FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TREND OF GIRLS IN MIXED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LUGARI DISTRICT, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to look into factors influencing academic performance trend of girls in mixed schools in Lugari district. The central problem of this study was that despite the fact that girls and boys in mixed schools are admitted and learn under the same circumstances, the girls tend to retrogress academically in subsequent classes. The study was based on Kaufman's (1977) theory of needs assessment, an approach that involves identifying and justifying gaps in results, and placing the gaps in prioritized order for attention. Analyzing needs provides a determination of where a need is coming from and provides clues to how the need may be reduced or eliminated. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. It involved 90 form four girls in mixed schools selected from the three divisions of Lugari district. Form four students of the selected schools were selected purposively basing on only those who had been in the school since form one. Other respondents were head teachers and teachers. The researcher collected data from the field using questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationships between variables in the study. The study established that there is a significant relationship between students' entry behaviour and subsequent performance. Boy – girl relationships were found to be significantly related to the student academic performance; and the existence of such relationships was noted by teachers and students. Curriculum content was found to be a significant predictor of the student academic performance. The forms of parental support significantly related to student academic performance are purchasing of teaching and learning resources and the parental support of tours and trips. The study recommended inclusion of admission interviews to be able to predict girls academic performance, strengthening of guidance and counseling as well as parental support which were found to be important in improving girls academic performance. It is envisaged that the findings of the study will be useful to policy makers; education officers, head teachers and parents to create an enabling environment where girls can realize their full academic potential.