

Parents' Participation in the Boy-children's Education: A case of Class Three Children in Nyeri County, Kenya.

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Abstract

Reviewed literature indicates that parents, as the first teachers of their children, influence performance in children's education especially when fathers are positively involved. Parents are the significant others from whom children learn through observation, imitation and role modeling. Studies done in Kenya focused on parental responses in relation to education without considering that fathers' and mothers' roles are different and that their influence on children's development differs. This study, therefore, sought to establish the role of individual parents in the boy-child's education and the influence of such role in the boy-child's academic performance in class three. Objectives of the study included: finding out the extent to which parents participate in the boy-child's education and the effects of their participation on their academic performance, to investigate whether parents are aware of their roles and influence in the boy-child academic performance, to determine the factors that affect parent's participation in the boy-child's education activities and lastly to find out whether there was any significant relationship between the level of parental gender participation and academic performance of the boy-child. The study was guided by two theories: Grolnick's (2002, 2009) theory of parental involvement and Epstein's model for parental involvement in education (2002). The study might be of importance to educationists and policy makers. They can use the results to formulate strategies of involving both parents in participating in boy's education activities that influence academic performance. The study locale was Nyeri County. The study population included: the boy-child in class three their two parents and class three teachers. Stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 220 boys, 440 parents and 16 class three teachers from 13 public primary schools. Validity of the research instruments was ensured through expert evaluation and judgment on content for validation, tools covered all the study variables and answering respondents' questions to ensure internal validity. Coefficient of validity index was used to compute the ratings from experts in the department. Reliability was ensured using Cohen Kappa inter rater reliability testing. Questionnaires, interview schedules and document analysis were utilized to collect data. Qualitative data collected through interviews were categorized according to themes and discussed qualitatively. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to summarize and organize quantitative data for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Chi-square test and presented using frequency tables and charts which formed the basis for discussions. Chi-square test and odds ratio were used to establish the predictors in the boy-child academic performance. Descriptive research design was used for the study. Findings from the study revealed that parental participation but at a very low level to influence above average academic performance. Other findings revealed that fathers participated more in financial activities while mothers were active in all educational activities including financial

activities. Though mothers were more active, Fathers' influence was a major predictor in the boys' academic performance. Three factors were cited as hindrances to effective parental participation in the boy-child's performance in the area of study: income, occupation and lack of parents' awareness of their roles in academic performance other than paying school fees. The study recommended that parents should be sensitized on their roles in education of the boy-child and be encouraged to assist their children in achieving high academic standards. The schools should also have policies that systematically involve parents in academic activities

Key words: Parents' participation, Boy-Childs' education, Class three children, Nyeri County, Kenya.

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