

Gender Disparities in Higher Primary School Dropouts: A

Sociological Analysis

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Abstract

This research explores the sociological factors responsible for higher rates of primary school drop-out amongst girls as compared to boys. The research shows these disparities are complex and influenced by socio-economic, cultural, institutional factors and their own family background. Girls are disproportionately affected by socio-economic factors such as poverty and household income, with culture norms and gender roles continued to worsen this discrepancy. The answer lies, in part, because of institutional biases within the education system and differences in levels of parental involvement. The use of theoretical frameworks such as Feminist Theory and Social Stratification serve well in explaining these discrepancies. This paper ends by offering policy recommendations that can help to address the issue of gender gaps in dropout, looking intended for ways forward, such as debates and empirical evidences supposed about feasible extra contributors plus theoretical models.

Keywords: Gender disparities, Higher primary school dropouts, Socio-economic factors, Cultural norms, Institutional factors, Family dynamics, Feminist Theory, Social Stratification Theory.

I. Introduction

1.1. Background

Dropout rates at the higher primary level remain a chronic global concern that has significant implications on both educational quality and education access broadly. Primary education as a crucial stage for students where they establish their primary ability and competence but many children do not pass this essential educational pathway (UNESCO, 2005). Specifically, around education, gender inequalities in educational outcomes are of particular interest as they reflect broader socio-cultural and economic disparities that manifest differently for boys than girls. Characterizing the causes of these disparities is crucial for developing effective educational policies and interventions.

1.2. Research Objective

The study attempts to identify the sociological determinants leading to gender differences in dropout at higher primary. The study examines these factors to uncover the root causes and recommendations for ameliorating gender-based disparities in education.

1.3. Research Questions

Which sociological factors are most responsible for the dropout rates of boys and girls?

The question is to observe the distinct impact of different socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors on boys and girls in their decisions for school dropout.

What are the contributions of these elements in each sexes?

The way that these factors play out differently for boys and girls is important in the optimization of sex-specific interventions targeting needs as well as barriers according to gender.

What theoretical perspectives could account for these gender differences?

We will address the structural and systemic roots of gender disparities in education with sociological explanations based on two established theories - Feminist Theory; Social Stratification Theory.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Gender Gaps in Education:

Historical Framing of Education Gender Gap

We can clearly see that historically, gender has had a great impact on the distribution of educational opportunities, most times big boys are favoured over girls. These discrepancies stem from historic sociocultural biases, supporting male educational attainment (both for boys and their schooling) over girls' education as it was regarded less value laden by King & Hill (1993). Changes have been made through global initiatives but the gap remains broad after all this time.

Global and Regional Statistics on Dropout Rates by Gender

Even with improvements in the situation, girls continue to be at a disadvantage especially in wide regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia where dropout rates for girls are higher. UNESCO (2005) noted that girls continued to face particularly high risks of dropping out from school, due in part to early marriage; child labor, gender-based violence among other factors. In contrast, in some regions girls drop out of school at a younger age than boys and read less often because they are encouraged to do more household labour (UNESCO

2005).

2.2. Sociological Factors

A Brief Overview of Socio-Economic, Cultural and Institutional Factors

Families are typically forced to value boys over girls based on socio-economic realities of poverty, resources available etc. The high dropout rates of girls are also a consequence of cultural practices such as early marriage and gender-specific role expectations Colclough, Rose, & Tembon (2000). Institutional factors (gender-insensitive curricula and no female teachers) are also important.

Previous studies investigate these factors on the educational gender gap

Several studies have presented the role of socioeconomic and culture on gender differences. As an example, Fuller and Liang (1999) stated that in South Africa the ethnicity economic status of earlier identified subjects is significant predictors girls school dropout. Lloyd and Mensch (2008) also found that school environments were not suitable to girls' needs which led them to drop out more easily.

2.3. Theoretical Frameworks

We can naturally apply theories such as feminist theory, social stratification theory to understand why there are gender disparities when it comes dropout rates.

Feminist Theory suggests that these inequities in education are caused by male-centered power and politics which the means of oppression. This theory contributes important insight into how norms and values within the broad society serve as structures that disadvantage girls in competitive-edge settings (Harding, 1987). Social Stratification Theory, however looks at how having certain social dominance or class place may affect educational achievements. It demonstrates how dropout rates are a matter of gender, which is inflected by economic and social positionality (Collins 2009).

III. Key Sociological Factors

3.1. Socio-Economic Factors

Effect of Poverty, Family Income and Economic Stresses

Both boys and girls are more likely to drop out when they come from poverty, though the impact of being poor varies by sex. This may lead to prioritising boys' education over girls and their being perceived as having better financial prospects (Colclough, Rose & Tembon 2000). Remarkably, economic pressures can lead to children living school or boys may need engaging in labor outside home and girls doing the domestic work (Lloyd & Mensch, 2008).

3.2. Cultural and Social Norms

Gender Roles, Expectations and Cultural Perceptions of Education

These are cultural norm and also gender roles play a vital role in this. Many traditional gender roles in society (in which boys' education is more important than girls), offer fewer incentives for girl's educational pursuits and therefore, it can lead to early marriage and motherhood of the adolescent female child (King & Hill 1993). These social norms cement existing gender imbalances in education whereby girls are perhaps not able (Colclough et al., 2000) to pursue all educational choices which they have rights to do.

3.3. Institutional Factors

The first variable was the school policies, followed by teacher attitudes and finally educational resources.

In the latter case as well, institutional mechanisms within schools contribute significantly to dropout rates. Such male-dominated settings, combined with gender-insensitive school policies (which can result in girls being discouraged or prohibited from attending sector-specific courses), as well a lack of female teachers and facilities such as separate toilets for girl students all contribute to higher dropout rates among girls (UNESCO 2005). The attitudes and stereotypes of teachers may also deter girls from participating further; indeed play environments which complete little to accommodate for the specific needs of girls are likely to worsen this situation (Fuller & Liang, nodoc).

3.4. Family Dynamics

Parental Involvement, Support and Educational Expectations for Boys & Girls

Family dynamics, such as support and involvement from parents greatly effects children education. There are some key differences with regards to parents' expected investment in their boys, and if they do have very high expectations for them. Parental participation in a child's educational outcomes has been linked to better academic results and lower dropout rates, but parental gender biases can translate into less support for girls' education.

IV. Discussion

4.1. Discussion of Results

Understanding the Socio-Economic, Cultural and Institutional Factors Driving Gender Differences in Dropout Rates

The analysis shows that socio-economic influences - poverty, household income - are the driving factors preventing girls from schooling because of economic obligations and societal

values. Gender roles, reinforced by cultural and social norms often prejudice families towards a preference of boys over girls to the point that they are also few gate keepers who can encourage their girl child's schooling as such leading many will be getting married at early age or stay back home carrying our domestic work. Institutional factors such as gender-blind school policies and teacher ideologies formed an unsupportive environment for girls which collectively lead to high drop-out rates among the latter group. Taken together, these results demonstrate the complexity of gender disparities in education and highlight that to resolve them a range of strategies across different sectors are needed.

4.2. Theoretical Implications

Testing Sociological Theories of Gender Differences in Dropping Out

Feminist Theory and Social Stratification Theory are examples of how the blank could be useful in explaining differences by sex as dropout rates. Feminist Theory attacks the notion of girls as 'poor lads', and claims that patriarchal structures extended to educational systems account for how it is not just these (previously authoritative) biased schools dictating their own exams suggesting they have about 4 or so: dissolved before finishing timing terrorist mode. Social Stratification Theory Social stratification theory will help to explain how the social position and SES status intersect with gender, thus affecting education of girls from lower-income family. Theoretical perspectives grounded in race and culture both confirm the empirical observations, provide evidence of a more systemic nature to educational inequities, and suggest ways for developing theory further as well as interventions.

4.3. Policy Implications

Conclusion Educational Policy Suggestions for Gender Disparities in Dropout Rates

Policy recommendations should address the need to build and create inclusive school settings that gender disparities in drop out rates are reversed By offering monetary assistance to impoverished families, and ensuring that girls are given equal educational opportunities, policies can address socio-economic restrictions. This can be prevented by holding community awareness on the benefits of educating a girl child and end the cultural norms. Schools ought to introduce gender-sensitive ethos with provision of adequate amenities for girls and creating awareness among teachers towards stereotyping. A comprehensive approach to these factors will help educational policies towards a significant reduction in the gender gap, not systemically at dropouts.

V. Conclusion

5.1. Summary

Key Highlights from the Analysis on Gender Disparities in Higher Primary Dropout

The involvement of socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors with higher primary school dropout rates among female children in the region is highlighted through this study. Lack of access to education for young girls is driven by pervasive poverty; entrenched cultural bias that favors boys over girls in formal and informal educational settings; and institutional biases within the sector. Socio-economic factors make many families emphasize the education of their sons preferentially to that of daughters, while traditional norms mean girls tend to get married early or shoulder domestic duties which take away from time they spend being taught. These disparities are further compounded by institutional factors- lack of facilities as well as gender-insensitive policies. Using Feminist Theory and Social Stratification Theory as frameworks to understand these issues, the data give quantitative proof of what I am observing but leaves it wide open for more comprehensive explanations (e.e. theory on changes in power disparities or intersectionality).

5.2. Future Research

Recommendations for Future Research to Investigate Other Variables and Confirm Theoretical Models

Further research is needed to investigate other barriers (socio-psychological and environmental) that are influential in the gender differences seen in student dropout rates. Longitudinal analyses would offer better understanding of how factors influence educational trajectories across time. It would also help reinforce or disconfirm existing theoretical models that perhaps we need to include the role of intersectionality, how overlapping identities such as gender and race combined with socio-economic status might interact resulting in different dropout rates. Cross sectional studies across regions and cultures could add insight into particular challenges facing all, whereas effective strategies in intervention. Further, more research is needed to assess long-term effects of policy interventions that would help in finding the best practices and scaling solutions for reducing gender differences in education.

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