



East African Journal of Education Studies

eajes.eanso.org

Volume 5, Issue 3, 2022

Print ISSN: 2707-3939 | Online ISSN: 2707-3947

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-3947>

ENSO

EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality

Festus Ndile^{1*}

¹St Augustine University of Tanzania, P. O. Box 1887, Morogoro, Tanzania.

*Author for Correspondence Email: festus115ndile@gmail.com

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.5.3.893>

Date Published: **ABSTRACT**

16 October 2022

Keywords:

Socio-Cultural
Factors,
Female
Completion,
Ordinary
Secondary
Education,
Morogoro
Municipality.

This study sought to investigate the socio-cultural factors and their effects on girls' completion of o-level education in community schools in Morogoro Municipality. The mixed research approach and descriptive survey research design were used. Sample size of this study was 222 respondents which included 135 ordinary teachers, 3 heads of schools, 30 parents, and 54 form four female students. Simple random sampling techniques were used in the selection of ordinary teachers, while purposive sampling technique were used in the selection of heads of schools, parents, and form four female students. Data collection methods were questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed by descriptive statistics while qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis. Findings of the study revealed that, socio-cultural factors that affect girls' academic performance negatively include parental investment, household work, preference of family to educate boys rather than girls, failure to buy basic needs, and traditional initiation rites. The study recommends that the Government of Tanzania should ensure that, the 2014 Education Policy is effectively implemented, the Government and other educational stakeholders should build more boarding schools and develop existing ones as to accommodate girls, and the Government should enroll back girls who dropped out of school because of pregnancies.

APA CITATION

Ndile, F. (2022). Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 5(3), 137-145. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.5.3.893>.

CHICAGO CITATION

Ndile, Festus. 2022. "Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality". *East African Journal of Education Studies* 5 (3), 137-145. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.5.3.893>.

HARVARD CITATION

Ndile, F. (2022) "Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality", *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 5(3), pp. 137-145. doi: 10.37284/eajes.5.3.893.

IEEE CITATION

F. Ndile. "Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality", *EAJES*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 137-145, Oct. 2022.

MLA CITATION

Ndile, Festus. "Assessment of Socio-Cultural Factors and their Effects on Girls' Completion in Community Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality". *East African Journal of Education Studies*, Vol. 5, no. 3, Oct. 2022, pp. 137-145, doi:10.37284/eajes.5.3.893

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of socio-cultural factors which hinders girls from completing the ordinary level of secondary school can be viewed by different researchers from different parts of the world. Globally, different researchers have discussed socio-cultural factors contributing to girls' failure to complete secondary school education. In Saudi Arabia, girls marry and drop out of secondary school before they reach the age of 16 due to socio-cultural factors of the Arab community such as local norms, forced marriage, and traditions social beliefs (UNDP, 2008). Once such girls drop out from schools, they assume married and family duties immediately and thus their chances of being employed are reduced. Furthermore, such girls lack skills such as self-esteem and decision making that can be used in dealing with different difficulties in society. In other case, girls' school dropouts cost the nation of Saudi Arabia money and resources that are invested in education.

According to Human Rights Watch (2017) millions of pregnant and married adolescent girls across many African countries are being denied their education because of socio-cultural factors and discriminatory policies and practices. For instance 18 million girls are out of primary schools in sub-Saharan Africa while 31 million of them out of secondary education. Early marriages and teenage pregnancies are major factors accelerated by socio-cultural factors in a particular country in sub-Saharan countries whereas between 30% and 51% of girls give birth before they are 18 years. In addition to that, cultural or religious factors regularly stigmatise unmarried and pregnant girls which cause many pregnant girls to be forced into early marriages.

In Uganda, boys are given high priority rather girls due to various reasons such as one of these

reasons is that during times of hardship some parents enjoy economic benefits once their girls are married unlike when they attend to schools (Bayisenge, 2011). World Bank (2015) pointed out women are more exposed in gender imbalance between men and women. It is unfortunate that such imbalances occurs at various levels for instance at family, community and national

Since Tanzania got her independence in 1961, various acts and policies has been initiated as to improve provision secondary education. For instance, in 1995 the Education and Training Policy which provides a condition for compulsory enrolment and attendance of students in schools and creating pleasant school environment for female students were was enacted (URT,1995). Furthermore, Primary Education Development Program I and II (PEDP I and PEDP II) and the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) were initiated with focus of increasing enrolment opportunities for pupils who has passed their primary school national examinations (URT, 2008). Despite of efforts of universalise education by the Government of Tanzania, various reports indicate that such efforts are hampered by a number of issues. For example, World Bank, (2021) revealed that in 2019, around 5500 girls drop out from secondary schools due to pregnancies

Moreover, the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania is based on equality in provision of education to all irrespective to negative socio-cultural factors. This gives opportunities to all people in acquisition of self-education as they can (URT, 2005). Despite of such, the problem of access and success in girls' education remained a big problem among girls due to negative socio-cultural factors in the communities.

Socio-cultural factors in different places in the World have been a serious problem facing girls' completion of education. However, internationally, socio-cultural factors differ from one place to another. This has caused women to be behind in acquiring secondary education and thus affects their standard of living in relation to access to basic requirements. In sub-Saharan Africa, 31 million girls drop out from school due to socio-cultural factors which accelerate early marriages and pregnancies, and the governments insist on tackling these socio-cultural factors by ensuring they attend and complete their education. Government should focus on assisting girls to prevent unplanned pregnancies and early marriages and allow young mothers to go back to school. In Malawi, between 2010 and 2013 roughly half of all girls marry before the age of 18 and 5,597 secondary school girls dropped out because of pregnancies (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Across sub-Saharan Africa, 9 million girls will never attend school compared to 6 million boys. In total, 34 million children are out of school across the region.

Morogoro region also is suffering from socio-cultural factors which affect girls to complete secondary education whereby in between 2009 and 2015, 44% of the girls who were supposed to complete basic education dropped out from secondary schools. The same data show that many girls who are selected to join secondary school education do not report to school, whereby in 2012, 43% did not report (Morogoro District Education Office, 2022).

This situation has motivated the researcher to undertake this study on social-cultural constraints of girls' access to education specifically in the Morogoro Municipality. While the above literature has investigated the causes of girls' dropout in Tanzania secondary schools, however little has been done on finding out specific socio-cultural factors and their effects on girls' completion of ordinary level education in community secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. There are increasing dropout rates of female students in Morogoro Municipality.

In Tanzania, various studies have been done of girls drop out. For instance, Kalinga (2013) examined factors for primary school students 'dropout in the Chunya district. Among the factors discussed in the study was poverty, which means households failed to provide basic needs for children to attend school, and lack of basic needs like food, uniform and school items like books caused students to drop out of school. The study also observed that, economic activities like mining and tobacco farming also were the causes of students dropping out of school. Students were involved in doing work in mining and tobacco farms and hence dropped out of school. Other factors discussed are the side of parents / guardians who put little emphasis on education, children's involvement in small businesses so as to contribute to the family economy and the long distances from students' residences to school. UNESCO (2016) showed that pastoralist societies in Tanzania do not send their girls to school and when girls attend school, they fail to complete school due to cultural factors, especially early marriages.

According to Hakielimu (2019), despite different initiatives taken by the government of Tanzania and other education stakeholders in ensuring female students complete secondary education, dropping out of schools has remained a big challenge. Furthermore, the number of girls during the student's registration to form one in community schools is very high compared to the number of boys students. In Tanzania, more than 69,000 girls dropped out of school in 2015. The ratio between girl and boy students is 86:32; this inequality is caused by systematic and socio-cultural challenges including early pregnancies, child marriages, gender-based violence and low family income, domestic responsibilities for girls, and unsafe distances between home and school. Evidence shows that educating girls increases the likelihood that their children will be educated, decreases infant and maternal mortality decreases child marriage and reduces the population.

Little has been known on socio-cultural factors in Morogoro Municipality which contributed to

higher female dropouts. This has motivated the researcher to investigate the socio-cultural factors and their effects on girls and the completion of female students in ordinary community secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality.

THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEWS

The study was guided by feminist theory. Nyoni (2004) explains that feminism is a combination of the view that women have been systematically disadvantaged throughout history and across cultures and the commitment to act to rectify this situation. Roughly feminism can be divided into four perspectives; radical, Marxist, socialist, and liberal feminism.

Nyoni (2004) pointed out that radical feminism sees male control of women (patriarchy) as the main problem in the exploitation of women by men. Marxist feminism on the other hand, sees capitalism rather than patriarchy as the source of women's oppression and capitalists as the beneficiaries. Socialist feminists argue that women's oppression is an aspect of both capitalism and patriarchal relations. Liberal feminism believes that unequal opportunities between males and females originate from socialisation. The socialisation of gender roles has the consequence of producing rigid and inflexible expectations of men and women. It blames no one for the existing gender inequalities and believes that nobody benefits from such a situation. Both men and women are harmed because the potential of females and males alike is suppressed by patriarchy and capitalism.

Both girls and boys are important in societies and they must have equal opportunities in education because education is a prime mover of any development process of society. In bringing gender equality to academic performance, the government needs to identify a particular socio-cultural practice denying the right of one gender and take immediate action against it.

This study was grounded in this theory because it emphasises equality of opportunities and equity to encounter the ideology of patriarchy and the

transformation of all structures and laws that undermine the position of women in order to create an enabling environment in which all women can participate fully and equally (Mosetse, 2006). Education opportunities should be free from socio-cultural notions and practices that do not produce equal opportunities on a merit basis for both girls and boys. Women have the right to enjoy the fruits of education as men after the completion of their studies. This could be possible if the learning environments were friendly to both sexes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses methodology that guided the study. Mixed research approach and descriptive survey research design were used. Sample size of this study was 222 respondents which included 135 ordinary teachers, 3 heads of schools, 30 parents and 54 form four female students. Simple random sampling technique was used in selection of ordinary teachers, while purposive sampling techniques was used in selection of heads of schools, parents, and form four female students. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analysed through content analysis.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section focuses on presenting the results of socio-cultural factors and their effects on female completion of ordinary secondary education in Morogoro municipality. The results of this objective were presented below.

Parental Investment

Table 1 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 41(30.6%) respondents strongly agreed that parental investment affects a girl's completion of ordinary secondary education, 56(41.2%) respondents agreed, 6(4.7%) respondents were neutral, 21(15.3%) respondents disagreed and the remaining 11(8.2%) of respondents strongly disagreed. This result shows

that the majority of respondents (71.8%) have agreed that parental investment affects girls' completion of ordinary secondary education.

Table 1: Parental Investment

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	41	30.6
Agree	56	41.2
Neutral	6	4.7
Disagree	21	15.3
Strongly Disagree	11	8.2
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

These results indicate that parental investment in children education is sometimes gender biased. Due to this, parents do not invest equally in education and thus affect girls' completion of ordinary secondary education. In addition to that, this biasness occurs particularly when parents have lower income and resources which cause girls to drop out from school earlier than boys.

These findings support a study by Lai, Leung, and Zhang (2008) who found that parents' gender biased cause them more of them to invest on boys education with aim of being taking cared in the future by them. Furthermore, Grant and Hallman (2006) found that there is a positive relationship

between financial strength of the family and girls dropout from school in South Africa.

Household Work

Table 2 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 33(24.7%) respondents strongly agreed that household work affects a girl's completion of ordinary secondary education, 57(42.4%) respondents agreed, 14(10.6%) respondents were neutral, 17(12.9%) respondents disagreed and the remaining 13(9.4%) of respondents strongly disagreed. These results show that majority of respondents (67.1%) agreed that household work affects girls' completion of ordinary secondary education.

Table 2: Household Work

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	33	24.7
Agree	57	42.4
Neutral	14	10.6
Disagree	17	12.9
Strongly Disagree	13	9.4
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

These results indicate that girls begin working at an earlier age than boys. In this perspective, girls take more loads of household work than boys. This tends to affect their ordinary secondary education since they have little time for studying as compared to boys.

The findings are in line with study Kemunto (2013) which revealed that, girls are highly demanded by customs to help their families in undertaking various household works such as finding firewood, fetching water, cooking and cleaning the house as compared to boys.

Family Preference to Educate Boys Instead of Girls

Table 3 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 16(18.8%) respondents strongly agreed that family preference to educate boys instead of girls affect girl’s completion of ordinary secondary education, 13(15.3%)

respondents agreed, 13(15.3%) respondents were neutral, 22(25.7%) respondents disagreed and the remaining 21(24.7%) of respondents strongly disagreed. This result shows that the majority of respondents (50.6%) disagreed that family preference to educate boys instead of girls affects girls’ completion of ordinary secondary education.

Table 3: Family Preference to Educate Boys Instead of Girls

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	16	18.8
Agree	13	15.3
Neutral	13	15.3
Disagree	22	25.9
Strongly Disagree	21	24.7
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

These results indicate that family preference to educate boys instead of girls affects the academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. In this perspective, boys would likely get necessary education as compared to girls. This happens because some parents think that after girls being married, such girls will provide more support on husband family and little support towards their biological family since dowry has been paid. In the case of boys, parents thought they would become the main source of income for their future families’ which is why they provide them with every possible facility, including education as to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities

since they left their parents upon marriage while sons are considered as the asset of the family. In addition to that, Ndahi (1987) found that parents have belief that, girls belong to her husband family since they will eventually being married whether they are got education or not.

These findings support study by Sultana and Zulkefli (2012) who revealed that, biasness in educating children is because of socio norms that girls are non-permanent members of the family

Failure to Buy Basic Needs

Table 4 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 24(28.2%) respondents strongly agreed that failure to buy basic needs affects a girl’s completion of ordinary secondary education, 39(45.9%) respondents agreed, 15(17.6%) respondents were neutral, 4(4.7%) respondents disagreed and the remaining 3(3.5%) of respondents strongly disagreed. These results show that the majority of respondents (74.1%) agreed that failure to buy basic needs affects girls’ completion of ordinary secondary education.

Table 4: Failure to Buy Basic Needs

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	28.2
Agree	39	45.9
Neutral	15	17.6
Disagree	4	4.7
Strongly Disagree	3	3.5
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

These findings indicate that parents' failure to buy basic needs such as sanitary towels for their daughters affects the academic performance of girls in schools since they miss classes and thus fail to complete their ordinary secondary education. Other girls could miss classes due to abdominal pains experienced but have no money to buy drugs.

The findings concur with that of Achoka, Nafula, and Okinyi (2013) which found that, lack of sanitary towels is a serious issue since girls could miss classes for about 5 days in a month (3 months a year) for fear of being ashamed in school by their classmates when they have leakage during their monthly period.

Table 5: Lack of Female Teachers in School

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	9	10.6
Agree	14	16.5
Neutral	10	11.8
Disagree	31	36.5
Strongly Disagree	21	24.7
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

These results indicate that the lack of female teachers is an obstacle to girls' participation and enrolment in schools. In this perspective, girls are reluctant to be taught by both male teachers and female teachers. These findings are contrary to society in other countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, as observed by Solotaroff et al. (2007) who revealed that dropping out from schools among girls is usually because of lack of female teachers. Due to such shortage, parents stop their daughters to attend in schools before their adulthood.

Table 6: Traditional Initiation Rite

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	22	26.4
Agree	27	31.9
Neutral	25	29.7
Disagree	7	7.7
Strongly Disagree	4	4.3
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

Lack of Female Teachers in School

Table 5 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 9(10.6%) respondents strongly agreed that the lack of female teacher in school affect girl's completion of ordinary secondary education, 14(16.5%) respondents agreed, 10(11.8%) respondents were neutral, 31(36.5%) respondents disagreed, and the remaining 21(24.7%) of respondents strongly disagreed. This result shows that the majority of respondents (61.2%) disagreed that the lack of female teacher in school, affect girls' completion of ordinary secondary education.

Traditional Initiation Rite

Table 6 reveals that, out of 135(100%) respondents, 22(26.4%) respondents strongly agreed that traditional initiation rites affect a girl's completion of ordinary secondary education, 25(29.7%) respondents were neutral, 7(7.7%) respondents disagreed and the remaining 4(4.3%) of respondents strongly disagreed. This result shows that the majority of respondents (58.3%) have agreed that traditional initiation rites affect girls' completion of ordinary secondary education.

These results indicate that the traditional initiation rite is one of the main socio-cultural activities for girls' completion of ordinary secondary education in Morogoro municipality since there is a domination of several ethnic groups. The aim of such a traditional initiation rite is to introduce youths to adulthood and social responsibilities. In addition to that, ceremonies encourage sex and childbearing as important responsibilities for women in society. The tradition involves playing traditional night dances with music known as "Kigodoro" or "Vigodoro" and sometimes traditional dances which occur during evening known as "Kigoma" or "Vigoma". These dances are done with half-body clothes or a naked body to girls who are considered to be mature, age 11-15 years age. This traditional ceremony influence girls to drop out from secondary school and thus lead to failure in completing ordinary secondary education.

These findings were supported by a form four female students who observed that: -

Rites of passage are traditional ceremonies used in societies to mark passage of an individual from one social status to another. Example of such rite of passage is marriage which tends to affect girls' education.

Furthermore, in an interview conducted a head of school pointed out the following: -

Participation of female in rites of passage ceremonies aim at providing education on children concerning self-awareness, hygiene, and productive health ... When children are matured enough, they need to have an understanding on what is good or wrong. So, this tradition affects schooling and influences female students' dropout.

These results concur with what was observed by Rutakinikwa (2016) who found that, in rites of passage ceremonies, girls learn how to perform sexual activities successfully despite their young age. These ceremonies ultimately contribute to early marriage, pregnancies, low academic

performance, and psychological trouble which end up disturbing girls' education.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study show that there are some socio-cultural factors affecting female academic performances in Morogoro municipality. These factors include parental investment, household work, family preference to educate boys instead of girls, failure to buy basic needs, and traditional initiation rites. Such factors tend to affect female completion of ordinary secondary education since they low academic performance, cause drop out of school, lead to absenteeism, and cause deterioration of health and general welfare of girls. Minimizing or even eliminating these factors in our society will promote girls' academic performance.

The study recommends that, the Government should ensure the 2014 Education Policy is effectively implemented for all school-age children, Government and other educational stakeholders should build more boarding schools and improve the existing ones, and the Government should enrol back girls who dropped out of schools due to pregnancies, society around community secondary schools should be educated and criticised on the negative attitudes that girls are just consumers of resources and time, and the government should employ matrons in community secondary schools.

REFERENCES

- Achoka, J.S.K., Nafula, R.C., & Okinyi, M.O. (2013). Not Yet Jubilee After 50 Years of African Scholarship and Development: Factors Against Secondary School Girl-Child Academic Excellence, Bungoma County, Kenya. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review*, 1(2013), 1-9.
- Bayisenge, J. (2011). Early Marriage as a Barrier to Girls Education: A Development Challenge in Africa. Kigali: National University of Rwanda.

- Grant, M., & Hallman, K. (2006). *Pregnancy-Related School Dropout and Prior School Performance in South Africa*. New York: Population Council.
- Hakielimu. (2019). *A Study on Girls Basic Education in Tanzania; a Focus on Factors that affect girls retention and transition rates*. dsm
- Human Right Watch. (2017). *Africa: Make Girls Access to Education a Reality*. New York: Human Right Watch.
- Habibu, N. A., Iramba, I. F., & Kambuga, Y. (2020). Teachers' Perception on Students Substance Use and School-Based Prevention Programmes in Tanzania. *International Journal Papier Public Review*, 1(2), 78-87.
- Lai, P.P., Leung, A.K., Li, A.N. and Zhang, M. (2008) Three-Dimensional Gait Analysis of Obese Adults. *Clinical Biomechanics*, 23(2008), S2-S6.
- Mosetse, P. (2006). *Gender stereotypes and education in Lesotho*. University of free state Bloemfonten
- Nyoni, R. (2004). *The role of theory in the sociological study of education*. University of Zimbabwe
- Rutakinikwa, L.N. (2016). *Factors Influencing Secondary School Girls Drop out in Bagamoyo District in Tanzania*, Open University Tanzania
- Solotaroff, J., Hashimi, N., Olesen, A. (2007) *Afghanistan Gender Mainstreaming Implementation*. The World Bank in South Asia
- UNDP. (2008). *Gender and citizenship in Saudi Arabia*. Geneva: UNDP.
- UNESCO. (2016). *Living No One Behind: How Far on The Way to Universal Primary and Secondary Education?* Dar es Salaam: UNESCO.
- World Bank. (2021). *World Bank Statement Equal Access to Education for Pregnant Girls and Young Mothers in Tanzania*. Washington: World Bank.
- World Bank. (2015). *Preparing the Next Generation in Tanzania: Challenges and Opportunities in Education*. Dar es Salaam: World Bank.