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# Low Cost Boarding Primary Schools' Influence on Pastoralist Pupils' Academic Achievement in Mandera County, Kenya

By

<sup>1</sup> Jillaow Elyas Abdi, <sup>2</sup>Momanyi Marcella and <sup>3</sup>Mwalw'a Shem E-mail: elyabdi2014@gmail.com

#### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of low-cost boarding primary schools (LCBPS) on pastoralist pupils' academic achievement in primary education in Mandera County. It was grounded on the Human Capital Theory. The study was anchored in Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods research design whereby cross-sectional survey research design and phenomenology were used. Data collection instruments used were questionnaires, document analysis guide, and interview guide and observation checklist. The research instruments were subjected to both content and face validity. Cronbach Alpha technique determined reliability of quantitative items while trustworthiness of qualitative items was determined in terms of their credibility, dependability and conformability. Ethical standards were upheld while conducting the study. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were cleaned, coded and keyed in a computer Statistical Package for Social Sciences software version 25 to generate frequencies and percentages that summarized data and presented in frequency distribution tables. Qualitative data obtained from document analysis guide, open ended questions, interview guide were organized into themes based on research questions and reported in excerpts, verbatim, narratives and direct quotes. Key findings showed that Low Cost Boarding Primary Schools influenced pupil academic achievement. The challenges encountered were shortage of teaching staff, parents' level of education, inadequate funding and child labor. Based on the findings, the study recommended employment of more qualified teachers, providing security to curb teacher exodus, addressing the quality issue by supporting teachers on the job, sensitizations of parents and the improvement of the learning environment as ways of enabling all children of Mandera County to access and achieve primary education. The government should review the provision of capitation grants, curb terrorism, and recruit teachers from the local community as a long-term measure to adequately staff the schools.

**Key words**: Academic Achievement, Low Cost Boarding, Mandera County, Primary Schools, Pastoralists, Pupils

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#### Introduction

All governments the world over recognize education as a vehicle for attaining economic, political, social and technological advancement. Indeed, education enhances income, restores or generates skills, which are helpful to people when given opportunities. Besides, it facilitates the realization of other human rights, provides an exit strategy out of poverty and reinforces social cohesion and integration (United Nations Education Social and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, 2007; Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013; Government of Kenya (GoK), 2012). As enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010) articles 43(1)(f), 53(1)(b) 54 and 55(a), and in consonance with international conventions such as the African Charter on the Human and People's Rights, Article 17; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 11; the United Nations International Convention on Social and Economic Rights, Article 13; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child(CRC), Articles 28, 29 and 30, every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education. As espoused in these documents, free and compulsory basic education should be provided to all children, even those of pastoralist families.

Over the years, reaching the nomads with formal education has been a major challenge (Abdi, 2010; Krätli, 2001; Muhammad & Abbo, 2010) due to their migratory culture in pursuit of water and pasture for their livestock. Efforts to provide education to them through such interventions as free education, school feeding programmes, low cost boarding schools, and provision of uniforms, books and stationery to pupils have remained futile (Carr-Hill & Peart, 2005; Dyer, 2016; Global Monitoring Report, GMR, 2010). As a matter of fact, pastoralist enrolment, attendance, academic achievement and transition to higher stages of education remain well below those of other groups globally (GMR, 2010; Kratli & Dyer, 2009; Dyer, 2009; Krätli, 2001). Providing mass education to the nomads owing to their mobility has been a challenge and this is shown in the low school enrolment in pastoralist areas.

Factors that hinder pastoralists' children from participating in basic education include mobility over large expanses of land in search of water and pasture for their livestock. Further, both boys and girls are denied access for different reasons: while the pastoralist families assume it is not safe for the girls to go to distant lands to pursue education, the boys are required to get more involved in livestock herding (Schelling, Weibel & Bonfoh, 2008). Pastoralists' resistance is neither to the idea of formal education; nor is there incompatibility between pastoralism and education (Abdi, 2011; Kratli & Dyer, 2009). These are some of the reasons that inspired the adoption of new approaches of delivering education to the nomadic communities.

Studies conducted in Kenya show that children of nomadic pastoralists are confronted with myriad barriers to access and completion of primary education (Ngome, 2006). The Institute of Policy Analysis & Research (2003) report cites such barriers to participation in nomadic education as low community level premium attached to education; teachers' negative attitudes towards the learners; inadequate schools and classrooms; and long bandit-infested distances to school. Several reviewed literatures echo the aforementioned barriers. Other studies cite limited government investment in infrastructure, harsh physical conditions, insecurity, low population density, difficulties in attracting and retaining learners and teachers, and teacher quality, forced repetition,

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costs such as school uniform, poverty, cultural practices and poor learning environments (Krätli & Dyer, 2009; MOE, 2018).

The government of Kenya, with support of her partners, came up with different nomadic education delivery approaches such as the LCBPS, mobile schools, sedentary schools for mobile populations, open and distance learning through radios and receiver, and school feeding programmes and scholarships for girls. However, these approaches have not had the intended positive impact (Munene & Ruto, 2015). The sector still faces myriads of challenges in terms of access, relevance, quality, equity, and equality, efficiency in the management of educational resources, cost and financing of education, gender and regional disparities, and teacher quality and utilization (Wainaina, 2010). Further, school-age children are majorly engaged in nomadic pastoralists' activities and lifestyle owing to the low premium placed on education among nomadic pastoralists, especially for the girl child (Orodho, Waweru, Getange & Miriti, 2013), hence low participation in formal school attendance and learning (MoE, 2012; UNESCO, 2010; Ngugi, 2017) that conflicts with the pastoral livelihood management strategies that combine mobility with child labour (Dyer, 2014).

While boarding schools are generally considered an expensive option of accessing education for nomads (Krätli 2001), the introduction of LCBPS has been found to be attractive to pastoral communities. In Mongolia, for example, the introduction of free boarding schools in 1950s saw an almost 100 % primary school enrolment in the 1990s. In Kenya, boarding schools are documented as the earliest attempt to provide basic education to the nomadic communities (Ministry of State for the Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands, (MDNKOAL, 2010). In the Development Plan for the period 1970 to 1974, the government made a resolution to provide boarding schools specifically in the ASAL districts of the country as a way of increasing primary school participation rates.

The government established LCBPS in the pastoralist areas with support from the World Bank to avoid disrupting the schooling of children whose parents were mobile (Sifuna, 2005). In these schools, the government provided free boarding facilities mainly food and shelter (free beds, mattresses, sheets, water, and lighting) and the parent only caters for the child's personal effects such as soap, uniform, shoe polish and pocket money. The LCBPS have since grown to 426 (MoE, 2018) and continue to attract children from the nomadic communities. Nonetheless, the concept of boarding schools has proved to be a costly venture that cannot be used to reach all nomadic children. Ayiro and Sang (2015) critique of boarding schools for pastoralist children is that such schools expose the children to extraordinarily unfavourable trade-off in restraining informal learning and enduring forced separation from their family environment as they seek the formal education within a school-based system.

The nomadic communities of Kenya are categorized into three: Pastoral nomads, fishing nomads, and hunters and gatherers (MoE, 2010). Pastoral nomads in Kenya are found in the northern counties of Kenya - Mandera, Marsabit, Garissa; counties of Rift Valley - Turkana, West Pokot, Samburu, Kajiado, Narok; and northern part of coastal region – Tana River (Government of Kenya, 2015).

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The Kenyan Government with support from its development partners put up low cost boarding primary schools (LCBPS) among the nomadic communities of Kenya. The objectives of the boarding schools that were targeting primary school going children were: to provide the child with a conducive secure learning environment away from a home characterized by family conflicts and trauma caused by a hostile environment, cattle rustling, movement from place to place, FGM and

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early marriages, to give the child enough study time, to mitigate against the nomadic kind of life i.e. the movement of children from place to place which disrupts learning resulting in dropping out hence low retention rates, to help the child develops holistically; the school environment will help the child grow in all domains. Another major objective of the LCBPS was to create equity, by removing the challenges that this children face which are only unique to this geographical location, hence making education accessible in ASALS just like the way it is in the other parts of the country.

Data from the MoEST (2014) shows that Mandera County registered the lowest primary school enrolment rates in 2014 (Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of 29.2% and Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of 25.3%) against the national primary school enrolment rates of 103.5% for GER and 88.2% for NER. It further shows that Mandera county also had the highest proportion of out-ofschool children based on the primary NER, information that is corroborated by UNICEF's (2016) report titled 'Out of School Children Situation in Kenya' that showed that a total of 852,000 children aged between 6 and 17 years were still out of school with Mandera County being the most affected. In terms of academic achievement, Mandera County registered mean scores lower than the national mean score in the Ministry of Education's Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) analyses for the period 2013-2018. The MOE (2018) report shows that the lowest achievement levels in Mathematics were reported in Mandera. Thus, performance in Mandera County has consistently fallen below the national average over the past five years. For instance, in 2017 and 2018, out of the 47 counties, Mandera managed positions 43 and 47 respectively. This is despite the implementation of LCBPS in the ASAL regions including Mandera County over the years. It is against this background that this study investigated the influence of LCBPS delivery approach on pupil academic achievement among the pastoralist communities of Mandera County, Kenya.

#### **Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The study was grounded in the Human Capital Theory (HCT). The origins of the HCT can be traced to macroeconomic development theory in the 1960s when it was reshaped by a group of economists associated with the University of Chicago (Mincer, 1958; Schultz, 1962) and became fully developed by Becker (1964). The theory emphasizes how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers. The basic premise behind HCT is that people's learning capacities are of comparable value with other resources involved in the production of goods and services (Lucas, 1990). One of the tenets of the theory is the claim that education enhances a person's skills and leads to a higher productivity level in the workplace, which in turn brings a higher wage to the person (Blaug, 1976). Another tenet is the claim that, besides increasing the wages of educated employees, education generates higher productivity, lowers unemployment, and creates greater social mobility. These benefits are referred to as positive externalities.

Human Capital Theory (HCT) rests on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and necessary to improve the productive capacity of an existing labour force (Schultz, 1961). It assumes that the individual acquires knowledge and skills through education and training; these knowledge and skills increases his or her productivity in the workplace, resulting in higher wages to the individual (Marginson, 1989, 1993). Therefore, people would invest in education up to the point where the private benefits from education are equal to the private costs. The social and private costs include foregone earnings, tuition, fees, books, and other miscellaneous costs. As the theory posits, it is individuals and not governments that invest an amount of time in education, and then the return comes in the form of higher participation in the labour market, less incidences of unemployment and relatively higher wages (Woodhall, 1995; Becker, 1993).

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The Human Capital Theory (HCT) has been useful in evaluating the relationships between education and training as inputs and economic and social benefits as outputs. In addition, HCT enables policymakers to understand costs and benefits of investing in education (social, economic and political), hence able to effectively develop policies to change individuals' cost/benefit calculations (e.g. by reducing short-term costs associated with educational investments) and increase their likelihood of pursuing education. The theory advocates for the need for policy makers to allocate significant resources such as teachers, teaching and learning resources and building of infrastructure to the expansion of education systems in order to enhance human development in the society. By such means, productivity is enhanced and sustained based on an increased and diversified labour force (Ngugi, 2016). The theory argues that an individual's acquired knowledge and skills can translate to certain goods and services, thereby propelling governments to provide education to all, including the unreached and the marginalized groups through alternative modes of education such as LCBPS.

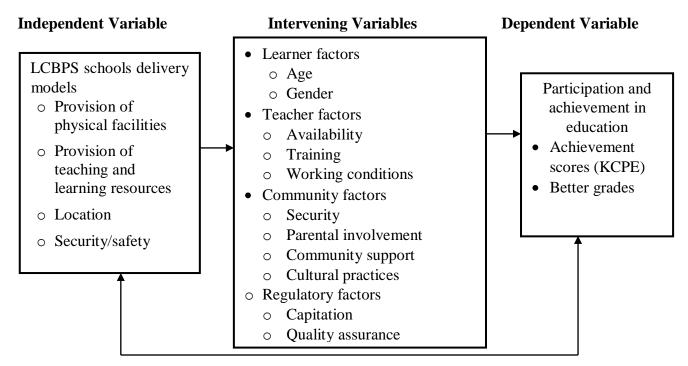
Despite its importance, the HCT has faced several criticisms. A large literature argues that educational outcomes are socially differentiated and are more a function of prior inequalities and institutional stratification in education, than individual choices about self-investment in education (Hoxby & Avery, 2013; Boliver 2011, 2013). According to the OECD (2014), the returns to education are affected by several other factors other than learning itself. Other scholars argue that earnings are not determined by the learning institution or college, but rather by externalities such as customs and hierarchies in professions and workplaces; wage determination systems and the industrial balance of power (Arum & Roksa, 2014; Piketty, 2014). Wolniak et al. (2008) argue that after graduation, education is associated with a growing impact on earnings, in non-linear fashion, hence the outcomes of investing in education are non-linear and less predictable.

Despite its criticism, the HCT has become influential in policy and public thinking about the relationship between education, work, productivity and earnings (Marginson, 2017). For instance, in the 1980s and 1990s the theory informed the then structural adjustment approach to education in cost measures and rate of return analysis in Africa's education systems with the financing of education shifting to individuals benefiting from education. As noted by McMahon and Oketch 2013), HCT still provides a strong framework and relevance to educational development in sub-Saharan Africa. In relation to this study, the theory was related to the people's desire to invest in education as a result of future benefit. It is against this background that the HCT guided the study in interrogating the current debates and issues regarding education provision to the pastoralist communities of Mandera County.

#### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study shows the interplay between the independent variables and the intervening variables to bring about the dependent/outcome variables of the study. As illustrated in Figure 1, the independent variables (LCBPS on delivery models) affect the dependent variables (participation and achievement in primary education), while controlling for the possible effects of the intervening variables namely; learner factors, teacher factors, government/regulatory factors and community factors.

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**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework for the study Source: Author (2020)

The independent variables are built around the features of LCBPs namely the physical facilities, Water Sanitation and Health (WASH) facilities, teaching and learning resources, a learner-friendly learning environment and security provision. The framework holds that the facilities and resources that characterize LCBPS provide opportunities for children from disadvantaged communities to participate in education and attain a high academic achievement. For instance, pupil achievement in education thrives in learning environments that are learner friendly, have adequate and well-maintained physical facilities (boarding facilities, classrooms and playgrounds) and WASH facilities (water points, toilets and sanitation disposal points). However, the provision of education in LCBPS is affected by a number of factors including learner and teacher factors, community factors and regulatory factors by the government. Ultimately, these influence pupils' participation and achievement in education.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

Available literature indicates that studies have been done on education of nomads. For instance, in China, Postiglione et al., (2012) examined the challenges and accomplishments of popularizing basic education in nomadic regions of TAR. They report a case study of Nyerong County, which harbours nomadic in Nakchu prefecture. The research involved conducting two field visits to Nyerong during which several schools were visited. Each time, a few schools were visited, and conversations were conducted with school principals, teachers and students. Also, archival data were collected and meetings were organized with officials from the County Educational Bureau. Key findings showed the difficulties that accompanied the transition from one instructional language to another. This had two corollaries: one to the students and the other to the teachers. Tibetan was the language of instruction in all nomadic primary schools and Chinese the language of instruction in middle schools. Consequently, the academic performance of students transitioning

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from primary schools to middle schools suddenly dropped and the students who developed emotional fear of study subsequently dropped out of school. The community teachers who taught in the local Tibetan language had to learn Chinese and adopt new methods of teaching. Most teachers were however reluctant to adopt the new method of teaching. This affected the popularization of basic education in TAR. While the cited study provides insights into transition and academic achievement of nomadic children in China, the longitudinal is silent on how it dealt with the weaknesses embedded in a longitudinal approach that was employed in Nyerong County. The possible attrition of the participants and inability of participants to recall events over a three-year lap may have affected the study. These weaknesses were overcome in this study's by using both cross-sectional and phenomenological research designs.

Were (2014) examined the effect of Low-Cost Boarding Primary School on enrolment and retention rates in ASAL primary schools in Lomelo Division; Turkana County. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, drawing data from five primary schools and a total of 150 respondents who included five head teachers, 10 SMC members, 15 parents and 120 pupils. The researcher used both probability sampling to select pupils and purposive sampling to select school head teachers, SMC members and parents who participated in the study. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and observations checklists. The findings showed that there was a significant relationship between LCBPS and access and retention. Secondly, the study observed a remarkable increase in enrolment since 2006-2012. However, inadequate resources, mismanagement and delay in funding by the government hindered the provision of education in the LCBPS. The current study enriched the methodology by augmenting survey research design with phenomenology research design in order to yield deeper information about the effect of LCBPS on pupil's academic achievement.

Ing'ollan (2016) investigated the factors affecting primary schools' pupils' performance from nomadic pastoral communities in Turkana East District, Kenya. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and targeted the head teachers, teachers, pupils and parents in the ten public primary schools in Turkana East District. This yielded sample size of 10 head teachers, 77 class eight teachers, 200 class eight pupils and parents. Data were collected through questionnaires and interview schedules. The findings of the study showed low female child participation in education. This was attributed to the cultural practice where girls are denied access to education and married out in exchange for cattle. On average, 55% of the parents would marry their daughters at age of between 10-12 years while 40% marry them at age of 13-14 years. Indeed, previous studies have echoed the practice of attaching more value to girls' marriage than to educating them. The study further established that the high mobility of the pastoralist families made irregular school attendance for most children resulting in high dropouts. The study thus concluded that cultural practices and high mobility of pastoralist families caused poor school attendance thus affecting school performance in Turkana East district.

Ing'ollan (2016) also established that the long distances covered from home to school affected pupil performance at school. This is because children who walk long distances arrive at school when they are tired and this affects their attention span in class. They may also arrive late and therefore miss what some class sessions. On activities children did while at home, the study found that they take care of animals and boys engaged in cattle rustling. It emerged that cattle rustling practice was considered a source of income. This poses a challenge to education in among pastoralist communities because children have little or no interaction with what they learnt at school. Without some little amount of revision, performance at school is often jeopardized. Such children will therefore register poor performance at school. Thus, the current study sought to

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determine if pupils in LCBPS ever get spare time at home to attend to school work by posing to them an open question on the activities they did while at home.

As a way of understanding how pastoralist communities affect the quality of education in Mandera County, Hussein (2016) investigated the factors that affect the performance in KCPE in Takaba Division of Mandera west. The study focused on the effect of teacher qualification, socioeconomic factors and community involvement on the quality of education. Key findings showed that poor retention of teachers in the rural areas negated the quality of education offered in schools. Very few teachers could be recruited from within these regions due to low education levels; the vulnerability of the areas due to insecurity and poverty. That girls' education is affected by negative attitudes of the girls' parents and communities towards education, boy-child preference, female genital cutting, early marriage, and excessive girl-child labor.

In a related study, Dube and Orodho (2014) sought to determine the explanatory variables for the dismal transition, retention and performance of the girl-child in secondary schools in Rhamu Town in Mandera County. Their study adopted the mixed methods research design. In particular, the study used the descriptive and multi-case studies research designs. Both probability and nonprobability sampling methods selected the study participants. That is, 54 parents were purposively sampled while stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 18 teachers and 120 students. Questionnaires, interview guides and Focus Group Discussions collected data. The study established that school dropout for most of the girls occurred in upper classes of primary schools particularly between class 5 and 8. The few girls who were lucky to join secondary schools dropped out before completing their education. Gender disparities were found in performance in examinations with male students performing better than female students. The dismal transition, retention and performance of the girl-child were attributed to the inability of parents pay the furtive school charges as a result of poverty at the household level, the retrogressive socio-cultural practices and the low premium attached to the education of the girl-child. Other reasons that were given included the challenges of early pregnancies and marriages, and inability of the government to create awareness to parents on the value of education as well as enforce punitive aspects of the Basic Education Act of 2013 to parents who fail to take their children to school.

#### **Research Design and Methodology**

The study was anchored in the Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Research design which comprises of both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. From quantitative, cross-sectional design was used to gather quantitative data from various categories of participants that comprised on head teachers, teachers and pupils. From the qualitative phenomenology design was used to gather in depth information on lived experiences from local chiefs, parents and area education officers. The qualitative data collected were used to enrich and support the quantitative data obtained from the cross-sectional survey design. The study adopted mixed methods approach was considered appropriate for the study as it enabled the researcher to combine quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, or approaches to a single study (Creswell, 2014). Using this approach, quantitative and qualitative data were converged particularly in the interpretation of the findings in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

The target population comprised of the County Director of Education (CDE), 6 Sub-County Directors of Education (SCDEs), 6 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs), 35 head teachers, 372 teachers, and 434 members of Board of Management (BOM), 10,720 parents, 10,951 pupils and 30 chiefs. Mandera County has 35 LCBPS with enrolment of 10,951 pupils. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample size for a finite population, 31 schools were sampled using stratified proportionate sampling technique. From the sampled schools, 12

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head teachers, 186 teachers and 375 pupils was sampled. In addition, all the 6 SCDEs, the 6 QASOs and the CDE participated in the study. Moreover, 12 members of BOMs, six parents with children in LCBPS and 12 chiefs were sampled to participate in the study using purposive sampling technique.

Data was collected by use of questionnaires, interview guides, document analysis and observation checklist. Three experts in education and one educational official with an enormous experience in nomadic education validated the research instruments in terms of both content and face validity. Each of the experts separately judged the clarity, objectivity and relevance of the items to the research questions. Their constructive feedback and responses were incorporated in the instruments thus validating them. The instruments were piloted in three LCBPS that was excluded from participating in the actual study. Cronbach Alpha technique determined the reliability for quantitative items on Likert scale while reliability that of qualitative items was determined in terms of their credibility, peer debriefing, dependability and conformability.

Quantitative data from the field were coded, entered in the computer Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 generate descriptive statistics of frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages that were used to summarize data. Qualitative data were transcribed and translated. Key findings were shared during the debriefing sessions to identify areas of convergence and divergence with respect to common issues. Thereafter, the transcripts were reviewed for completeness and accuracy. The data were then organized thematically and presented in narratives, excerpts and direct quotes to corroborate with the quantitative findings.

#### Presentation, Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

#### **Demographic characteristics of Pupils**

The study collected data from pupils in LCBPS in Mandera County. The pupil characteristics gathered included gender, age category and class the pupil was enrolled. These are presented in Table 1.

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 Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Low Cost Boarding Primary School Pupils

Characteristics	S	Boarding section		Day section	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	306	89.5	19	86.4
	Female	36	10.5	3	13.6
Age Category	12-14 years	134	39.2	12	54.5
	15-17 years	200	58.5	9	40.9
	18 years or more	8	2.3	1	4.5
Class	Four	5	1.5	1	4.5
	Five	17	5	0	0
	Six	37	10.8	4	18.2
	Seven	93	27.2	7	31.8
	Eight	190	55.6	10	45.5
Total		342	94	22	6

Source: Field Data, 2020. LCBPS (Boarding), n = 342, LCBPS (Day), n = 22

As indicated in Table 1, 89.5 percent of the pupils from the LCBPS boarding were males; only 10.5 percent were females. Similarly, 86.4 percent of respondents from LCBPS day males while only 13.6 percent were females. This finding suggests a lower female participation in primary education in Mandera County. It is consistent with the MOE annual statistics (2016) which reported that fewer girls than boys attend school in the ASAL counties including Mandera County. Similarly, Adella (2016) found that although some members of the community have positive attitudes, many still hold negative stances concerning the value of educating the girl child. The findings therefore suggest that LCBPS have yet to achieve the goal of enhancing pupil participation in education, particularly for the girl child. Girls often face a myriad of challenges in accessing education, right from home (early marriage, domestic responsibilities), on their way to school (long distances to travel to and from school, and insecurity) and even at school (lack of WASH facilities, lack of sanitary products during menstruation). The lack of clean water and dedicated sanitation facilities for girls in the schools makes them to miss some classes and even drop out of school. While LCBPS may have mitigated the home and on-the-way challenges, the findings point to a possibility that the in-school factors remain a perennial challenge to the provision of education to the girl.

The findings show that more than half (60.8%) of the pupils from LCBPS boarding were aged 15 and above years; only 39.2 percent % were in the age bracket of 12-14 years. The mean age was 14.9. The finding shows that only 39.2 % of the pupils in the LCBPS boarding are within the primary school age. On average, the pupils were aged above the primary school going age of below 14 years. As regards the day school wing of the LCBPS, 54.5 % of the pupils were in the age bracket 12-14 years and less than half (45.5%) were aged 15 or more years with a mean age of 14.5. The findings show that 60.6 % of the LCBPS pupils were way above the normal primary school going age. However, 54.5 % of the day pupils were within the primary school going age

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bracket. The high proportion of pupils who were above the normal school going age stood a risk of dropping out of school to support parents with domestic chores or be married off for the case of female pupils than those who were within the school going age. On the other hand, it is worth noting that parents release their children to join boarding schools when they can take care of themselves. Boarding school requires that children wash their clothes, clean their dormitories and queue for food, a task that can be done at a slightly higher age bracket.

With regard to the class the pupils were enrolled, the findings show that a majority of the pupils (93.6% and 95.5% for the LCBPS boarding and LCBPS day schools respectively) were in the senior classes (class eight, class seven and class six). This implies that they had interacted with the nomadic education long enough to provide pertinent information to the study. They had experienced the learning environment longer than those in the relatively junior classes.

#### **Demographic Characteristics of Teachers**

The demographic characteristics of the teachers are presented in Table 2. These characteristics include gender, age category, and highest academic qualification, professional qualification, teaching experience and teaching experience at current school.

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**Table 2: Teachers' Responses on their Demographic Characteristics** 

<b>Demographic Character</b>	emographic Characteristics		BPS
		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	119	75.8
	Female	37	23.6
	No Response	1	0.6
Age in years	20-29	61	38.9
	30-39	68	43.3
	40-49	17	10.8
	50-59	4	2.5
	No Response	7	4.5
	Mean age		32.1
<b>Highest Academic</b>	High School	61	38.9
Qualification	Undergraduate	74	47.1
	Postgraduate	8	5.1
	No Response	14	8.9
Professional	PTE Certificate	120	76.4
Qualifications	PTE Diploma	19	12.1
	Bachelor of	11	7
	Education		
	Master of	2	1.3
	Education		
	PhD in Education	1	0.6
	Untrained Teacher	4	2.5
	No Response	-	-
Teaching	0-4	60	38.2
<b>Experience in Years</b>	5-9	70	44.6
	10-14	15	9.6
	15-19	4	2.5
	20-24	2	1.3
	25-29	4	2.5

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	30-34	2	1.3
	Mean		6.8
Teaching experience	0-4	103	65.6
at current school in years	5-9	40	25.5
	10-14	5	3.2
	15-19	2	1.3
	20-24	1	0.6
	25-29	4	2.5
	No Response	2	1.3
	Mean		4.6

**Source:** Field Data, 2020. *LCBPS Teachers* n=157

The findings in Table 2 show that 75.8 percent of the respondent teachers in the LCBPS were males and 23.6 % were females. This suggests that the teacher resource in nomadic education is male teachers. This explains why there are a few girls who continue school because they lack role modelling. The findings can be explained by Dyer (2015) that the conservatism nature of nomadic communities to enroll few girls in education hence the absence of female teachers. Similarly, Raymond (2014) argued that the consistently low girls' enrolment reflects parental concerns over how schooling processes and curricular values fit community codes of moral propriety, as well as the absence of female teachers in nomadic schools.

Teachers' experience in managing learners is a function of age and professional experience such that younger teachers may not have attained long experience in the teaching profession therefore less likely to adapt appropriate learner management skills. Table 2 shows that 43.5 percent of the teachers in the LCBPS were aged between 30 and 39 years, and 38.9 % were aged between 20 and 29 years. Only 10.8 % were aged between 40 and 49 years and 2.5 % were aged between 50 and 59 years. The findings show that a majority of the teachers in the LCBPS (82.4%) were generally young aged below 40 years.

With regard to teachers' highest level of education, 47.1 % of those in the LCBPS had attained undergraduate education, 38.9 % had high school education and only 5.1 % had postgraduate education. This finding revealed that the teachers in LCBPS had attained the requisite level of education to teach in primary schools. The MOE stipulates that a teacher should have a higher level of education than that offered at the level where s/he is supposed to teach. Therefore, the study established that the teachers had the minimum educational qualifications to teach at primary school level.

In terms of professional qualifications, a majority (76.4%) of the teachers in the LCBPS held PTE certificate, 12.1 percent held PTE diploma, 7 % held Bachelor of Education and 1.9 percent had postgraduate qualifications. Only 2.5 % were untrained teachers. The findings revealed that a majority of teachers in LCBPS were professionally trained to teach primary pupils. Teacher training prepares teachers to adapt materials and create environments that motivate learners and enhance the learning process. Trained teachers are therefore abled in learner management and motivation strategies hence likely to create a conducive learning environment where pupils participate actively.

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As relates to teaching experience, the findings for the overall teaching experience showed that 61.8 percent of the teachers in the LCBPS had five to nine years' teaching experience; the remaining 38.2 percent had less than five years' teaching experience. The findings show that a majority of the teachers in LCBPS were experienced teachers having taught for at least five years in primary schools in and outside Mandera County. They were therefore likely to effectively support pupil participation in primary education.

#### Low Cost Boarding Primary Schools Education influence on Pupil's Academic Achievement

#### **Pupils' Preparation for National Examinations**

In Kenya, the preparation of candidates for national examinations is a critical determinant of their performance. The government of Kenya has put in place the 100 percent transition policy from primary education to secondary education. Hence pupils' performance in the national examinations not only helps to understand whether meaningful teaching and learning took place but it also determines which kind of secondary school they transition to, that is, National, extracounty, county or day secondary school. The teachers were asked to indicate the level to which LCBPS prepares the pupils for national examinations. Preparation was construed to mean adequate coverage of the syllabus, provision of revision time and revision materials and engaging in supervised self-study programmes for the learners. The findings are presented in Figure 2.

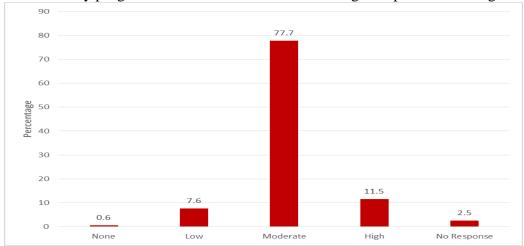


Figure 2: National Examination Preparation, n = 157

**Source:** Field Data, 2020

From the findings, 77.7 percent of the teachers rated as moderate the preparation of pupils for national examinations. About 11.5 percent rated the preparation high and 7.6 percent rated the preparation low. A dismal 0.6 percent mentioned that the LCBPS did not prepare pupils for national examinations. This finding implies most LCBPS moderately prepare pupils to perform better in the national examinations. This means that LCBPS have sufficient time to interact with the pupils who live within the schools and can therefore give them personalised attention in academic and social matters that may affect their performance in examinations. Since the pupils do not walk long journeys to school on a daily basis but rather stay within the boarding schools, the LCBPS are more likely to adequately cover the syllabus, assist pupils and supervised their revision for examinations.

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#### Pupils' Achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

The study sought to establish pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) for the period 2015 to 2020. Results were analysed in order to determine their achievement in national examinations. The findings are displayed in Figure 3.

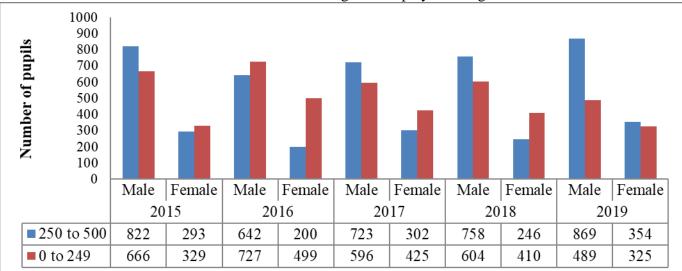


Figure 3. Pupils' Achievement in KCPE for the period 2015 to 2019

Source: Field data, 2020

Figure 3 presents the performance of pupils in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) for the period 2015 to 2019. The totals are aggregates of all pupils who sat KCPE in 32 schools. For each gender, the number of students who scored below the pass mark of 250 marks and those who attained or exceeded the pass mark are provided. There was a drop in performance for both male and female pupils in 2016. In 2017, more males scored 250 and above than those who scored below 250. However, more female pupils scored below 250 marks compared to those who scored 250 and above in the same year. Similarly, in 2018, more male pupils attained the pass mark than those who did not while for the female pupils, a majority scored less than the pass mark. Improved performance was recorded in 2019 for both male and female pupils. Unlike in the previous years, more female pupils attained the pass mark although the difference between those who attained the pass mark and those who did not was dismal. These findings show a low achievement scores in KCPE over the five year period for female pupils compared to that of male pupils.

The document analyses findings revealed that the school with the lowest registered Candidates reported few pupils (3 boys) scoring 250 or more marks and a majority (4 boys and 8 girls) scoring less than 250 marks in 2015. A similar trend was observed in 2016 where the school had four boys scoring 250 marks and above and a majority (13 boys and 4 girls) scored less than 250 marks. In the successive two years, only a small number of pupils (all boys) scored 250 marks and above until in 2019, where for the first time a girl scored above 250 marks. Still the performance was dismal (only 4 boys and 1 girl scored 250 marks and above) while 10 boys and one girl scored less than 250 marks. The pass mark in KCPE is at 250 marks out of the possible 500 marks. These findings show poor performance in KCPE over the five year period for the school.. This presents an area for further interrogation to explain why LCBPS in the county register low performance despite the fact that they are fairly well equipped compared to the sedentary day primary schools. One of the challenge that negated the gains made in pupil achievement in these

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schools is the attack of education by terrorist elements. This has led to mass exodus of non-local teachers from Mandera county.

An analysis of one of the schools with the highest registered candidates revealed that, in 2015, 85 boys scored 250 marks or more. No girls were presented for KCPE in that year, an indicator of low female participation in primary education in the county. As previously explained, girls in pastoralist communities often lag behind in education participation due to a number of reasons including cultural practices like early marriage and preference for boys education, lack of sanitation facilities for menstruating girls and insecurity. In 2016, 45 boys and 40 girls scored 250 marks or more and 30 boys and 34 girls scored less than 250 marks. In 2017, 35 boys and 27 girls scored 250 marks or more and 35 boys and 30 girls scored less than 250 marks. In 2018, 37 boys and 30 girls scored 250 marks or more while 33 boys and 36 girls scored less than 250 marks. In 2019, 25 boys and 20 girls scored 250 marks or more while 27 boys and 27 girls scored less than 250 marks. This analysis shows an average pupil achievement with no gender differences in performance.

However, an analysis of the pupil achievement in a girls-only LCBPS revealed a declining pupil achievement over the same period. In 2015, 45 girls scored 250 or more marks and 28 scored less than 250 marks. In 2016, 3 girls scored 250 marks or more while 57 girls scored less than 250 marks. In 2017, 17 girls scored 250 marks or more and 44 girls scored less than 250. In 2018, 30 girls scored 250 marks or more while 30 girls scored less than 250 marks. In 2019, 8 girls scored 250 marks or more while 35 girls scored less than 250 marks. This shows a decline in pupil achievement in girls-only LCBPS. Examinations in Kenya whether at primary, secondary or tertiary level are high stakes and they determine someone's upward mobility in the academic ladder and the type of course the person is to pursue later in life which in turn determines the career path of the pupils. It is therefore crucial that the children are taken through a thorough preparation before siting the exams.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study sought to determine the influence of LCBPS education delivery model on pupil's academic achievement. The findings revealed that most LCBPS moderately prepared pupils to perform better in the national examinations. The document analyses showed an average pupil achievement with no gender differences in performance. However, an analysis of the pupil achievement in a girls-only LCBPS revealed a declining pupil achievement over the same period. The study established that the provision of adequate time for personal reading at school, a clean environment around their school dormitories, enough food in school, enough toilets, staying at school and a friendly school administration resulted in improved academic performance of the pupils. Therefore, the study concluded that although LCBPS provided a conducive learning environment, the LCBPS education delivery model had a moderate influence on pupil's academic achievement in primary education.

#### Recommendations

The government should increase the capitation for low cost boarding primary schools since the current amount of ksh 3000 per annum per learner can hardly support the accommodation needs of the children. The teachers deployed should be inducted into the pastoral way of life so that they adapt the curriculum to the pastoralist value system and way of life. In order to maintain a motivated workforce, the government should ensure that the schools are well staffed and teachers are well remunerated especially those in LCBPS. This will reduce teacher turnover and improve pupil learning and achievement.

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In order to address the perennial mass exodus of non-local teachers due to terrorist attack, the government should create a strong local labour base by attracting and putting incentives in place for prospective teachers from the local community. The school leadership should work closely with the teachers and the parents to ensure that teaching and learning resources are available and pupils are motivated for effective teaching and learning.

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