

## Influence of Socio-Cultural Practices on Free Primary Education Policy Implementation among Pastoralists in West Pokot County, Kenya

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### Article History

Received: 08.07.2018

Accepted: 17.07.2018

Published: 30.07.2018



**Abstract:** Pastoralists are members of the human race who occupy extremely disadvantaged regions of the world. The environmental conditions in these regions make this group of people very harsh and cruel. They practice weird cultural practices which derail the efforts of the government towards attainment of universal primary education. This paper examines how the social cultural practices of this group of people influence the implementation of Free Primary Education in West Pokot County, Kenya. The findings are a result of a study which adopted a descriptive research design and was based on the Action Reaction Theory. Data was collected by use of questionnaires from 300 pupils randomly selected from primary schools in the entire West Pokot County. 50 parents, 50 head teachers and 1 Director of Education were purposively selected to participate in the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in data analysis. Findings highlighted in this paper will help in formulating policies which are suited for pastoralists to widen and broaden their quest for education.

**Keywords:** Pastoralist, Socio-Cultural, ASALs, Conflict, FPE, West Pokot.

## INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, literature on pastoralists is extremely uneven and is determined by politics and security issues and there is, therefore, need for empirical data. Chettri [1] reports that the information about Indian pastoralists lacks or is supported by weak documented descriptions of their systems. However, screening of the anthropological literature as well as of development indeed confirms that pastoralists represent a subsector of society that has received much less attention in comparison to other social groups from both research and development angles. Globally, a number of countries have made a commitment towards achieving Education for All, but the high cost of implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE) has made progress towards the goal very slow [2].

It is estimated that nomads constitute 6% of the African population and can be found in no less than 20 African countries. In all the countries, the rate of primary school enrolment for children among the nomadic communities in East Africa is significantly below the national average. The rate of secondary enrolment is very low. In Nigeria, the nomads' major constraints to participate in existing basic education programs result from constant movement in search of water and pasture [3].

There has been an attempt by government and nongovernmental organizations to analyze the role played by children in the pastoralists' production systems in a view to understand what makes parents and guardians reluctant to release them to join school [4]. Education programs normally underscore the need to enhance access to education among pastoral communities but most fall short of changing the status quo of glaring statistics of poor enrolment to formal schooling in the regions. There are apparent challenges that keep the statistics of enrolments rates so low among the pastoralists compared to other regions of the country. Harsh and isolated environments have been identified to put pressure on competent and performing teachers to seek for transfers from pastoralist schools. The complex relationship between the pastoral communities and their socio-economic background casts more doubts as to how the local people are involved in policy process of improving access to primary schooling, and later to sustainable secondary schooling [5].

UNESCO [6] indicates that there are 72 million children in the developing world who are out of school. While the national enrolment rate is 94 percent, it stands at 78 percent in West Pokot County, Kenya. Worse still is the realization that among the other

herders' or pastoralists' communities, enrolment is less than 40 percent. Conflict has been a major obstacle to accessing education for children. Children caught in conflicts are killed, forcibly recruited or orphaned by the death of their parents forcing them to flee. They end up in separated families, camp situations and /or traumatized situation. The first Global Consultation on Education in Emergencies was held in 2004 and was meant to provide guidelines to countries and agencies in conflict or post conflict situation. On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007, UNICEF appointed Mr Ishmael Beah (a former child soldier) as the first advocate for children affected by war. His mission is to further strengthen the voice advocating for their rights. Conflict in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) of North Eastern Kenya is widespread and often overlaps with extreme food insecurity. It is mainly triggered by competition for resources.

There is clear evidence that despite government interventions, most pastoralists' children are not benefiting from FPE [7]. The government estimates 71,000 children were out of schools in Turkana District, 25,000 in Samburu District and 3,800 in Laikipia District [8]. While some people view peace negotiations as priority over education to avoid wasting resources, there are questions as to "whether a standardized education system is beneficial to pastoralists and whether it would be necessary to provide pastoralists with education that suites their pastoral and nomadic livelihood system" [7]. Children affected by conflict "not only need ordinary schooling but the entire process of re-education. They tend to be ignored by ministries of education and taken up by NGOs" [9].

The World Bank has supported Education FOR All by joining programmes accredited to enhance equality and access to education including the Food For Education (FFE) programmes whose initial success were recorded between 1993 and 2000 [10]. Through the FFE program, schools receive wheat grains which are used in school feeding. FFE has increased General Enrolment Rate (GER), promoting attendance and retention in primary schools. Evidence suggests that retention in schools reduces early marriages. Borrowing from these successes, the Kenya government runs feeding programmes within the FPE in schools in ASALs and implements the Extended Feeding Program (EFP) to any region experiencing droughts, famine or needing assistance. Some critics argue that the government should focus on food security projects rather than school feeding programmes. They argue that feeding children in schools only creates a dependency and most of these children eventually drop out of schools when the feeding programmes are withdrawn.

The UN General Assembly proclaims the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and

all nations, to the end that each individual or nation shall keep the declaration constantly in mind and strive to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and to secure their effective recognition and observance. The Kenyan law relating to education and children compliments the basic principles of the UDHR. According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Kenya is a signatory to the following legal instruments relating to the rights of the child; the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified in July 1990; International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), ratified in 1972 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified in 1972. The Committee of the CRC report on Kenya (June 2007) acknowledges Kenya is also a signatory to the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination (ICEAD), in 2001; the ILO Convention NO.182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, in 2001; Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2002 and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transitional Organized Crime, in 2005.

The common understanding within all the covenants and basic guidelines, while working with children is the basic principle that in all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration (CRC, Article 3). While all major conventions have sections regarding the rights and obligations to children, the CRC is entirely dedicated to children rights. In most societies, children are considered as the most important members of the family. The family is considered as the basic/natural fundamental group unit of society and governments are obliged to offer support, protection and assistance (ICESCR, article 10; ICCPR article 23 and 24). Education is the key to preparing the child to an individual life, mental and social development. As Per the CRC, children have a right to free and compulsory primary education (article 13) including the mentally or physically disabled (article 23). The CRC is the most ratified covenant with only two countries left to sign it. It covers issues such as the definitions of who is a child, parent's responsibilities, right to nationality, names, education, health, legal protection and social development to protection against exploitation, and forced military enlistment/ recruitments. It emphasizes on the dissemination of information and cooperation among agencies working with children.

In the region, Kenya was a signatory to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, in July 2000. It established the National Council of Children Services in 2000, the Sexual Offences Act and the Refugee Act in 2006. The Committee on the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC)

commended these actions in its forty-fourth session as major steps towards protection of children's rights.

To achieve the rights of the children, UN member countries are currently committed (from targets set in 1990) to reducing poverty, promoting education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health and reduce AIDS and other diseases through the MDG. The second goal of the MDG is to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary education. The MDGs are commitments (through global partnership) that reinforce the stipulations in the regional and international conventions. While poor countries have promised to govern better, the rich have promised to support them through aid, debt relief and fair trade. The UN Secretary General believes that the goals are achievable through working together. The Dakar Framework for Action, conceptualized in Senegal in 2000, sets regional goals for countries including EFA by 2005 and UPE by 2015. Through regional dialogue, countries having similar problems are able to come up with solutions and strategies in their own context to enhance their commitment to preserving children's rights and promoting their development.

The overall goal of FPE is to build the human capital capacity through investing in children at an early age. Basic skills not only help individuals but also have an impact on the income, growth potential, population and public sector performance. In Nigeria in the 1970s, FPE was driven by the need to produce skilled manpower [11]. The government realizes that education and training will contribute to national development. Economic difficulties have denied many Kenyan children education. The poor economic performance in Kenya has led to rising poverty levels which impact negatively on education performance indicators. By offering FPE, the government is making a link between education and economic development - everyone has a right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.

The MOEST gives guidelines on FPE policies, which are passed down to the School Management Committees (SMC). MOEST also advises on teachers', parents' and students' roles. The County Director of Education (CDE) is in charge of education matters in the county and is assisted by Sub-County Education Officers in various parts of the county. The Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC) has been set up to play an advisory role to the teachers and the SMC. Under FPE policy, the teachers' role is curriculum implementation as per the approved syllabus. Teachers also support school management through membership in the SMC. Parents are regarded as stakeholders in the new policy. Parents are to assist in school management through PTA meetings and the board membership; they are to assist in providing physical infrastructure, which is not offered by government under FPE. Parents are also

called upon to help in counselling and instilling discipline to the pupils. The SMC is responsible for managing funds, settling disputes in the school or making recommendations to the DEO, conducting tendering interviews/approvals for supplies and receiving school supplies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The implementation of the Free Primary Education policy was received with a lot of enthusiasm by the children and the parents of pastoralist communities. On inception, the policy saw enrolment upsurge to unmanageable levels but this did not last long because the sustainability measures were not put in place by the government. In most pastoralist communities, socio-cultural practices take centre stage and members are thrown into inertia and romantically disgraced. The social cultural practices of the Pokot community have a very strong bearing on which way the community follows besides its quest for attaining universal primary education. The social undertakings may have deeper understanding than the education that is alien to the community. The community would prefer their customs to education and immediately the traditional practices are over the children no longer have interest in schooling or any formal education. This paper is thus an attempt at bridging the gap between expectation and reality by discussing the influence of socio-cultural practices on Free Primary Education policy implementation among pastoralists in West Pokot County, Kenya.

### **Socio-Cultural Practices and Access to FPE**

According to Wachira [12], governments constantly reaffirm their commitment to equal opportunity in education. Under international human rights conventions, they are obligated to act on that commitment since restricting opportunity in education is one of the most powerful mechanisms for transmitting poverty across generations. As stated by Gura [4], schooling or access to educational opportunities is one way of promoting overall equality in society by providing social mobility of its recipients based on merit or credential attained. In Kenya, the economic value of education to an individual and his/her family is fostered by a firm public belief that equalization of education or educational achievements leads to equalizations of earnings. In regard to achieving UPE, children from poor households, rural areas, slums and other disadvantaged groups face major obstacles in access to good quality education. While children from the wealthiest 20% of households have already achieved universal primary school attendance in most countries, those from the poorest 20% have a long way to go [6, 3].

While acquisition of formal education has resulted in cultural alienation in most communities, it has been posited that the impact is more profound on pastoralist communities [13, 14]. According to MOE

[15], nomadic pastoralists are dependent on their school age children for herding animals and undertaking other household chores which are important for their survival. Nomadic pastoralists require flexible education delivery modes that take into account their children's work at home; that which schedules outside nomadic working time and at the same time transfer learning to the homesteads. Therefore, nomadic communities believe that formal schooling leads to alienation from their lifestyle and threatens their basic survival. It is because of this fear that children are kept out of school. Schooling has deskilled the pastoral populations and introduced aspirations that are not congruent to pastoral life. Some retrogressive cultural practices continue to be propagated. Early marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) impede girl's education in pastoralist communities. After circumcision, girls face lower social restraints. They may engage in sexual activity since they are now considered women. After FGM, the resultant pattern is pregnancy, school dropout and, eventually, early marriage.

Education is universal as per the constitution of UNESCO [6] which embraces the idea of equality of education opportunity without regard to race, sex, economic, social or any other distinction [16]. According to UNESCO [6], everyone has the right to education and should be equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means. World Bank [17] emphasizes that increasing participation in education improves family nutritional practices, and proper hygiene and management of their households. Gakidou *et al.*, [18] affirm that literacy leads to better health and education, reduced infant mortality, higher earnings, reduced fertility rates and improved quality of life for all nations.

Most African societies are characterized by gender inequality between males and females. The ideological foundation for gender inequality is their patriarchal structure. Patriarchy is defined as "a set of social relations with a material base that enables men to dominate women" [19]. It is a system of stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex which provides material advantages to the males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females. Social roles are classified as superior or inferior and bases of classification include age and sex. Patriarchy also conditions the spatial segregation of men and women; the male space consists of the public domain while the female space consists largely of the household and its immediate environs.

Women's activities are largely confined to the household or the female sections of family compounds. Thus women are expected to get married and care for their families - formal education is not regarded as a prerequisite for being a wife and mother. On the other hand, boys who are expected to be future household heads are favoured in access to education. Education is

seen as enhancing their abilities to earn good income which will enable them care for their families and aged parents. Girls are regarded as strangers or temporary members of the household as they will be married and leave their families. Investing in their education is considered a waste as it is the husbands' families that reap the benefits of such an investment.

Many parents, especially illiterate parents, have low academic expectations for their children. Some believe that education is for boys only, others think that boys like studying more than girls, that boys are more brilliant than girls and perform better than girls. Parents' and teachers' perceptions of adult roles for girls - their marital and maternal obligations to their families - make them believe that girls do not require much formal education as these roles do not require going to school. Lanyasunya [20] has observed that, traditionally, girls are viewed to be inferior and therefore discriminated upon right from birth. The parents fear losing honour, prestige and bride price due to effects of schooling. Duba [5] argues that formal education of girls is even viewed with suspicion as a threat to morality. In this regard, girls' education is given less attention than that of boys. Therefore, the girls are socialized to be a self-sacrificing person desired for biological reproduction and service to others in the family. Teenage pregnancy is a major cause of girls drop out from school. Teenage pregnancy is due to factors such as inadequate parenting, breakdown in moral standards, lack of sex education, and leaving children unsupervised for long periods.

Nyamongo [21] stipulates that even after more than 80 years of development, pastoral communities are still viewed as culturally conservative, stubbornly persistent in their pursuit of pastoralism and rejection of farming sedentarisation, education and other modern ways of being. Pastoralism is performed concurrently with the same schooling hours. As noted in *The Daily Nation* 1997, working children are denied their basic rights and are subjected to all sorts of challenges as a result of working at a young age. All children have a right to life, protection, education and development. Universal primary education fixes ambitious long-term goals supported by realistic planning and sufficient medium to long-term budgetary allocation to ensure progress in access, participation and completion in primary education. These include raising quality while expanding access by focusing on smooth progression through school and better learning outcomes, increasing textbooks supply and quality, strengthening teacher training, and support and ensuring that class sizes are conducive to learning.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study [22]. There are 503 primary schools in West Pokot the County and a sample of 10 percent of the schools was done. 50 schools were

randomly selected. Head teachers were purposively sampled from the sampled primary schools. The researcher purposively picked a parent from the selected schools. The sample size of students was arrived at by use of the formula indicated by Reid & Boore [23]. The total number of respondents was 300 students, 50 purposively sampled head teachers and 50 parents from the sampled schools. One County Director of Education was purposively selected.

Creswell [22] observes that purposive sampling emphasizes on a criterion based selection of information-rich cases from which a researcher can discover, understand and gain more insight on issues crucial for this study. The sampling process therefore selected individuals, groups and organizations that would provide insight into the phenomena under study. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Responses from all questionnaire items were cross-checked to facilitate coding and processing for analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v 21). Pearson product moment correlation coefficient

was computed to test strength of the relationship between variables. Simple linear regression analysis was computed to determine the statistical relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Analyzed data was presented in form of tables and charts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Socio-Cultural Practices and Implementation of FPE

Social cultural practices play a very pertinent role in influencing the implementation of free primary education among the pastoralists. Pastoralists calculate the cost effectiveness of education and the quick utilization of the child in family labour and security. This paper looked at how female genital mutilation, early marriages and cattle rustling affect the implementation of free primary education. These are practices carried out by pastoralists for their gains as a community. To achieve this objective, the participants were asked to respond to items in the questionnaire on a Likert scale of 1-5. The results are presented in Table-1.

**Table 1: Socio-Cultural Practices and Implementation of FPE**

Socio-cultural practices		SA5	A4	U3	D2	SD	M	SDV
		%	%	%	%	%		
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Head teacher	55.0	32.1	0	8.1	4.8	3.16	.808
	Parents	36.7	45.8	17.5	0.0	0.0	2.69	.742
	Pupils	55.2	40.8	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.67	.831
Early Marriage	Head teacher	11.6	49.3	5.8	29.0	4.3	2.70	1.04
	Parents	10.1	47.8	7.2	30.4	3.1	3.05	.8732
	Pupils	40.6	33.0	8.7	7.2	10.4	3.13	.915
Cattle Rustling	Head teacher	11.6	46.4	2.9	5.8	33.3		
	Parents	46.2	44	5.4	0.0	4.3	4.677	.470
	Pupils	20.3	47.8	4.3	4.3	23.2	2.53	.945
Traditional Stereotypes	Head teacher	18.8	55.1	.849	17.4	2.9	2.40	5.8
	Parents	40.9	41.9	14	.497	0.0	4.569	4.3
	Pupils	14.5	46.4	5.8	29.0	4.3	2.65	1.00
Teenage Pregnancy	Head teacher	32.3	46.2	11.8	3.2	11.8	4.376	.487
	Parents	18.8	46.4	4.3	26.1	4.3	2.42	.613
	Pupils	62.4	37.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.118	.605

Source: Field Data

As illustrated in Table-1, it is evidently clear that majority [43 (87.1%)] of head teachers agreed with the assertion that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) affects implementation of FPE among the pastoralist communities of West Pokot. This was supported by a mean of 3.16 and a standard deviation of 0.808. On early marriages, most head teachers agree that it significantly affects the implementation of FPE and access of FPE among the pastoralist communities, 30 (60.9%) of the head teachers agreed with a mean of 3.16 and a standard deviation of 0.808. When the respondents were asked if Free Primary Education policy is affected by cattle rustling, the head teachers agreed at 29(58%) with a mean of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 1.04. Lastly, when asked whether FPE policy implementation is affected by traditional

stereotypes, the head teachers agreed at 37 (73.9%) with a mean of 2.405 and a standard deviation of 0.8. These results are supported by MOE [15] which stated that nomadic communities believe that formal schooling leads to alienation from their lifestyle and threatens their basic survival. Kratli [13] and Sifuna [14] also stated that it is because of this fear that children are kept out of school. They further stated that some retrogressive cultural practices continue to be propagated. MOE [15] stated that early marriage and FGM impede girl's education in pastoralist communities.

After circumcision, girls face lower social restraints. They may engage in sexual activity since they are now considered women. After FGM, the



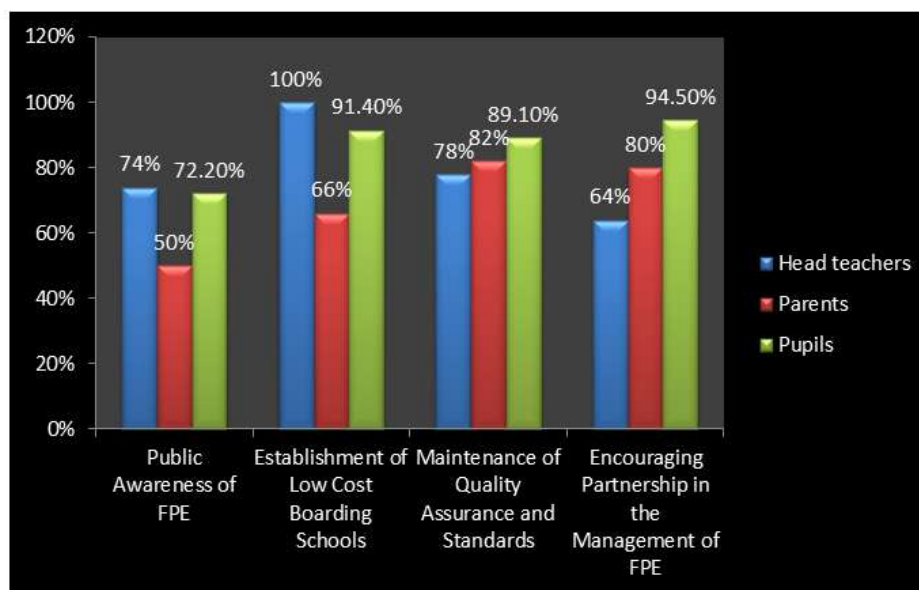
resultant pattern is pregnancy, school dropout and early marriage. From the results in Table 1, the parents agreed at 82.5% (37) that FGM affects access of FPE policy among the pastoralist communities. This was supported by a mean of 2.69 and a standard deviation of 0.742. When the teachers were asked whether early marriage affects access of FPE policy among the pastoralist communities, 57.9% (26) agreed with a mean of 2.69 and standard deviation of 0.742. Further, when asked if free primary education policy is affected by cattle rustling, they agreed at 90.2% (41) with a mean of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 0.945. Lastly, when asked whether FPE policy is affected by traditional stereotypes, the parents agreed at 82.8% (37) with a mean of 4.569 and a standard deviation of 4.3. This implies that social cultural practices are a threat to the FPE policy. These findings concur with Duba [5] who argued that formal education of girls is viewed with suspicion and regarded a threat to girls' morality thus granted less attention than that of boys.

In addition, the results in Table 1 show that the pupils agreed [(96%) 211] that FGM affects access of FPE policy among the pastoralist communities. This was supported by a mean of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 1.04. When asked if early marriage affects

access of FPE among the pastoralist communities, the pupils agreed at 73.6% (162) with a mean of 3.05 and standard deviation of 0.873. Further, when asked if FPE policy is affected by cattle rustling, the pupils agreed at 68.1 % (149) with a mean of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 0.945. Lastly, when asked whether FPE policy is affected by traditional stereotypes, the pupils agreed at 60.9 % (134) with a mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of 1.00. These results support MOE's [15] observation that nomadic communities believe that formal schooling leads to alienation from their lifestyle and threatens their basic survival. It is because of this fear that children are kept out of school. The results further augment Lanyasunya's [20] assertion that many parents, especially illiterate ones, have low academic expectations for their children, believe that education is for boys only, think that boys like studying more than girls, and believe that boys are more brilliant than girls and perform better than girls.

### Approaches to Improving Desirable Outcomes of FPE among Pastoralists

The study also sought to find out efforts which can be used to improve on desirable outcome of FPE for pastoralists and the results are as demonstrated in Figure-1.



**Fig-1: Approaches to Improving Desirable Outcomes of FPE among Pastoralists**

The respondents were asked on whether public awareness would improve the outcome of FPE. 74% (37) of the head teachers agreed, 50% (23) of the parents agreed on this and 72.2% (159) of the pupils agreed. This implies that most of the pastoralist communities lack awareness on the FPE policy. This observation is supported by the Republic of Kenya Report [24], popularly known as the Koech Report, which observed that the pastoral communities of Kenya require affirmative action in order to address the

inequalities that had caused them to lag behind in accessing and participating in education.

When asked on whether establishment of low cost boarding schools could improve on desirable outcome of FPE, all the head teachers in the selected schools agreed, 66% (33) of the parents agreed and 91.4% (201) of the pupils agreed. This implies that establishment of boarding schools is the right way of improving access to FPE among the pastoralist communities because they could be able to evade

cultural practices like female genital mutilation and early marriage. When asked whether maintenance of quality assurance and standards improves the outcomes of FPE, 78% (39) of the head teachers agreed, while 82% (37) of the parents agreed and 89.1% (196) of the pupils agreed. This implies that quality assurance and standards is a factor in improving access to primary schooling among the pastoralist communities. When the respondents were asked whether encouraging partnership in the management of FPE would bring a desirable outcome in FPE, 64% (32) of the head teachers agreed, 80% (36) of the parents agreed and 94.5% (208) of the pupils agreed. This implies that community involvement is effective in ensuring access to free primary schooling among pastoralist communities. This is supported by World Bank [17] which emphasized on the increasing participation of various stakeholders in education. Gakidou *et al.*, [18] also affirm that literacy leads to better health and education, reduced infant mortality, higher earnings, reduced fertility rates and improved quality of life for all nations.

On the issue of whether FPE policy has reduced the negative social cultural practices among the Pokot, the county director stated that “due to increased enrolment rates of the pupils and also reduction of dropout rates in many schools of West Pokot County, more girls have been integrated into the system”. Further, on whether FPE has improved the provision of quality primary schooling, he was of the opinion that the education policy has evolved over time with a focus on key issues such as: education and development, equity considerations, quality of education, structure, administration and management curriculum, cost and financing, education planning, techniques and approaches, monitoring and evaluations.

#### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study found out that there was a significant relationship between socio-cultural practices and implementation of FPE. The desire by the West Pokot nomadic communities to amalgamate resources to enrich themselves makes them have a high value for their girls. The girls are seen as source of cattle by way of dowry. This socio-cultural practice makes them proud of their girls and pushes men to participate in cattle rustling to obtain cattle for the pride price. This practice has aggravated the FGM among the Pokot to hasten the qualification of girls to wives very fast in their greedy endeavour to receive cattle in the name of pride price for their daughters. As such, this lifestyle impedes government efforts to attain universal primary education for all and requires specific interventions by all stakeholders.

The nomadic characteristic of the Pokot people makes them vulnerable to drop out of school at an early time in their schooling cycle. This is because of the movement of the parents from one area to another in

search of pasture and clean water in the plains. Their movement makes them join a new school in the new area moved to without information thus pushing the enrolment high in the new school and leaving the former school without learners. Furthermore, the pastoralist community largely lacks ownership of FPE program which impedes efforts to have all the children in primary school. This generally lowers the quality of education of the community.

Because of the region's history of suffering due to food insecurity, many parents opt to remove children from schools to lend an extra hand on income generating activities and herding livestock. To curb this, provision of food at schools will give parents some relief from this burden and will help in student retention. The Kenyan government and other stakeholders should expand the extended feeding program to the schools in West Pokot County. They should also engage in building of new schools and classrooms.

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