

EFFECTS OF POLYGAMY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TOWNSHIP WARD, TURKANA CENTRAL SUBCOUNTY, KENYA

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<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJREHC.2023.4322>

ABSTRACT

Polygamy is considered both in developing and developed countries as a determinant of child schooling performance. Empirical findings from developed countries consistently confirm that the trade-off between reduced parental involvement and education exerts negative pressure on academic performance. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of parental involvement in polygamous families on the academic performance of public primary pupils in the Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County. The study was anchored on Structural Functionalism Theory because of its explicit exposure to how family socialization as a basic social unit builds on the well-being of the future of the individuals in society. The study adopted mixed methods research design. The target population was 42763 comprising 21374 primary school pupils, their 21374 parents, and 15 head teachers in the Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County. The researcher adopted a purposive sampling technique in selecting the pupils and the head teachers who participated in the study. Quantitative data was collected using close-ended questionnaires from pupils and polygamous parents while qualitative data was collected from the headteachers using interview schedules. Quantitative data analysis techniques included percentages and mean. Study findings were presented using frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data was analyzed through categorical themes. The study revealed that reduced parental involvement affects negatively the academic performance of pupils in Turkana. The study also revealed that the percentage of educated mothers and fathers from polygamous families is as low consequently leading to a low parental involvement in the child's academic work. In light of the findings, the study proposed recommendations to various stakeholders to formulate policies that will ensure local leaders unite and launch a robust community sensitization campaign on the importance of parental involvement in the studies of their children.

Keywords- Polygamy, Parental Involvement Academic Performance, Pupils in Public Primary Schools, Township Ward, Turkana Central Subcounty, Kenya

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Human development and civilization have long been dependent on the knowledge and education acquired by individuals from the institution of marriage and the society at large (Elberdour, 2012). This notion is slowly fading as most people are embracing the mythical believe that involvement of teachers alone is enough for the exemplary academic performance of pupils in primary schools. After the era of colonization and eventual formation of UN, little

has been researched by scholars about the effects of various types of human families on the academic performance of pupils in schools (Tang, 2014).

Human family is an institutionalized social group in which members are related by blood, descent, adoption or by marriage and may live together because they believe in their oneness (Elberdour, 2012). To stabilize their lives, Tang (2014) saw that humans grouped themselves into various categories of marital structures namely, polygamous marital structures, monogamous marital structure among other marital structures. The study will however focus on polygamous marital structure. Tangs (2014) defined polygamous marital structure as a union between a man and two or more wives. Edlund (2012) on the other hand saw polygamous marital structure as a form of plural marriage which involves one husband to more than one wife. According to Teresa (2018) Polygamy involves a union between a husband and two or more wives who have agreed to live together and sire children. This study adopted Tangs (2014) definition which describes polygamy as a union between a man and two or more wives.

Pupils from most of Asian countries such as Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and other Asian countries which value polygamy underperform academically because they lack parental encouragement and conducive study environment at home. Based on the above assertions, there is a lot of evidence that parental involvement which is lacking in polygamous families is extremely significant for the academic excellence of pupils. Reduced parental involvement in studies of pupils and dismal academic performance among the pupils from polygamous families has made 56% of Nigerians to believe that the practice of polygamy is not supportive of quality education of pupils (Fenske, 2015). Fenske (2015) notes that due to the huge size of polygamous family, children in most polygamous families in Nigeria have lost touch, trust, and respect towards their parents. Christian missionaries in Nigeria have considered polygamy as morally wrong because it encourages parents to bear many children that they cannot be able to educate or provide quality education (Fenske, 2015).

Polygamy remains a controversial issue in Kenya just as the other Muslim countries around the world (Teresa, 2018). Teresa (2018) notes that the Kenyan pupils from economically unstable polygamous families especially from pastoralist backgrounds don't enjoy academic guidance from their parents which makes them to generally underperform in their studies because they lack homework parental guidance. Secondly though the parents are pastoralists, they find no motivation in buying their children learning materials such as books and pens. She further noted that for pupils to excel in their academics there is a huge need for parents to complete pupils' academics through homework guidance and timely provision of learning materials such as books, pens and uniforms (Teresa, 2018).

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) released a report in 2020 which revealed that parents from pastoralist counties recorded higher polygamy prevalence rate of 61%. Another report from MOE in 2020 stated that pupils from the same counties coincidentally underperformed in their studies despite the efforts by the Kenyan government which includes provision of free primary education, academic bursaries and rolling of school feeding programs. Scholars agree that in other countries and counties, many pupils have been hindered from reaching their optimum level in academic pursuit due to negative issues emanating from their polygamous homes. These include lack of parental encouragement, lack of a conducive learning environment, poor finance and housing, poor feeding, ill health, and lack of interest

on the part of the Pupils. Based on the above, there is increasing evidence that parental involvement is beneficial for a child's success in school. This study, therefore sought to find out the effects of polygamous parents' involvement on pupils' academic achievements in Township Ward of Turkana County. Available studies have examined the effects of polygamy on pupils' academic performance in other countries and counties. Since there is very little literature about the relationship between polygamous marriage and academic performance of pupils in the county, this study was therefore focused on finding out if the two are related in Turkana County

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Parental involvement is key in moulding academic performance of pupils both at home and in schools. To create an ideal society where children are socialized, oriented, and educated into responsible and productive members of the society, families and responsible institutions should endeavor to educate and guide children accordingly. Despite the efforts by the Kenyan government to enhance academic performance and quality of education through provision of free primary education, introduction of a 100% transition, provision of academic bursaries and rolling out of school feeding programs which are meant to supplement families' efforts, the real situation facing the primary schools in Turkana County which has 57% polygamy prevalence rate is that; only 64% of its pupils perform well academically and transits to secondary schools (KNBS, 2019 & MOE data; 2021).

The researcher was concerned that a huge knowledge gap existed between the 57% polygamy prevalence rate in Turkana and the 64% transition rate and how it affected academic performance in Turkana. The search for existing literature that can bridge this gap has been unsuccessful, hence the reason the researcher conducted a study in Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County about the effects of polygamous family's parental involvement on academic performance of pupils.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of polygamous family's parental involvement on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools.

2.2 Objective of the Study

To examine the effects of polygamous families parental involvement on academic performance in public primary schools in Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County

2.3 Research Questions

How does parental involvement in polygamous families affect academic performance in public primary schools in Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County?

2.4 Significance of the Study

Since the study found out how lack of parental involvement in polygamous families affects negatively academic performance of pupils, the study is significant in proposing

recommendations to various stakeholders and leaders the need to unite and launch robust community sensitizations campaigns on the importance of parental involvement in the studies of their children.

2.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study covered the effects of polygamous family's parental involvement on academic performance of primary school pupils within Township Ward of Turkana Central Sub County. The period of the study covered the month of August 2022. The research discussed parental involvement of polygamous families on academic in primary schools. The scope also focused on Township Ward of Turkana Central Subcounty because the KNBS 2019 census report of 2019 identified Turkana central to be having the highest polygamous rate for instance, one of its wards namely Township had 57% polygamy prevalence. The report also revealed that only 64% of the pupils in Township ward perform well academically and transit to secondary schools (KNBS, 2019 & MOE data 2021).

2.6 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that there were polygamous families around the area of the study and that the respondents of the study were to provide honest answers to the study questions. Before the commencement of the study, the researcher also assumed that characteristics of the sample population will resonate with those of the target population. Thirdly, the researcher expected Maximum Corporation from the respondents who consented their participation in the study.

3.0 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Effects of Parental Involvement in Polygamous Families on Academic Performance Pupils

The concept of parental involvement in relation to academic performance of pupils simply refers to the time spent, resources committed, and academic guidance offered by parents towards supporting their children to excel and perform better in their academics. (Landry & Neubauer, 2016).

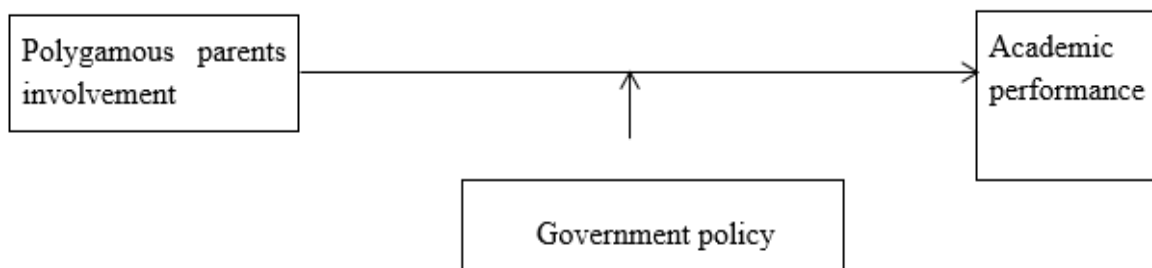
In a study that focused on polygamy and education in continental Europe, De Lange, Dronkers and Maarten (2014) in a comparative perspective used pooled data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to investigate the effects of parental involvement on children's educational performance. The study covered 209,300 students at 11,887 schools in 25 countries. Results revealed that reduced parental involvement affects academic performance of pupils negatively. The pupils from polygamous backgrounds who were supported by their parents in doing their homework scored nearly 14 points lower than pupils who were not supported.

Polygamous marriages are more prevalent in Nigeria at the rate of 57% according to Dalton and Leung (2013). In Nigeria, children from polygamous families don't enjoy maximum parental guidance hence get socialized mostly by external environment made up of peers, neighbors, and schoolmates. This makes their academic performances dwindle because they are subjected to drug abuse, criminal activities, and immoral behaviors among other negatively impact on their ability to concentrate in studies. Dalton, and Leung (2013) noted that

polygamous parents deny their children required academic guidance contrary to parents from monogamous families who familiarize with friends of their children to ensure that they are not socialized by negative external environment. Dalton and Leung (2013) further asserted that some children in polygamous families are negatively affected academically because they not supported with requisite educational materials like uniforms, pens and books required for their studies due to family's extreme financial position, making their children demoralized hence dropping out of schools in the process.

Teresa (2018) sought to establish the extent to which polygamous families in relation to parental involvement affects the academic performance of pupils in Kenya and found out that apart from extreme poverty levels experienced by most polygamous families in Pokot and Samburu communities, most primary school pupils also underperform in their academics due lack or minimal parental involvement in their children's studies. Teresa (2018) sampled 213 pupils from polygamous families and found out that 170 who were not supported academically by their parents scored below 34 points in their previous mathematics test, while 43 who enjoyed academic guidance at home scored an average score of 71 points. In the end, Teresa (2018) concluded that lack of parental involvement in studies of their children in polygamous marriages affect negatively academic performance of pupils because they don't support children's homework and hence the reason for their poor academic performance.

3.1 Conceptual Framework



According to the conceptual framework, if polygamous parents increase their level of involvement with the studies of their children for instance by guiding them more through their homework and increased school visits, children will be motivated to perform better in their academics, the reverse logic also holds.

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The study adopted mixed methods research design. This research design was adopted because of its ability to describe both quantitate and qualitative aspects of the situation, data, or case under investigation holistically.

4.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Township Ward of Turkana Central Subcounty. The choice of Township Ward of Turkana Central subcounty as the study area was informed by the KNBS 2019 Census report which identified Turkana central to be having the highest polygamous marriages prevalence rate compared to other regions of Turkana County which. Township Ward in Turkana Central had 57% polygamy prevalence rate and that only 64% of its pupils perform well academically and transits to secondary schools (KNBS, 2019 & MOE data 2021).

4.3 Target Population

The target population of the study comprised primary school 21374 pupils, their 21374 parents, and 15 head teachers in Township Ward, Turkana Central Sub- County which totaled 42,763 persons. Target population is the theoretical population in blueprint which a researcher plans to engage before the commencement of the study while the study population is the practical population that shows up for the study (Robert, 2014).

4.4 Sample Size

The researcher determined the sample size of 367 participants (177 pupils, 177 polygamous parents who consented the pupil's participation in the study, and the 13 headteachers) through Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table.

5.0 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

5.1 Questionnaire

The researcher used questionnaire to capture responses from the pupils and polygamous family heads. Questionnaires were structured using 3 close ended questions which had series of choices. In brief the structure of the questionnaire adopted a 5-point Likert scale with a varying level of agreement. In the 5-point Likert scale, 1 represented Strongly Agree, 2- Agree, 3- Neutral, 4- Disagree and 5- Strongly disagree.

5.2 Interview Schedule

The researcher used the interview schedule to gather information from head teachers on how parental involvement and size of polygamous families affected academic performance of pupils in public primary school.

5.3 Piloting of the Instruments

The researcher conducted a pilot study at Kanamkemer Primary in Kanamkemer Ward and where he targeted a sample size of 30 respondents from polygamous backgrounds which comprised 15 pupils and 15 parents and 1 headteacher in accordance with Samuels (2018) who proposed that a sample size of 30 and above is the most ideal for any pilot study whose sample size exceeds 150. Reliability of the instruments was tested using a pilot study which involved a small-scale preliminary study whose findings were used to assess the suitability of the instruments in carrying the main study. Cronbach's Alpha formulae was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires.

5.4 Validity of the Instruments

The concept of instruments validity ordinarily refers to the notion that the research instruments are well structured to capture the responses that will reliably answer research questions (Jackson, 2011). The validity of research instruments was established by the researcher using construct validity which was achieved by linking the research questions to the objectives of the study. Secondly the validity of instruments was also established by consulting the experts from the department of social science and Board of Post graduate studies in Turkana University College for their ratings, views, comments, and recommendations.

5.5 Reliability of the Instruments

According to Lavine (2014), reliability refers to the degree to which a research instrument gives consistent results or data after repeated trials. Reliability of instruments was tested using a pilot study which involved a small-scale preliminary study whose findings were used to assess the suitability of the instruments in carrying the main study. Cronbach's Alpha formulae was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaires. The researcher conducted a pilot study at Kanamkemer Primary in Kanamkemer Ward and where he targeted a sample size of 30 respondents from polygamous backgrounds which comprised 15 pupils and 15 parents in accordance with Samuels (2018) who proposed that a sample size of 30 and above is the most ideal for any pilot study whose sample size exceeds 150.

Quantitative responses and data captured by the instruments were subjected to an SPSS analysis which yielded coefficient value of 0.7. This meant that the instruments were reliable in accordance with Cronbach and Gleser (1964) who observed that a reliability coefficient of .70 and above is taken to be sufficient for a study to be conducted but if lower, then the instruments will be taken to be unreliable. Cronbach's alpha was computed by correlating the score for each scale item with the total score for each observation and then comparing that to the variance for all.

Apart from using Cronbach's alpha to determine instrument's reliability, the researcher used data collection triangulation to offset and complement the weaknesses and strengths of the different methods. The researcher sought to obtain independent, objective results and analysis that reflected reality, results that were repeatable in the event of another study on the same topic. The choice of sample and use of documentary data were meant to enhance the reliability of the study's findings.

5.6 Data Collection Procedures and Analysis Techniques

The researcher requested for permission from relevant authorities and then made personal visitation to the schools sampled, met the respective head teachers, informed them about the research, and arranged for possible dates of data collection. The researcher administered the questionnaires in person and made clarifications when need arose.

5.7 Ethical Considerations

To ensure that ethical considerations were adhered to during the entire research process, the researcher laid down various frame works which protected the respondents from harm for instance by applying for research license from National Council for Science and Technology

and Innovations (NACOSTI) through the Directorate of Post Graduate Studies of Turkana University. The researcher also acquired research authorization permit from MOE. The researcher also obtained an introductory letter from Turkana University College which informed the respondents about the researcher and the purpose of the research. To shield the pupils who are aged 18 years and below from unlawfully participating in the study, the researcher sought their consent through their parents and teachers before they were involved in the study.

6.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Effects of Parental Involvement on Academic Performance of Pupils

To determine the extent to which parental involvement affects academic performance of primary schools’ pupils, the researcher sought to determine from pupils whether their polygamous parents usually give them academic guidance or not, whether the pupils are usually supported by their parents in doing their homework or not, and whether the pupils are usually visited by their polygamous parents in schools or not. Questionnaires with structured questions were used to collect responses from pupils and the findings were summarized in table 1

Table 1 Effects of parental involvement on academic performance

	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
Questions and No of pupils who responded	5	4	3	2	1
My parents usually counsel and give me academic guidance when I perform poorly in my exams	1(1%)	2(1%)	27(15%)	37(21%)	110(62%)
My parents usually help me in doing my homework	4(2%)	14(8%)	24(14%)	43 (24%)	92 (52%)
I am usually visited by my parents at school	9 (5%)	21(12%)	20 (12%)	30 (17%)	97 (55%)
Average responses from pupils	5	12	24	37	100

(Source; Field research 2022)

From Table 4.8, a total of 2% of the pupils (3 out of 177) that is (1% +1% for those who agreed and strongly agreed) pupils agreed that they are usually counseled and advised by their parents while 83% (147 disagreed) and 27 remained neutral. In question 2, which asked whether

support their children academically at home, 10% (18 out of 177) agreed that their polygamous parents usually guide them in doing their homework while 76% (135 out of 177) disagreed with the same. Out of 177 total, 17% (30 out of 177) of the pupils also admitted that they have been visited by their parents while at school, while 72% (127 out of 177) disagreed that they have been visited by their parents while at school. With these findings its evident that increase in parental involvement affects positively academic performance of pupils while decreased involvement decreases academic performance of pupils

The researcher also used the interview schedule to get the opinions of the headteachers on how parental involvement affects academic performance of primary school pupils. The findings revealed that all the Headteachers (13) agreed that most of the pupils from polygamous backgrounds are rarely visited mainly because the polygamous men prefer spending their time with the youngest wife at the expense of getting involved with the studies of their children. The headteachers also argued that due to the large number of children in polygamous families' polygamous parents find it tiresome, expensive and time consuming to visit all of them. Headteachers agreed that the less visits accorded to these pupils by their less caring polygamous parents instills a sense of frustration in them as they are being laughed at by their peers who enjoy regular parental visits. This develops psychological trauma in their minds hence draining much of their study time hence the dismal academic performance due to time wastage. In their opinions 12 out of 13 interviewed headteachers said that most of polygamous parents don't support their children in handling their homework assignments. The pupils report that they don't find time with their parents when they go home because their parents usually return home when the children are already asleep and leave very early when they are still a sleep. Headteachers jointly agreed that the pupils who have been enjoying parental homework support have been scoring 20% more in their academics than their counterparts.

This study resonates with the study done by Landry and Neubauer (2016) which revealed that pupils from polygamous families who are supported by their parents during their studies children recorded better grades than their counterparts from backgrounds where parents were less involved with their studies. When polygamous pupils were asked if they enjoy academic counseling from their parents, the mean response was 1.7 in a scale of 1 to 5, the meaning they strongly disagreed that they are usually counseled by their parents. The study found out that 62% of the pupils (110 out of 177) from polygamous families Strongly Disagreed that they had been guided and given academic counseling while 21% of the pupils (37 out of 177) Disagreed about the same, 15% of the pupils (27 out of 177) remained Neutral. The headteachers further pointed out that most of the pupils from polygamous parents underperformed academically because they stayed away from them.

This study resonates with the study by Landry and Neubauer (2016) which revealed that pupils from polygamous families who were supported by their parents during their studies tend to record better grades than their counterparts from backgrounds where parents were less involved with their studies. To support their assertions, Landry and Neubauer (2016) conducted a study which aimed to assess the role of the government in provision of quality education, they sampled 237 pupils from polygamous backgrounds in America whose parents participated in their studies and realized that 70% of pupils who were guided in doing their homework have

had a mean grade of 65 points while their counterparts had an average score of 45 points. The scholars concluded that pupils who enjoy academic guidance from their parents perform well academically because they enjoy full attention and the requisite academic support and guidance from their parents (Landry & Neubauer, 2016).

This study also supports Bell's (2013) study which sought to establish the role of polygamous marriage on the studies of young scholars from polygamous background in Arabia, He sampled parents' polygamous families, and realized that only 20% were involved in supervision of their children's studies while the remaining 80% cared less. On assessment of their children's grades, the formers children's scored 10 points better than the latter from the backgrounds where parents were not involved in studies of children.

7.0 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This objective of the study whose respondents were pupils from polygamous families was to examine the effects of parental involvement on academic performance of primary school pupils and found out that 83% of the pupils are usually not counseled or advised academically by their polygamous parents. The study also established that 72% of the pupils aren't visited by their polygamous parents hence the poor academic performance. Reduced parental involvement affects negatively academic performance of pupils. This study resonates with the study done by Landry and Neubauer (2016) which revealed that pupils from polygamous families who are supported by their parents during their studies children recorded better grades than their counterparts from backgrounds where parents were less involved with their studies.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The objective of the study was to examine the effects of polygamous family's parental involvement on academic performance of primary school pupils. From the study's findings, it it's evidently true that reduced parental involvement of polygamous parents on academics of their children affects their academic performance negatively. That when parents don't visit their children in schools, when academic guidance at home is lacking and when there are limited parent-pupil interactions, pupils lack direction which leads to academic failure. This study resonates with the study that was done by Landry and Neubauer (2016) which revealed that pupils from polygamous families who are supported by their parents during their studies children recorded better grades than their counterparts from backgrounds where parents were less involved with their studies.

8.1 Policy Recommendations

Based on these objectives, the researcher found out that lack of parental involvement in the studies of pupils from polygamous families affects negatively academic performance. The researcher recommends the enactment of policies that will make it mandatory for the Local NGOs, Council of elders, religious leaders, and ward level leaders such as the chiefs, MCAs, to unite on yearly basis and sensitize their communities on the importance of educating all children and the need for polygamous parents to get involved with the studies of their children.

8.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The focus of this study was to assess the effects of polygamous family's parental involvement on academic performance of Pupils in primary schools. Although the study established that reduced polygamous families involvement in academics of pupils negatively affects the academic performance of pupils, the researcher doesn't claim that the study was exhaustive. For the purposes of enhancing research activities and public awareness, other researchers and scholars may carry out research in the following areas on the Influence of culture on academic performance of pupils from polygamous backgrounds, Case Study of Turkana Culture.

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