

**THE EFFECT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SELECTED GOVERNMENT  
EDUCATION POLICIES ON GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
EDUCATION IN SAMBURU CENTRAL SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Despite the fact that primary education in Kenya is free, Samburu Central Sub-County experiences low enrolment and high rate of dropout among girls. This renders the status of girls' participation, especially in primary schools, very low. Children in Samburu Central Sub-County and especially girls do not fully participate in primary school education. This has occurred in the face of numerous past and present initiatives in terms of implementation of Government education policies to ensure that all children in Kenya access primary school education. This study, therefore sought to investigate the extent to which selected implemented government education policies have impacted on girls' participation in primary school education in Samburu Central Sub-County. The study used survey research design. This study was based on the muted group, the social learning and perennialism theories. The study targeted 70 primary school headteachers and 515 assistant teachers in Samburu Central Sub-County. Data were collected from a sample of 21 head teachers and 155 teachers using a self-delivered questionnaire. Data were analysed using frequency counts, means and percentages. This was accomplished through Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) computer programme version 11.5 for windows. The study revealed that girls drop out rate was higher than that of boys between 2003 and 2011. The same scenario was observed with regard to completion rates by pupils' gender. It also emerged that policy initiatives that had the higher impact on girls participation rate were the free primary education programme and school feeding programme. Additionally, the major risk factors in regard to girls' participation and completion rates were teenage pregnancy, forced marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM) and household poverty. The study recommends that to enhance girls participation rate in primary schools in the study area, there is a need to increase the number of low-cost primary schools in addition to stamping out negative cultural practices specifically FGM and early marriages. The study further recommends a replication of the current investigation in other arid and semi-arid regions with a view to determining whether similar findings will be generated. The study may assist the government and stakeholders in Samburu Central Sub-County to identify ways in which girls' participation in primary education can be enhanced in the county.