school because of poor performance. He further noted that culture allows girls from different families to sleep together in the grandmother's house. The connection between them has nothing to do with formal education, but days' events, food, dress and children. This kind of environment does not encourage girls' aspiration for education, and they offer no resistance even when discontinued from school in favor of cultural practices.

Since the pastoral communities require significant land resources to graze their livestock, their villages are constructed far apart from each other. As a result one school must serve several villages typically within a 15-20 km radius. There are no cars, buses, horses or even bicycles available for children, so they must walk this long distance. Many girls are denied education opportunities solely because of parental concerns for their safety during these long walks.

Even for those who make it to school the long walks undermine education. Not surprisingly teachers report that children who have spent 2-5 hours walking in the morning, without any meal are tired and the ability to concentrate is impaired. It is often late when children arrive home after such long walks and they are still required to do the family chores. Even if they still have the

desire and energy to study after they are finished with their responsibilities at home, it is dark and there is no electricity or artificial light for use during their studies.

Okumu (1995), points out that both in Kwale and Nairobi, respondents of situation analysis survey, gave poverty as the most important factor for students dropping out of school (33 % and 64 % respectively). In Nairobi 42 percent of the respondents indicated that they would send their son to school in case of economic crunch in contrast to only 8 percent when decisively stated they would prefer to send their daughters. Report by MOE (2007) indicates that 58% of the Kenyan population is living below the poverty line. This however leads to inability of the poor to meet education cost for their children. Consequently, this becomes a barrier to the education for girls who withdraw from school to engage in domestic work, a factor which was determined by the study.

Murugi, (2008), indicated that over one million children are out of school in Kenya due to poor backgrounds. Some have been forced to drop out of school to earn a living for their families due to rising poverty. This is worsened by post election violence. In the Republic of Kenya Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET) and Koech reports, it is evident that child labour keeps children out from school (Republic of Kenya, 1989). The labour engaged by the children depends on the geographical region for example touting, fishmongers, and beach boys, caring for younger siblings, picking tea or coffee (Reche, 1982).

Adu (2007), say that some young children from poor families are kept out of school because their families need additional income that they may generate. Some families are so poor such that they cannot afford to hire labour. Hence, such families may decide to use their children as laborers. However this influence both boys' and girls' 'participation in education depending on the family status. It was also observe that child labour was rampant in miraa, tea and coffee growing areas in Meru, Embu and Meru North. Lack of economic alternatives in the labour market is a factor that influences girls to drop-out of school prematurely. Many girls perceive marriage as an escape from family poverty (Wamahiu, Opondo & Nyagah, 1992).

In many countries some pupils are responsible for covering some of their educational costs particularly in rural poor families. For young girls in primary schools, the responsibility for

covering their educational costs often leads to sexual relationships with older men who are willing to exchange sexual favours with financial support. Such relationships carry the risk of teenage pregnancy which deters their schooling (Chepchieng & Kiboss, 2004; World Bank, 1995).

Wanjiru, (2007), observed that, girls sometimes offer to go and work as house helps so as to raise money for their brothers' education. Furthermore the education in Kenya fails to address the special circumstances of working children. It should also be noted that with the subsidized secondary education, still parents have a responsibility of providing the students with learning materials and other resources (MOE, 2008). Depending on the family financial level, the education of girls from poor households is disadvantaged. In those cultures where they believe it is wiser to invest in education for boys than girls, the later drop from school (Wamahiu, Opondo & Nyaga, 1992).

Brock and Comish, (1997), found out that, together with the fundamental socio-cultural bias in favour of males, the economic factor, especially in terms of grinding poverty and hunger, is probably the most influential in adversely affecting female participation in education, especially in rural areas. In such harsh economic circumstances, both direct and hidden costs to a family of sending daughters to school are perceived by parents to be prohibitive in terms of the educational provision as well as the loss of vital help at home and on the land. In most cases the contribution of females is unpaid and they may have little or no experience of the handling of money which further reduces their status and power, but increases their vulnerability. Because of the patriarchal predominance, investment in a girl's schooling is wasteful since it benefits the family into which a girl marries rather than her own. In the more privileged classes investment in the education of females may be an advantage in 'marrying well'. This further increases the urban/rural gap. Vocational education which might relate to employment prospects, is everywhere weak and under-valued, but especially so in respect of the interests of girls. The inability of some countries to resource their schools and even to pay their teachers regularly, lead to low morale, teacher absenteeism and parental disenchantment.

Bayisenge (2009) observed that, education itself can be a deterrent to female participation in schooling. Difficulties of accessibility, lack of resources, low teacher quality and morale is widespread. In particular the lack of female primary teachers in rural areas is a real problem. Parents are, in some countries, very reluctant to send daughters to school if there is no female teacher, the facilities for the accommodation and security of such teachers are usually absent or inadequate. The organization of schooling in terms of the daily and seasonal imperatives of local economies usually renders it dysfunctional, and the curriculum is often unattractive in instrumental terms. At secondary level, in addition, there is a considerable need for more single-sex (girls) schools, some with secure boarding facilities and scholarship schemes to enable participation.

Republic of Kenya (1999), Report on the Commission of Inquiry into Education System in Kenya, noted that gender disparity continues to persist in certain areas and that there is persistent constraints that continue to hinder girls from getting education. Girls in marginalized areas and with special needs remain disadvantaged. The findings of the study established that family socio-economic background influence girls' participation in education in Kuria district.

2.7 Importance of Counseling in Schools

Kenya Institute of Education (2003) noted that the major task of Guidance and Counseling unit is to deal with problems of psychological maladjustment of students in school and run seminars for teachers on vocational guidance. Recommendations on the provision of these services in learning institutions have been given in various government reports and policy documents since Kenya's independence in 1963. Some of these documents, which include development plans, policy papers, education commissions' reports and sessional papers, highlighted various issues. Republic of Kenya (1976), Report on Committee on Educational Objective and policies, recommended that all teachers be trained in work and be required to do it as one of the normal duties. In- service courses were to be mounted for practicing teachers. Adequate time was to be provided for this and the program has to be integrated with other topics like career, ethics, human relations, family life and sex education. It also observes that the totality of the growth and development of youth depends on education to ensure that they fit well in the society. The report

states that to be of use such should be based on the values of society. It is by learning and accepting the values of societies that students will be deemed disciplined.

Republic of Kenya (1988), The Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond, recommended that youth in secondary schools should assist them develop high attitude towards discipline and management of time. This is very important, as disciplined students will not waste their time in doing unnecessary things. Disciplined students will do the right thing at the right time and will not engage in anti social behavior. Republic of Kenya (1992), Report on National Conference on Education For all (EFA) Commission, went round the country inquiring on matters of education; it regrettably noted concerning that the unit that was once vibrant is no longer as effective as it used to be. Most of the professionally qualified personnel had retired or been deployed to other sections. The report indicated that institutional and field staff had nowhere to seek necessary advice to help them carry out effectively. The government has been making an effort to implement the recommendations from past education reports and commissions on but still discipline problems are experienced in most secondary schools.

Colter (1973), asserted that educational guidance aims at defining and delineating these areas of academic proficiency that will have a major impact on further education and on preparation for work and non-work activities. Identification of areas of academic weakness is necessary in order to minimize their effect on future life choices or to plan a programmed of remediation, if proficiency in those areas appears necessary to a possible future choice. Tolbert (1972) documented that the role of the counselor is to guide students to stiff competition for higher grades in schools. Mutie and Ndambuki (1999), lists components of educational guidance as study skills, time-tabling, note-taking, note making and library use. Educational guidance is based on the understanding that the school is responsible for helping individuals to be aware of their capabilities and develop them to their fullest extent and to locate higher educational and training opportunities by providing the necessary advice and information.

MOE (2007) observed that, the challenges to girls' education in Kenya are not only many and varied but also vary in severity; some of which are stated: Early/ forced marriage, FGM,

parental and societal attitude, sex roles, and family socio-economic background among factors. An effective approach to monitoring participation requires the adoption of a gender lens. Gender in education formalizes the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders whether directly or indirectly in the education sector, and is in turn remarkably to eliminate all gender disparity.

Access to education for girls remains a challenge in Kuria district due to poverty, retrogressive cultural practices such as FGM, early marriages and a general negative attitude towards girls' education. We seek to address these causes to ensure gender equality in education both as a right and as a way of pulling girls out of poverty. This programme creatively works towards eliminating the root causes of inequalities in access to education by the girl child top being campaigns against FGM. Lobbying all stakeholders and advocate for an increase in the number of girl child accessing quality education and by addressing the root challenges that face women in education.

Women's participation in leadership has been minimal due to among others negative cultural practices, beliefs, low levels of education, electoral violence, lack of economic powered, apathy and gender insensitive political parties. It is important to enhance the participation of women in leadership by increasing their number, enhancing their potential and building capacities of general women community in demanding for accountability in governance institutions. It mobilizes community through paralegals to respond to women's rights violations and monitors their rights at community level, while lobbying government to promote their rights. We seek to increase the participation of women in leadership and governance in Kuria district.

2.8. Theoretical Framework.

This study was guided by Social Learning Theory and Cultural Lag Theory.

2.8.1 Social Learning Theory

Bandura (1986), developed social learning theory which emphasized on the importance of observing and modeling what other people do. Much learning occurs in the social context. He focused much of his work on modeling, a process which an individual learns new ideas and behavior by watching other people. Thus other people function as models and present the behavior to be imitated. Learners surrounded by positive models have the opportunity to learn a lot of positive behavior. Learners surrounded by models who have negative influence may find it

difficult to learn certain skills. Social learning theory guides the peoples' behavior so that it is in accordance to the norms, values and beliefs of the society, thus enabling them to adjust successfully. Behavior is picked consciously and unconsciously by observing the consequences the others receive for performance.

Kuria District PRSP (2004) exposed that, in Kuria district, girls learn from the experiences of others. If the behavior is positive then the behavior is likely to be imitated unlike when the results are negative. The girls interact with the members of the society through socialization transmitting to them all the accumulated experiences to shape them to fit in the community, they acquire most of the social concepts and behavior by observing models in their daily lives. The main models to girls in Kuria district are those close or important to them. Girls are likely to model after their parents, teachers, caregivers and peers. Many girls fear to be associated with rebellion against cultural demands and therefore choose to comply at the expense of their education. The study revealed that the above association influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Figure 1 describes the Social Learning Theory as applicable to the Kuria girl-child condition.

2.8.2 Cultural Lag Theory

The study was based on Ogburn's (1964), Cultural Lag Theory, as cited by Orodho, (2004). The proponent of the theory argues that within the society, change takes place in the material culture and that adaptive non-material culture changes extremely slowly in spite of changes elsewhere. Different rates of change in material and non-material part of culture account for cultural lag. In this sense, Ogburn , (1964), conceptualizes cultural lags as the failure of ideas, attitudes, aspects as institution and practices to keep pace with changes in the material culture. In Kuria the girl-child finds herself caught up in a web of non-adaptability to non-material cultural change. The study revealed that cultural lag is a major influence in girls' participation in education at secondary school level. Figure 1, describes the Cultural Lag Theory as applicable to the Kuria girl-child condition.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 indicates that cultural practices influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. However, there are extraneous variables that influence both the independent and dependent variables as shown in figure 1.

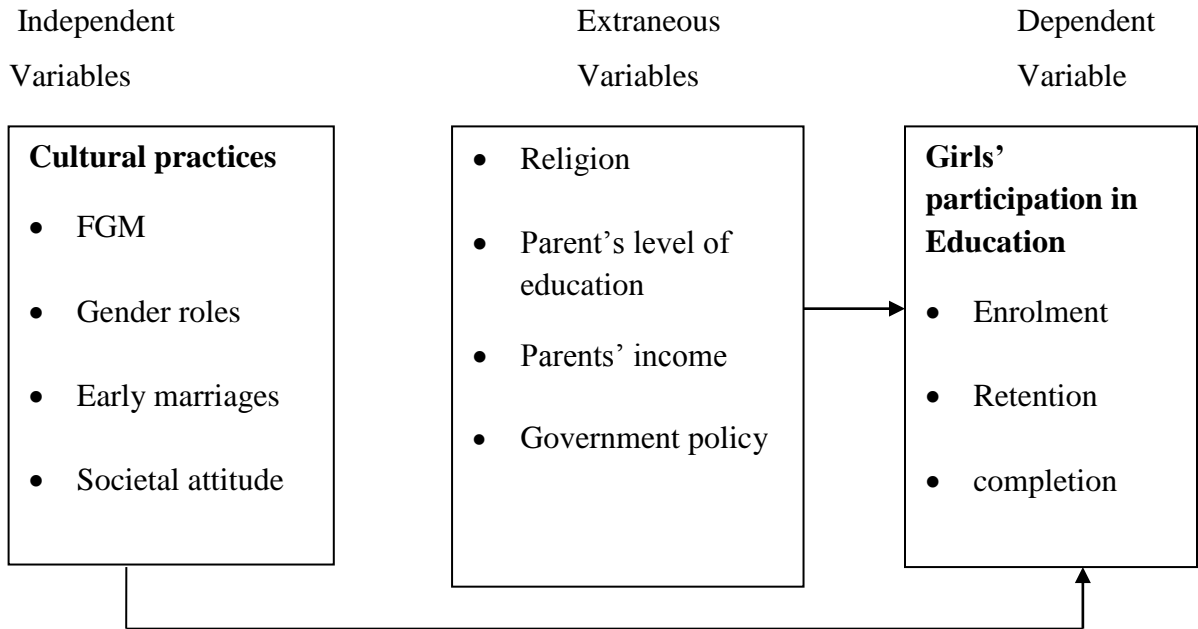


Figure 1: Influence of Selected Cultural Practices on Girls' Participation in Education.

The independent variables, which include FGM, gender roles, early marriages, societal attitude influence the dependent variables such as enrolment, retention, and completion. However, the extraneous variables which include, religion, parents' level of education and income, and Government Policy, diminish the influence of the independent variables on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on research methodology and the procedures to collect the required information for the study problem. Research methodology described research design, population of study, sampling procedures and sample size, instrumentation, reliability and validity, data collection, data analysis, references and appendices.

3.2 Research Design

This study utilized descriptive survey design to obtain information concerning the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at secondary school level in Kuria district, Nyanza Province of Kenya. Kombo and Tromp, (2006), observed that the purpose of the descriptive survey design is the description of the state of affairs, as it exists. The study adopted descriptive survey, which refers to a method that is used to collect detailed description of the existing phenomenon, with the inherent aim of employing data to justify the current conditions and practices to make more intelligent plans for improving them. In this study, the researcher intended to investigate events without exaggeration of the variables in order to obtain the correct information based on the objectives. The study investigated the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at secondary school level. The survey and documentary methods of data collection were used to examine key areas such as enrolment, retention, and completion trends. There was no manipulation of variables of the study.

3.3 Location of the Study

This study was conducted in Kuria district in Nyanza province of Kenya. Kuria borders the Republic of Tanzania to the South, trans-Mara district to the North East and Migori district to the North West. Kuria is a district with five administrative divisions namely, Ntimaru, Kegonga, Kehancha, Maberu and Masaba. The total area of the district is 572 Km². The study was conducted in three girls' public secondary schools in the district. The area is a suitable representation of other districts such as, Suba, Migori, Transmara and Kisii in the country, which are influenced by the selected cultural practices. Data was collected from the sampled girls' secondary schools from the districts.

3.4 Population of the Study

The population of the study was confined to three girls' public secondary schools, with learners in forms two and three. This population was ideal for providing the sample because, it is at this level when girls discontinue education at secondary school level due to factors such as early marriages, Female Genital Mutilation, gender roles, family and societal attitude towards girl child education. Some of them drop out of school due to pregnancy and inadequate parental supervision. The distribution of population per school by class for the study is shown in Table 1.

Table 1:

Distribution of population per School by class

Girls secondary schools	No of students in Form 2	No of students in Form 3	Total
Nyabohanse	69	38	107
Nyaroha	60	46	106
Mabera	68	39	107
Total	197	123	320

Source: District Education officer, Kuria district, (2011).

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Kombo and Tromp, (2006), pointed out that sampling is the act, process of selecting a suitable sample or representative part of a population for determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. The way in which a researcher selects subjects for the study will determine how one is able to generalize the results of the study. The study targeted 320 girls drawn from three public girls' secondary schools specifically from forms 2 and 3. Simple Random Technique was employed to select a sample of 175 for the study. The table for determining the sample size as suggested by Kathuri and Pals, (1993), was used in the study.

Table 2:

Distribution of respondents per school

Girls secondary schools	No of students in Form 2	in	No of students in Form 3	Total
Nyabohanse	37		21	58
Nyaroha	32		26	58
Mabera	37		22	59
Total	106		69	175

3.6 Instrumentation

The study involved the use of a questionnaire to collect information from the students. The construction of the questionnaire was guided by the objectives, research questions; the literature review (Orodho, 2004). The instrument was used to collect information on the influence of female genital mutilation, early marriages, sex roles, and family societal attitude on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. A questionnaire was preferred because the respondents were able to read, understand and interpret the instructions provided. The tool was preferred because it ensured confidentiality on the part of respondents.

3.6.1 Validity of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), defined validity as the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. The researcher came up with questionnaire in line with the objectives of the study. The research supervisors of Egerton University established the content validity of the instruments before they were administered. Piloting was done in a purposively selected girls' secondary school identical to the ones used in the study from the same district. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 58 respondents for piloting. The respondents had the same characteristics with those included in the actual research. Piloting was essential because it took into account any deficiencies such as, insufficient space for responses and vague questions for modification.

3.6.2 Reliability of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) noted that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. Reliability of the instrument was established by using the Cronbach's alpha, which was used to determine the internal consistency of the items. This method employed the use of a single administration of the instruments, thus it yielded greater internal consistency reliability. The reliability of the instrument was 0.775. This was at 0.075 within the recommended threshold.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought research permit from the National Council for Science and Technology, Nairobi. The researcher made an appointment to visit the District Education Officer for Kuria, and selected schools in order to develop rapport with the schools' administration, concerning the intended data collection in their schools. On the agreed date, the researcher collected data from students, on the influence of FGM, early marriages, sex roles, societal attitude on girls' participation in education. Data on the school enrolment, retention, and completion trends was obtained from the secondary schools' head teachers and the D.E.O. The researcher administered the questionnaire in person.

3.8 Data Analysis

The selected factors that influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level were grouped in various categories based on female genital mutilation, gender roles, societal attitude and early marriages. Descriptive statistics which entails the use of frequencies and percentages were utilized. Analysis of data was also done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences, (SPSS) for windows version 18. Statistical Package of Social Sciences was preferred for the study because it was more accessible and the documents produced by the program are easy to interpret.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis, results and discussions of the collected data based on research objectives and the research questions in the study. The areas includes, demographic information of the respondents, influence of FGM , gender roles, societal attitude, and early marriage on participation of girls in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme for windows version 18 was used to analyze the results. The results were presented by use of frequencies, percentages; cross tabulation.

4.2 Demographic Information on the Respondents

This information is based on the background of the respondents on the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. Out of the targeted population of 320 respondents, a sample size of 175 girls participated in the study. Simple random technique was used to select 106 girls from form 2 and 69 girls from form 3 for the study from the three schools of study.

4.3. Influence of Female Genital Mutilation on Girls' Participation in Education

This section was to determine the influence of FGM on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The respondents were asked to respond to the questionnaire by indicating their levels of agreement as per the Likert scale's levels of intensities: Strongly agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Disagree, (D), Strongly Disagree, (SD), Uncertain, (U). The level indicated in this study showed the extent to which the factor responded to has influenced the girls' participation in education at the secondary school level cycle.

Table 3:
Influence of FGM on girls' participation in education

	SA		A		D		SD		U		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Girls take no corrections	54	30.9	68	38.9	29	16.6	20	11.4	4	2.3	175	100
Leads to school dropout	51	29.1	80	45.7	20	11.4	21	12.0	3	1.7	175	100
Initiated girls opt for marriage	44	25.1	73	41.7	37	21.1	13	7.4	8	4.6	175	100
Initiated girls can get married	52	29.7	78	44.6	23	13.1	16	9.1	6	3.4	175	100

The results indicated that, 69.8% of the respondents strongly agreed (SA) and agreed (A) that after female genital mutilation girls feel mature to take correction. UNICEF (1992) observed that many women believed that to be a good wife one must undergo FGM to be clean and proper for marriage. Furthermore, the operation is done to reduce sexual desires and to maintain virginity until marriage. FAWE, (1996), reported that education for girls after initiation rite is not favorable. Many girls feel mature to take correction, they are treated as adults, and this lowers their desire for school which is perceived as an institution for children.

Results of the research revealed that 74.8% of the respondents strongly agreed (SA) and agreed (A) that after female genital mutilation; girls opt for marriage at the expense of schooling. Bendera, (1998), noted that initiation ceremonies are a disruptive force that pulls girls out of their studies. This is because many girls are treated as adults, and this lowers their aspiration for schooling and their focus is marriage. Furthermore, there is the fear of missing a husband once educated, since many African men are suspicious of educated women. It is very clear that girls remain with the option of dropping out of secondary education cycle in favor of marriage. However it is important to note that, regardless of the cultural demands there are other intervening factors that have affected their cultural stand such as the religion and the parents' level of education, whereby 28% strongly agreed and disagreed with the option that after initiation girls drop out of school in favour of marriage.

Female genital mutilation has been a top priority for United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for almost three decades. As early as 1952, the U.N. Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution condemning the practice. International momentum against the practice gained focus in 1958, the Economic and Social Council invited the World Health Organization to study the persistence of customs subjecting girls to ritual operations. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women denounced the practice, and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the child identified female genital mutilation as a harmful traditional practice. According to the demographic and Health Surveys Program, a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development to assist in undertaking medical and reproductive health surveys, FGM affects 130 million women in twenty-eight African countries. Rather than diminishing as countries modernize, FGM is expanding.

Oxfam (2005) noted that, girl's completion rates are still very low in most third world countries. The transition rates from primary to secondary school has never gone beyond 50 %, even though 80 % of all pupils who sit for exams pass, only 50% get places at secondary or technical schools. The fear of being labeled either a racist or cultural imperialist has deterred many people from actively challenging this almost taboo subject. There is a possibility to argue that FGM is a ritualized violence; it is a violation of women's and children's rights and an attack on natural sexuality and bodily integrity. Like all other forms of gender based abuse and discrimination, they are therefore unacceptable. The reluctance to interfere with other cultures, voice concern or to take a stand is simply colluding with its perpetuation and putting thousands more innocent women and children around the world at risk. Therefore, participation in secondary school education is still a challenge for many girls in Kuria district.

Kuria District PRSP (2004) noted that, access to education for girls remains a challenge in Kuria district due to retrogressive cultural practice such as FGM. Girls undergo circumcision, feel mature for marriage and do not go back to school when the new term begins leading to a high drop-out rate. Girls are sensitized to seek refuge in the counseling centers until the end of the traditional ceremonies. Further the report praised the local police for their support for legal action taken against some reported cases of forced circumcision and marriages. Initiation is a rite of passage and after the exercise one graduates into adulthood and this makes most girls feel

mature to make their own decisions. Most of them become unruly and cannot listen to any counsel. They drop out of school at the expense of retention and completion of their education cycles at the secondary school.

The persistence of FGM practices stemmed from collective and social pressures exerted from the family. After the process of circumcision girls feel that they have been moved from childhood to adulthood and they are mature enough to take care of and raise a family. This makes most of them drop out of school in favor of marriage. Kuria district report (2004), found out that without considering education, a Kuria girl should be married at the age of 15 years old. This is the time when she starts her adolescence stage. She is married off at this age so that her parents do not have to get involved in a hectic time for trying to control her during puberty. The husband who has booked her during her birth is then called to take her away and teach her how to behave like a wife and not like an adolescent girl.

FGM is known to have a wide range of psychological and psychosomatic disorders. Kiptiony (2008), observed that girls may experience interferences in sleep patterns and cognition. Abor, (2006), in his study revealed that FGM affects the girls' well-being due to FGM trauma resulting from the pain undergone. With such the girls may lack attention and focus for academic performances and eventually drop out of school in favour of marriage. Ondiek (2012), noted that alternative rites of passage have been introduced in Kuria district, but this information is yet to reach the whole community. NGO's and Community Based Care are offering rites of passage and have established safe houses where girls escaping FGM are sheltered and offered an alternative rite of passage besides continuing with education to completion.

4.4 Influence of Gender roles on Girls Participation in Education

This section was to determine the influence of gender roles on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The respondents were asked to respond to the questionnaire by indicating their levels of agreement as per the Likert scale's levels of intensities: Strongly agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Disagree, (D), Strongly Disagree, (SD), Uncertain, (U). The level indicated in this study showed the extent to which the factor responded to has influenced the girls' participation in education at the secondary school level cycle.

Table 4:

Influence of Gender roles on Girls' Participation in Education

	SA		A		D		SD		U		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Domestic chores	56	33.1	63	37.3	24	14.2	25	14.1	1	0.6	169	100
Girls' submission	81	47.9	50	29.6	14	8.3	16	9.5	8	4.7	169	100
Girls' involvement	71	42.0	34	20.1	26	15.4	28	16.6	10	5.9	169	100
Lack of mentors	37	22.3	56	33.7	31	18.7	22	13.3	20	12.0	166	100

The results showed that 70.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that domestic chores at home do not allow girls to have time to study that is 33.1% and 37.3% respectively. The gender role stereotypes that schools help to reproduce include the notion that girls are caring, nurturing, quiet, helpful, and considerate of others and place others' needs before their own. Academically girls' achievements are attributed to their hard work, whereas successful boys are considered naturally gifted. In contrast, underachieving male students are considered lazy, whereas underachieving girls are regarded as not capable. Boys are viewed as rational, logical, unemotional, and strong and are also expected to be outgoing, smart and naturally academically talented. Therefore in schools, gender role stereotypes attribute males' academic success to innate intelligence and girls' achievements to hard work. Moreover, these gender differences are explained through biological differences without any consideration of the impact of social environment on students' learning, achievement, motivation and attitudes.

David and Kanyuka (1992), noted that, cultural arrangement which puts a man as the head of the family complicates the matter more by giving him power to distribute chores and approve any other activity, schooling inclusive. Girls have to work for long hours like their mothers unlike boys with less gender roles; girls are socialized into appropriate gender roles at their early stages of growth and development. These gender roles include cooking, fetching water, taking care of siblings, farm work, working during funerals, and weddings. Some of these activities encourage absenteeism from school in favor of community's demands.

African Press International (2008), observed that time is inefficiently used by many girls at school and at home. At home, time needed for homework and studies is used for household chores, playing, chatting and visiting friends. In school, while boys may spend the hours outside class time discussing academic challenges, girls may be found in clusters gossiping.

In Kuria district women may not contribute when it comes to matters of retention and completion of education cycles of their daughters. Despite the increase in women in the labor force since the mid 1900's traditional gender roles are still prevalent in the world. Women are usually expected to put educational and career goals on hold in order to raise children, while their husbands work. However, there are women who choose to work as well as fulfill their gender roles and taking care of the children.

The result indicated 77.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that, submission to the male authority influence their participation in education. Ballara, (1992), observed that in African countries where female education seemed to threaten male authority, the solution was to keep girls' education lower in quality and quantity than that of the boys. Lavy, (1992), established that boys had a poor opinion about girls and by the age of 5 and 6 years they learnt to attribute power and prestige to the male role.

Lack of educated role models influence girls' participation in education. The results show that 56% of the respondents strongly agreed (SA) and agreed (A) that is 22.3% and 33.7% respectively, that lack of role models has a negative influence on girls' participation in education. This result indicated that, there was significant association between lack of role models and girls' participation in education at the secondary school level. However some girls selected disagreed (D) and strongly agreed (SD), to show the community is changing on its stand on selected cultural practices.

Kuria district PRSP, (2004), identified that, in Kuria district, girls learn from the experiences of others. The girls interact with the members of the society through socialization transmitting to them all the accumulated experiences to shape them to fit in community, they acquire most of the social concepts and behavior by observing models in their daily lives. The main models to girls are those close or important to them. Girls surrounded by models who have negative influence on participation in education may find it difficult to learn certain skills. Furthermore the report

revealed that many girls with formal education are likely to get married outside the community. Many girls fear to be associated with rebellion against cultural demands and therefore choose to comply at the expense of their education.

Girls in Kuria district are taught to engage in wage activities like weaving, basketry, pottery and farming to fetch money for their family. Some of them do commercial labour to get money. Some are sent to the market to sell goodies like vegetables, groundnuts and yellow bananas to get money for their families. Some miss classes to accompany their mothers to people's farms to dig or weed to get money. Many girls spend a lot of their time picking tobacco which is the cash crop in this area. They can also pick tobacco on other peoples farms to be paid and this hinders their concentration on studies and with time they give up on education. There are limited female positive role models in academic fields, especially in careers, in many communities in the rural areas. Role models in villages mainly do simple jobs e.g. cooking and serving food, selling in the market or by the road side, etc. and have a great influence on the young girls in the community who believe that these women, with no formal education, earn money and are well off. They therefore do not see the need or importance of a formal education.

4.5 Influence of Societal attitude on girls' participation in education

This section was to determine the influence of societal attitude on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The respondents were asked to respond to the questionnaire by indicating their levels of agreement as per the Likert scale's levels of intensities: Strongly agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Disagree, (D), Strongly Disagree, (SD), Uncertain, (U). The level indicated in this study showed the extent to which the factor responded to has influenced the girls' participation in education at the secondary school level cycle.

Table 5:

Influence of societal attitude on girls' participation in education

	SA		A		D		SD		U		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Preference for boys' education	51	29.1	63	36.0	22	12.6	32	18.3	7	4.0	175	100
Boys are more intelligent	29	16.7	73	42.0	22	12.6	25	14.4	23	13.1	175	100
Lack of role models	20	11.4	48	27.4	36	20.6	64	36.6	6	3.4	175	100
Empowering girls	20	15.6	65	37.6	18	10.4	44	25.4	19	11.1	173	100
Educated girls benefit husbands	28	16.6	48	27.4	16	9.1	79	45.1	3	1.7	175	100

Societal attitude influence girls' education, 65.1% of the girls strongly agreed and agreed that the society prefer educating boys to girls. Bala (2006), asserted that son preference denies the girl child good health, education, and economic opportunities, which are likely to benefit the boy child. Moreover, many of the poor and large families prefer educating boys to girls, they believe that boys will provide continuity headship of the family property and inheritance.

KAACR, (2003), noted that girls are viewed as valueless, inferior and vessels for obtaining wealth and serving the husband and the children. It is believed that once a girl is educated, she will only benefit her husband's family, thus education for girls is a waste of family's resources. Furthermore, many parents may marry off their daughters in order to provide economic support in terms of bride wealth. Oloo (2003), found out that, the inability of families to meet the school expenses victimizes majority of girls. In times of economic hardships parents pull girls out of school first in favour of the boys' education. Arai and Tabata, (2006), a study carried in Pakistan indicated that parity in education is attributed to a large extend to the society and parents' attitude against girls.

Ballara, (1992), noted that, many parents believe that education would make their daughters less amenable to customs hence their social stem. Furthermore, parents believe that boys are more intelligent than girls who are also vulnerable to school dropout due to pregnancy. Educations

seem to give women a better earning prospect and would change their economic status. This fact sometimes gives rise to family tension, ambitious attitude, in nature because culture dictates that women should depend on men.

However 30% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that parents prefer educating boys to girls. This indicates that, there are other intervening factors which have challenged the society to provide education to both girls and boys. Extraneous factors include government policy, parents' exposure to education, among others. MOE, (2007), on gender policy in education proposed equality in the provision of education to all, regardless of their gender. Some of the parents from the Kuria community have changed their stand on selected cultural practices.

Francis, (2000), found out that, cultural stereotypes are engrained in both men and women and these stereotypes are a possible explanation for gender inequality and the resulting gendered wage disparity. Women have traditionally been viewed as being caring and nurturing and are designated to occupations which require such skills. While these skills are culturally valued, they were typically associated with domesticity, so occupations requiring these same skills are not economically valued. Men have traditionally been viewed as the breadwinner or the worker, so jobs held by men have been historically economically valued and occupations predominated by men continue to be economically valued and pay higher wages.

Orotho (2004), as women enter an occupation, this reduces the amount of prestige associated with the job and men subsequently leave these occupations. The entering of women into specific occupations suggests that less competent workers have begun to be hired or that the occupation is becoming deskilled. Men are reluctant to enter female-dominated occupations because of this and simply resist the entrance of women into male-dominated occupations. Most women in Kuria district do not have formal education. They dropped out of school to get married, and the young girls are surrounded by such women. They just teach them how to be good wives, mothers and work hard at home. They do not encourage the girls to study, in fact even others discourage them from continuing with studies, telling them that there are no jobs in the country, therefore they see no need to continue with studies. Kuria district has very few educated women, who are living outside that area and only comes home to visit once in a while because they are very busy

elsewhere. Therefore these girls are not close to educated older women who can mentor and model them.

MOE, (2007), documented that teen mothers can be supported through provision of life skills information. We need to offer adolescents, boys and girls, different options and one important option is dual protection, so that they can get protected against pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS. Moreover, girls need to be empowered to make the right decisions at the right time. If they really decide to have sex, they have to think about what it means and what the implications of having sex are. Women need the right information, where to get the services, what it means having a baby, and the consequences and their implications.

Kuria district PRSP,(2004),observed that it is evident that giving girls a second chance will enhance retention and completion of all cycles of education. Many men feel so insecure and inferior when their wives have white collar jobs or earn more than them. It is very hard for them to buy any idea or advice their wives give for they feel it is because of their formal education; pretending to know a lot. Most of the men fear marrying educated women because they assume they are stubborn and not easy to control. Educated women know their rights and can't allow men to mistreat them. This makes most Kuria men marry uneducated women whom they believe are humble, obedient, respectful and subject to their authority. However, when it comes to secondary education, girls are still disadvantaged. Moreover, women's employment rates are still low and seem to have further declined in recent years.

The challenges of reconciling boy and girl child education in Africa are quite numerous. The greatest challenge lies in the fact that most African societies place due regard to custom. But much of the indigenous custom does not favor the progress of a woman. Girls, in the traditional systems, are not supposed to get formal education. In Kuria district girls have been barred from attending school simply because they think girls should only be ripe for early marriage. This landmark reality is deeply constraining girl child education and there is need to scale up interventions.

4.6. Influence of Early marriage on Girls' Participation in Education

This section was to determine the influence of early marriages on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The respondents were asked to respond to the

questionnaire by indicating their levels of agreement as per the Likert scale's levels of intensities: Strongly agree, (SA), Agree, (A), Disagree, (D), Strongly Disagree, (SD), Uncertain, (U). The level indicated in this study showed the extent to which the factor responded to has influenced the girls' participation in education at the secondary school level cycle

Table 6:

Influence of early marriage and girls' participation in education

	SA		A		D		SD		U		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Girls dropout from school	91	52.9	53	30.8	17	9.9	10	5.8	1	0.6	172	100
Girls are married earlier	25	14.7	46	27.1	46	27.1	49	28.8	4	2.4	170	100
Girls kept in seclusion	25	14.6	51	29.8	49	28.7	41	24.0	5	2.9	171	100
Girls' are readmitted to school	77	45.0	59	34.5	6	3.5	16	9.4	13	7.6	171	100

It is evident that early marriage influence girls' participation in education, 83.7% Of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that early marriage lead to school dropout. Oloo, (2003), noted that it is a practice of giving away girls for marriage at early age of 11, 12, and 13, after which they are expected to start producing children. The principle reason for this practice is to preserve virginity, provide bride wealth, and raise the status of the girl's family. Early marriage was identified as critical factors that influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level. It denies them an opportunity to pursue education. In some cases where parents arrange marriage for their children, girls quit school in favour of marriage to please their parents. Girls, who get pregnant while undergoing studies, face a lot of ridicule from their fellow pupils to the extent that it will be difficult for them return to school after giving birth. Even though the government has been supportive to such girls and gives them a leeway to join schools of their choice to recover from the pregnancy stigma, this has born little success. It requires psychological intervention for any success to be realized.

Ondiek, (2010), found out that the initiated girl felt stigmatized and threatened that they would lack husbands, if they remained uninitiated. Many of them drop out of school after initiation and

for marriage. Moreover in Kuria culture there is no place for unmarried woman. He further noted that, early marriage is the most cited reason why Kuria girls drop out of school. Kuria girls are taught that FGM is the rite of passage into womanhood that accompanies puberty and an immediate precursor to marriage. Once initiated, they are ridiculed by their peers if they continue their education, since school is for children. Further escalating the pressure for early marriage is the reality that in the Kuria culture women are traditionally valued on the basis of how many children they can produce for their husbands, not by how educated or economically successful they might become. In the Kuria culture, children as young as nine years old are not allowed to stay in the same house with their father and instead sleep in separate house without supervision. Lack of supervision and ignorance makes girls highly vulnerable to pregnancy before marriage which is a disgrace and reduced bride price. Fear of premarital pregnancy is a common reason for parents to insist that their daughters leave school and marry early. Therefore it was clear from the results that early marriage is a powerful tool that interferes with girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district.

A report by the centre for the study of adolescence entitled 'the situation of young people in Kenya' released by Save the Children Sweden, (2012), found out that by the age of 19, 48 % of young women in Kenya have a first child. It was recently reported in the media that in Tanzania, studies conducted by various organizations including Haki Elimu in the past 5 years show that an average of 3600 school girls dropped out of school annually due to pregnancies. It is sad that many of these students will not be able to realize their dreams. It was also reported that, in Nachingwea, between 39 & 42 % of class VII students did not complete their primary education. While in Songea, by 2008, a total of 128 secondary school students became pregnant, and in 2009 a total of 73 students became pregnant and they had to drop out of school. The same trend can be observed across the country, taking into consideration that there are a number of unreported cases. While many countries now recognize the importance of giving adolescent mothers a second chance to continue with their education and pave a future for them, only a handful have re-entry policies in place.

Girls who may get married earlier are given a second chance to complete their education. Only 42% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. The MOE; policy proposed that in line with the EFA goals, all should be allowed to access education regardless of their status. From the

results many girls selected their responses against the resolution and the changes of the MOE but in favor of the cultural demands. MOE, (2007), observed that one of the strategies to provide education for all is to ensure implementation of the re-entry policy for school girl mothers and provide accelerated learning opportunities for school girl mothers and boys affected adversely by the socio-cultural factors. However it was noted 56% Of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that girls who may get married early should be given a second chance to continue with education.

Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization,(2002), having inspired by the declaration of Beijing Conference on women, felt the need to establish the cause for the low performance of girls in schools in the country. MYWO, set up projects to address this concerns. One of the projects was The Girl Club, in various districts such as Kuria, Marakwet and Kilifi. The organization produces monthly publications which has touched the lives of many disadvantaged girls. The organization felt the need to be involved in the challenge of improving girls' education in the country. The organization knew that if something is not done immediately to rectify the situation .Consequently the entire community would loose in the long run given the important role those women in the family, community and the nation at large. Creation of awareness has gone a long way to help girls realize the importance of girls' education.

After initiation girls are kept in seclusion and prepared for marriage. The results show that 54% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that after initiation girls are kept in seclusion and prepared for marriage. This result also shows that girls have been sensitized on the current global trends concerning changes in education system. Such documents include Gender Policy in Education, Policy document on Education for All and Children's' rights Act. Oloo, (2003), pointed out that in many societies when girls reach puberty stage, they are fattened up, groomed, adorned and kept in seclusion from school to make them attractive, so that they can be married off to the highest bidder.

The result reveals that 80% of girls strongly agreed and agreed with the study that, the system is willing to readmit the married girls to continue with their education. MOE,(2007), found out that in order to address girls' challenges at the secondary school level the ministry has implement various policies such as developing and implementing policies that can create an enabling environment to enhance girls' retention, completion and transition. MOE, advocates for girls'

education to parents and communities, sensitizing them against negative socio-cultural practices and facilitating re-entry of girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy and early marriage.

Wanjiru (2007) noted that many of re-entry policy across the continent depend on external funding. In this situation sustainability after donor withdrawal is questionable. For example, in Zambia, one education programme named Community Health and Nutrition, Gender and Education Support (CHANGES) was closed down and the girls have remained at the mercy of the school administration. A small percentage have been put on the (government) sponsorship, while a bigger percentage is struggling for school fees or dropped out completely. There are several laws that should protect young mothers' right to an education. The major problem with the law is that the Education Act in many countries has not been properly implemented.

However, re-entry of young mothers to school was one of the most important issues to address gender inequalities in education according to several donor representatives for example the Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank. The Sweden's ambassador viewed it as a strategic issue since it is related to a vulnerable group and to gender equality. The issue was considered to be important enough to render it a position of key issue in Sweden Dialogue Plan of 2009.

In Kenya for example, the government allows girls to stay in school up to the time they deliver, and resume their studies as soon as they are strong enough to continue with education. If a girl is denied this chance, then the parents or the girl can report to the nearest education ministry office and have the school compelled to re-admit her based on the Children Act or the Education Act. However, many head teachers expel girls immediately their pregnancy is discovered. Most girls lack support from parents, teachers or their classmates to challenge the expulsion. They may also feel they deserve to be punished or feel too shy to re-join their classmates. Some people blame social and cultural standards for girls' failure to resume their education after pregnancy. It has been held over the years by various communities and individuals that continuity in education for a girl terminates at the altar of pregnancy.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, the conclusions reached, recommendations and areas for further research. This study determined the influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya.

The study was based on the Social Learning Theory and Cultural Lag Theory. The sample size of the study 175 girls from three public secondary school in Kuria district. Questionnaire was used as the instrument of collecting data. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with the aid of computer programme that is, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), computer programme for windows version 18.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The summary of the findings are presented as per the objectives. From the responses provided, the study established that, the selected cultural factors influenced girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. The findings have been presented in the previous chapter of this document, and the summary is given below.

- i. The study determined that, FGM negatively influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district, Kenya. After initiation girls feel mature to take correction, this is because they are treated as adults, and this lowers their aspiration for school which is perceived as an institution for children. Initiation leads to school dropout, indeed a disruptive force that pulls girls out of their studies and provokes them to adulthood and can easily drop out of school for marriage.
- ii. This study established that gender roles negatively influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level. Girls have to work for long hours like their mothers unlike boys with less gender roles. This negatively influences their participation in education.

- iii. This study found out that societal attitude negatively influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Parents prefer educating girls to boys; they believe that boys will provide continuity headship, property and inheritance.
- iv. This study determined that early marriage negatively influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district as it leads to school dropout. Girls are given away for marriage at early age after which they are expected to start producing children, provide bride wealth and raise the status of the family.

5.3 Conclusions

- i. FGM has a negative influence on girls' participation in education. Most girls get married soon after FGM, thus terminating their education.
- ii. Results led to the conclusion that gender roles negatively influence girls' participation in education as many of them stay away from school to help the family in daily chores.
- iii. The study found out that societal attitude negatively influence education for girls as the community prefer educating boys to girls.
- iv. Early marriage is a leading factor that influences girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. The practice impacts negatively on girl child education.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the researcher makes the following recommendations;

- i. The government should enhance policies and programmes which ensure girls' participation in education at secondary school cycle.
- ii. Alternative Rites of Passage equivalent to FGM, with positive contribution should be encouraged.
- iii. Male responsibilities in the family should be included in the education of children from the early ages and special emphasis placed on discrimination against children particularly in education. The education system and other stakeholders should promote equal opportunity to males and females in undertaking domestic chores.

- iv. The schools, and community based organizations should advocate for equal opportunity on gender access to education by minimizing the cultural attitudes that give preference to boys.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Researcher recommends further research in the following areas;

- i. The study was based only in Kuria district and the results may not easily be generalized for other districts. Therefore a similar study should be carried out in other districts, to bring out the real picture focus of the study.
- ii. The study was based on public schools, which may not easily be generalized to private and special schools; therefore the same study should be conducted in private and special schools to ascertain the ideal results.
- iii. The proponents of alternative rites of passage need to focus on the selected cultural practices in the study to empower girls on how to respond to cultural demands.
- iv. The study was based on selected cultural practices, that is, FGM, gender roles, societal attitude and early marriage. Other factors such as family economic status, parents' exposure to education, religion, and distance from schools and learning environment should be investigated for better findings.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introduction Letter to the respondent

Dear respondent,

I am a student at Egerton University Pursuing Masters Degree in Guidance and Counseling and would like to conduct a study on **the influence of Selected Cultural Practices on Girls ' Participation in Education at the Secondary Level in Kuria District**. The findings of the study may provide information on ways of improving the participation of girls' in education at secondary school level. Any information you give will be very useful in determining the success of the study. Your response will be treated with confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Thank You,

Janipher A. Ocholla.

Appendix B: Questionnaire for the Student

This questionnaire has been designed to collect information on selected cultural practices that influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. All information will be treated with confidence. Please circle appropriately

Form 2 ()

Form 3 ()

Q1		The following are ways in which FGM influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Please use a scale of 1-5, with 1 being I Strongly Agree, 2 being I Agree, 3 being I Disagree, 4 being I strongly Disagree, and 5 being I Don't Know. Circle as appropriate.				
		I strongly agree	I agree	I disagree	I strongly disagree	I don't know
1	After initiation girls feel mature to take correction	1	2	3	4	5
2	Initiation leads to school dropout	1	2	3	4	5
3	After initiation girls opt for marriage	1	2	3	4	5
4	At the age of 18 an initiated girl can get married	1	2	3	4	5

Q2	What is the influence of gender roles on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district? Please use the scale of 1-5, with 1 being I Strongly Agree, 2 being I Agree, 3 being I Disagree, 4 being I Strongly Disagree, and 5 being I Don't Know. Circle as appropriate.					
		I Strongly Agree	I Agree	I Disagree	I Strongly Disagree	I Don't Know
1	Domestic chores at home do not allow girls to have time for studies after school.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Girls' submissions to male authority affect their participation in class.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Girls' involvement in production and wage activities influence their participation in education	1	2	3	4	5
4	Lack of educated role models	1	2	3	4	5

Q3		What is the influence of societal attitude on girls' participation at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Please use the scale of 1-5, with 1 being I Strongly Agree, 2 being I Agree, 3 being I Disagree, 4 being I Strongly Disagree, 5 being I Don't Know.				
		I Strongly Agree	I Agree	I Disagree	I Strongly Disagree	I Don't Know
1	Parents prefer educating boys to girls	1	2	3	4	5
2	Boys are more intelligent than girls	1	2	3	4	5
3	Lack of mentors and role models	1	2	3	4	5
4	Empowering girls economically may disadvantage the male authority	1	2	3	4	5
5	Educated girls may only benefit the husbands' family	1	2	3	4	5

Q4		What is the influence of early marriage on girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district? Please use the scale of 1-5, with 1 being I Strongly Agree, 2 being I Agree, 3 being I Disagree, 4 being I Strongly Disagree, and 5 being Uncertain. Circle as appropriate.				
		I Strongly Agree	I Agree	I Disagree	I Strongly Disagree	Uncertain
1	School dropout	1	2	3	4	5
2	Girls who may get married earlier are given a second chance to complete education	1	2	3	4	5
3	After initiation girls are kept in seclusion from school and prepared for marriage	1	2	3	4	5
4	The school system is willing to readmit the married girls to continue with their education in the institutions.	1	2	3	4	5

Q5 Religion has discouraged the following variables to improve girls 'participation in education. Tick () as appropriate.

FGM Yes () No () Gender roles Yes () No ()

Q6 Parents' income seem to influence girls' participation in education at the secondary school level in Kuria district. Tick () as appropriate.

Yes () No ()

Q7 Has the Government Policy on Free Primary education influenced girls' education at the secondary school level in Kuria district? Tick () as appropriate

Yes () No ()

Appendix C: Required Size for Randomly Chosen Sample

Table for determining needed size of a randomly chosen sample from a given finite population of N cases such that the sample proportion P will be within plus or minus 0.05 of the population proportion P with a 95 percent level of confidence.

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354

95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	800	367
130	97	650	241	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Source; Kathuri and Pals (1983)

Appendix D: Letter of Research Authorization

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349, 254-020-2673550
Mobile: 0713 788 787, 0735 404 245
Fax: 254-020-2213215
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/14/012/805**

Date: **24th May, 2013**

Janipher Amani Ocholla
Egerton University
P.O BOX 536
Njoro

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of selected cultural practices on girls' participation in education in secondary schools level in Kuria District, Kenya"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nyanza Province** for a period ending **31st December 2013**.

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Kuria District** before embarking on the research project.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. K. Rugutt'.


DR.M.K.RUGUTT, PhD, HSC
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY


Copy to:

The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer
Kuria District

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development".

Appendix E: Research Permit

<p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution Janipher Amani Ocholla Of (Address) Egerton University P.O.BOX 536 Njoro</p>	<p>Date of issue 24th May 2013 Fee received KSH.1000</p>
<p>Has been permitted to conduct research in</p>	
<p>Kuria Nyanza</p>	<p>Location District Province</p>
<p>On the topic: Influence of selected cultural Practices on girls participation in education in secondary school level in Kuria District, Kenya.</p>	
<p>For a period ending: 31st December 2014</p>	<p><i>(Signature)</i> Secretary National Council for Science and Technology</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">CONDITIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment. 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved. 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries. 5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively. 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice 	 REPUBLIC OF KENYA RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT
<p>GPK60553mt10/2011</p>	<p>(CONDITIONS—see back page)</p>