

**INFLUENCE OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION ON GIRLS'
TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAROK
SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, NAROK COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree or any other award in any other University.

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EDU-3-1048-3/2020

Recommendation

We confirm that the candidate carried out the work reported in this thesis under our supervision.

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DEDICATION

This research thesis is dedicated to my dad who taught me the value of hard work and my children whose love for me knows no bounds.

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ABSTRACT

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) goal two requires that all children complete full course of primary education and transit to secondary education. Education for All initiatives also stresses the emphasis for all children to be educated at all levels. Having clear guidelines on how female pupils can be retained in school and henceforth transit to secondary schools is, therefore, needful. Nevertheless, public primary schools have continued to report low transition rates (40%) of girls from primary to secondary. The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of Female Genital Mutilation on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Kenya. The objectives included: assessing the influence of Female Genital Mutilation on girls' academic performance, girls' dropout rate and girls' absenteeism. The liberal feminism theory guided the study. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The schools in Narok South Sub-County are 179 and the units of analysis comprised of head-teachers, teachers and female pupils in public primary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The target population henceforth constituted of 179 head-teachers, 1,288 teachers and 6,998 girls, corresponding to 8,736 target respondents. Proportionate stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select participating teachers and female pupils while purposive sampling to get the head-teachers. By using Krejcie and Morgan 1970 table; 118 head-teachers, 291 teachers and 361 girls were sampled, leading to an overall sample size of 770. Focus group discussions were carried out with head-teachers while teachers and female pupils answered questionnaires. Reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach alpha coefficient where a threshold of 0.7 was used to access reliability and validity; by checking contents, face and construct validity. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS for both descriptive and inferential statistics and was presented using tables and figures. The qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations on privacy, confidentiality, voluntary participation, anonymity and acknowledging the sources that informed the study were abide by. The study confirmed that FGM practices negatively affected girls' transition to secondary schools. This was evidenced by poor academic performance, high drop-out cases, high absenteeism resulting from early marriages, teenage pregnancies, hemorrhage, prolonged healing process, psychosocial effects, psychological impacts, learner isolation, indiscipline and unsupportive school environment. The research recommends the ministry of education to prioritize funding for anti-FGM campaigns, sanitary kits, building boarding facilities and girl conducive toiletries to address absenteeism and drop-out. The ministry of education should come up with back-to-school policies after FGM, early absenteeism detection guidelines and curriculum guidelines showcasing teachers training on effective gender responsive pedagogies. The ministry of education needs to invest in guidance and counselling facilities and resources to develop a supportive school environment and manage psychosocial effects of FGM. Findings have implications on curriculum review to include gender base pedagogy and funding increment to cater for, infrastructure, training and professional development.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ASALs:	Arid and Semi -Arid Lands
CDE:	County Director of Education
EFA:	Education for All
FGC:	Female Genital Cutting
FGM:	Female Genital Mutilation
KCPE:	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MYWO:	Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization
NACOSTI:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNICEF:	United Nations Children Education Fund
WHO:	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The research sought to understand how FGM influences girls' transition rates from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. This chapter discusses the background, statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, significance, scope, limitations and assumptions of the study. At the end it concludes by outlining the operational definition of terms.

1.2 Background of the Study

Formal education for girls is fundamental to national development and represents a critical investment in human capital. The transition from primary to secondary education is particularly important, as it determines whether girls can access advanced learning opportunities and develop professional competencies necessary for meaningful participation in social and economic development (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). However, female genital mutilation (FGM) poses a significant barrier to this educational progression. The practice often leads to early marriage, forcing girls into motherhood before they can complete their education or pursue careers (Spernes, 2022). FGM fundamentally violates human rights, including the right to protection from harm, the right to equality, and the right to education (Ndile, 2022).

Female genital mutilation involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons. When a girl undergoes

FGM, the clitoris is either partially removed or completely excised, rendering it dysfunctional and causing permanent damage. The consequences of FGM extend far beyond the immediate physical trauma. Girls who undergo this practice face severe health complications, including hemorrhage, infections, urinary tract infections, and long-term reproductive health problems (Tordrup et al., 2021). Beyond these biological effects, survivors experience profound emotional and psychological consequences, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression. These multifaceted impacts often interfere with peer relationships and social integration, creating additional barriers to educational engagement and achievement.

The pathway through which FGM affects educational outcomes operates through several interconnected mechanisms. First, the immediate health complications resulting from the procedure lead to extended school absences during the healing period, causing girls to fall behind academically. Second, the psychological trauma interferes with concentration and learning capacity, diminishing academic performance. Third, cultural expectations following FGM often position girls as ready for marriage, prompting families to withdraw them from school. Finally, when families face economic constraints, the promise of bride wealth provides additional incentive to prioritize marriage over continued education investment. Previous research has documented the relationship between FGM and school dropout among affected girls (Chematui et al., 2019; Muhula et al., 2021). The WHO (2014) reports that this harmful practice continues to spread globally, affecting millions of girls worldwide.

Girls who undergo FGM are typically between 5 and 14 years of age, coinciding with their primary school years (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2013). The scale of the

problem is staggering. UNICEF reports that at least 83 million women and girls have undergone FGM in countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Sudan alone (UNICEF, 2013). Given the magnitude of affected populations, the future educational attainment and career prospects of millions of girls remain seriously compromised. Girls who undergo FGM experience significant threats to their physical and mental wellbeing (UNICEF, 2022). The practice is often considered a rite of passage ritual, requiring extended recovery periods before girls can resume normal activities, including school attendance (UNICEF, 2020). Consequently, many girls who survive the procedure either abandon their education entirely or fail to transition to secondary school (UNICEF, 2020).

While FGM is most prevalent in Africa and the Middle East, the practice has spread globally through migration and diaspora communities. Countries such as France, Australia, Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, and Britain have reported cases of FGM, particularly among immigrant populations (Marchildon, 2018; UNICEF, 2020; Sakeah et al., 2018). However, African nations continue to report the highest prevalence rates, with Egypt at 97%, Somalia at 98%, Mali at 94%, and Sierra Leone at 90% (UNICEF, 2013). These statistics persist despite international statutes and national legislation designed to protect girls' rights (Chematui et al., 2019). FGM remains most concentrated in Central Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia (UNICEF, 2013). Although the precise origins of the practice remain unclear, industrialization and globalization have facilitated its spread through diaspora communities (European Institute for Gender Equality [EIGE], 2013).

In Europe, girls who have undergone FGM experience mental, sexual, and psychological distress. The severity of these complications often necessitates specialized medical treatment and psychosocial interventions, which significantly disrupt regular school

attendance (Vloeberghs et al., 2012). In Canada, limited public awareness of FGM has resulted in minimal attention to the issue. However, this lack of awareness does not indicate absence of the practice; rather, the low level of public knowledge suggests that FGM may occur covertly within certain communities (Marchildon, 2018). Research indicates that FGM survivors in Canada experience negative educational outcomes and struggle to maintain academic focus (Sahiyo, 2016). These findings underscore the need for girl child protection initiatives, including those articulated in the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All declarations, which emphasize ensuring that all learners complete primary education and successfully transition to secondary school (UNICEF, 2013).

Asia and the Middle East also report high prevalence rates of FGM, with the practice typically targeting infants and young school-age girls during their critical educational years (UNICEF, 2020). Girls enrolled in primary education, particularly those in grades one through six, face the highest risk. Following FGM, these girls frequently marry rather than transition to secondary education. Research by Chematui et al. (2019) demonstrates that FGM not only terminates girls' educational progression but also undermines their motivation, goal orientation, and regular school attendance.

Within the African region, FGM persists despite stringent legal prohibitions in many countries. In Ghana, for example, the practice continues to be widespread, particularly in the eastern region, notwithstanding legislation enacted in 1994 to prohibit female genital cutting (Sakeah et al., 2018). A comparative study of Baruku and Pusiga districts revealed that Pusiga reported significantly higher rates of FGM than Baruku (Sakeah et al., 2018). One critical factor contributing to lower FGM prevalence in Baruku was strong

community emphasis on girls' education. Educational attainment emerged as a protective factor against FGM, with educated family members and guardians serving as advocates for girls' protection, in contrast to Pusiga, where a larger proportion of the population lacked formal education (Sakeah et al., 2018).

In Somalia, FGM takes multiple forms, ranging from partial to complete removal of the clitoris and labia. These procedures result in reproductive organ infections that contribute to school absenteeism, truancy, and social withdrawal. In severe cases, affected girls drop out of school completely, while others succumb to complications such as hemorrhage and trauma (Hawa, 2021). Nigeria similarly reports cases of FGM among school-age girls, who are subsequently married at young ages (Ali et al., 2014). Ali et al. found that parents with limited education primarily support these practices and advocate for immediate marriage following circumcision. Such parents often devalue girls' education and view investment in daughters' schooling as wasteful.

In Kenya, girls undergo FGM in counties including Narok, Kisii, and Migori (Muhula et al., 2021). Following recovery from the procedure, families typically consider girls ready for marriage and arrange marriages quickly. During this period, affected girls are usually still enrolled in primary school or awaiting results to proceed to secondary education (Muhula et al., 2021). This practice directly interrupts their educational progression and eliminates opportunities for secondary school transition. Even when girls do not marry immediately, they frequently face health complications from circumcision, including hemorrhage and urinary tract infections, which negatively affect their ability to transition from primary to secondary education (Muhula et al., 2021).

Studies conducted across different Kenyan counties reveal that FGM produces diverse negative effects on girls' educational outcomes. Research in West Pokot County, Kenya, found that early marriage following FGM constitutes a primary barrier to educational continuation (Chematui et al., 2019). The study revealed that inadequate financial support for secondary education costs motivated parents to arrange marriages for daughters who had undergone FGM. Similarly, research in Wajir County demonstrated that low-income parents in arid and semi-arid lands frequently arrange marriages for daughters following FGM, particularly when motivated by promises of bride wealth from prospective grooms' families. Girls married under these circumstances never complete primary education or sit for national examinations, permanently foreclosing opportunities for secondary school transition (Sakwa, 2020).

In Narok County specifically, primary school enrollment remains low, and appreciation for girls' education is limited (Chematui et al., 2019). UNICEF reports indicate that Kenya's illiteracy rate stands at 7.59 million people, with women constituting the majority of this population (UNICEF, 2013). The Government of Kenya has initiated programs intended to encourage the Maasai community to abandon harmful cultural practices, although these efforts have achieved limited success. The national goal of achieving Education for All and 100% transition to secondary schools remains unrealized in Narok County, necessitating more effective interventions (Chepkwemai, 2016; Chematui et al., 2019). Marginalized communities such as the Maasai in Narok South Sub-County exhibit particularly low educational uptake among girls, resulting in underrepresentation of women in professional careers and limiting socioeconomic development among pastoralist communities (Chematui et al., 2019). Education offers substantial benefits,

including poverty alleviation, self-sufficiency, disease prevention, employment opportunities, and economic development, underscoring the importance of universal access (Chepkwemai, 2016).

Despite government implementation of stringent measures to eliminate FGM, girls in Narok South Sub-County remain at high risk for the practice. While existing studies have examined various dimensions of FGM's impact on education, including dropout rates and early marriage, research has given limited attention specifically to the transition from primary to secondary education (Sakwa, 2020; Muhula et al., 2021; Chematui et al., 2019). The specific mechanisms through which FGM affects this critical educational transition, and the relative contribution of various pathways including health complications, cultural expectations, and economic constraints, require further investigation. Therefore, this study addresses the existing research gap by examining the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary education in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya. Understanding these relationships is essential for developing targeted interventions that can help Kenya achieve its Education for All goals and support the educational aspirations of girls in marginalized communities.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a catalyst for national development. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically Goal 2, emphasize the importance of all children completing primary education and successfully transitioning to secondary school. Similarly, the Education for All (EFA) initiative stresses the necessity of providing universal learning opportunities regardless of gender

(Kahunzire et al., 2023). In Kenya, the Ministry of Education has set an ambitious target of achieving 100% transition of all pupils from primary to secondary schools (Mutundu et al., 2024). However, this goal remains elusive in communities where female genital mutilation persists.

Female genital mutilation presents a formidable barrier to girls' educational advancement in Kenya. The practice, which dates to time immemorial, continues to target young girls during their primary school years (Naibei, 2023). In communities where FGM is practiced, adherence to this cultural tradition is deeply intertwined with social acceptance and belonging. Girls and families who reject FGM often face social ostracism and exclusion from community life (Matanda et al., 2018). This social pressure perpetuates the practice despite legal prohibitions and creates an untenable dilemma for young girls: choose community acceptance through FGM or risk social exclusion by continuing their education (Mutundu et al., 2024). Consequently, patriarchal practices rooted in tradition continue to undermine girls' educational aspirations and outcomes (Matanda et al., 2018). The educational consequences of FGM are particularly severe in Narok County, where the practice remains prevalent. National data reveal that dropout rates among girls range from 60% to 70%, indicating a critical crisis in girls' educational continuity (Mutundu et al., 2024). In Narok County specifically, schools experience persistently low transition rates for girls following the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations (Naibei, 2023). This pattern demonstrates a significant disconnect between primary school enrollment, persistence through primary education, and successful transition to secondary school. The situation has prompted widespread concern from multiple stakeholders, including the national government, faith-based organizations, non-governmental

organizations, churches, and parents, particularly regarding girls in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) and marginalized communities where FGM initiations persist (WHO, 2013; Nyagah & Luketero, 2016; Nyaga, 2015; Naibei, 2023).

Despite government implementation of stringent measures to eliminate FGM, girls in Narok South Sub-County remain at high risk for the practice. While existing studies have examined various dimensions of FGM's impact on education, including dropout rates and early marriage, research has given limited attention specifically to the critical transition from primary to secondary education. For instance, Chematui et al. (2019) investigated the effects of FGM on girls' academic performance in West Pokot County and reported negative influences on educational outcomes. However, their study did not specifically examine transition rates. Similarly, research by Sakwa (2020) and Muhula et al. (2021) explored FGM's broader educational impacts but did not isolate the specific mechanisms affecting the primary-to-secondary transition.

Several critical gaps remain in the existing literature. First, the specific mechanisms through which FGM affects this critical educational transition remain poorly understood. Second, the relative contribution of various pathways—including immediate health complications, psychological trauma, cultural expectations of marriage readiness, and economic constraints—requires systematic investigation. Third, no comprehensive study has examined how these multiple factors interact to influence transition rates specifically in Narok South Sub-County, despite the region's high FGM prevalence and notably low transition rates. Fourth, existing research has not adequately considered how community social dynamics and fear of ostracism compound the educational barriers created by FGM itself.

Understanding these relationships is essential for multiple reasons. Theoretically, this research will contribute to knowledge about how harmful traditional practices intersect with educational systems and gender equity initiatives. Practically, findings will inform the development of targeted, culturally sensitive interventions that address the specific barriers preventing girls from transitioning to secondary education. Policy-wise, this research will provide evidence to support more effective implementation of existing laws prohibiting FGM and strengthen educational support systems for at-risk girls. Ultimately, addressing this problem is crucial for helping Kenya achieve its Education for All goals, realize the 100% transition mandate, meet Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), and support the educational aspirations of girls in marginalized communities. Therefore, this study addresses the existing research gap by examining the influence of female genital mutilation on girls' transition from primary to secondary education in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya. Specifically, the study investigates the prevalence of FGM among primary school girls, identifies the specific pathways through which FGM affects educational transition, examines the relative contribution of health, cultural, and economic factors, and explores stakeholders' perceptions of barriers and potential interventions. By focusing specifically on the transition moment—rather than general educational outcomes—this research will provide actionable insights for improving girls' educational continuity in communities where FGM persists.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The research assessed the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study objectives were to:

- i. Establish how academic performance due to FGM influence girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.
- ii. Assess how drop-out rate due to FGM influence girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.
- iii. Assess how absenteeism due to FGM influence girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

1.6 Research Questions

This research had the following guiding research questions:

- i. How does FGM influence the academic performance and girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County?
- ii. How does FGM influence school dropout rate and girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County?
- iii. How does FGM influence absenteeism and girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County?

1.7 Justification of the Study

Equal access to education for the girl child is a subject that interests the Kenyan government to which counties are accountable, thus understanding the underlying factors which demean girls' chances to rise, transit and pursue education inform interested parties on what to do to revert the situation. The research was also moved by the great need for

girls to experience quality learning just as their counterparts do by majoring on the transition from primary to secondary education for marginalized communities such as in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County. In Narok South Sub-County, the transition rate among girls is lower compared to other sub-counties as evidenced by the three girls' schools found in the sub-county (Narok County Ministry of Education Report, 2024). Getting short-term and long-term best practices for addressing transition rate therefore, not only expedient the realization of MDGs interests but also achieves EFA and the Vision 2030 agenda. This justified the carrying out of the study.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study relied on data from primary respondents which were the head-teachers, class-teachers and grade 6-8 girls in public primary schools. This could give room for biasness as a result of the dependence on individual reasoning, understanding of the matter being investigated, exposure, opinions and experiences among the study respondents. The research addressed the limitation by encouraging head-teachers, the teachers and girls to be genuine, truthful and devout while responding to the respective questionnaire and focus group discussion questions.

Moreover, the research experienced a methodological limitation considering that it used a descriptive survey design, limiting observing the influence of FGM on transition over a long time. Conducting longitudinal research would have enabled access the transition of girls over time and validate how it is influenced by FGM practice although this would have taken more years, which was out of scope of the required years to complete the master's degree. The study however, utilized a variety of data collection tools to gather

comprehensive information for better understanding of the underlying situation. The detailed data obtained provided broad cross-sectional insights which were useful in informing short-term and long-term strategies for improving girl's transition to secondary schools.

1.9 Scope of the Study

This research considered to find out the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County. It aimed at seeking to find out the academic performance, school drop-out rates and absenteeism resulting from FGM and their influences on girls' transition from primary to secondary school education in Narok South Sub-County. Data for this research was obtained from the head-teachers, grade 6-8 girls in public primary schools as well as the grade 6, 7 and 8 teachers.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The investigation established may benefit the government stakeholders and interested parties responsible for developing and revamping Ministry of Education policies. Best practices drawn from the inferences might emerge critical towards improving if not actualizing the 100% transition of learners in basic education levels in Narok South Sub-County. Critical evidence about the problem assessed may inform funders, charitable persons, donors and well-wishers from NGOs and FBOs the needfulness to garner their interest in sponsoring girls' education from primary to secondary schools in order to achieve 100% transition rate. The findings may also be of great importance to female students, parents, guardians and other stakeholders, based on recommendations from the

study on promoting girls' education which may result in 100% transition from primary to secondary schools. Finally, the conclusion reached in the study may institute further research in the area of FGM in Narok County, Kenya and this may benefit the school going girls in the County by developing mitigation measures on FGM.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

This research considered that:

- i. Primary schools in Narok South Sub-County were endeavoring to attain high girls' transition and hence they needed improvement strategies such as addressing poor academic performance, girls' drop-out rates and absenteeism cases.
- ii. The study also presumed that FGM practices affect girls' academic performance, led to school drop-outs and high absenteeism cases which inhibited their transition from primary to secondary schools; hence girls' transition was low.

1.12 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Female Genital Mutilation:	It consummated a custom of expelling, manipulating or complete expulsion of women external genitalia and exposing the girls to early maturity leading to early marriages hence, dropping out of school as early as primary level.
Transition:	A time when a learner is required to advance to a higher level of education by shifting, changing or moving from primary to secondary school education.
County:	A geographical location consisting of several counties in Kenya such as Narok County.
Academic performance:	It refers to pupils' achievement in academics through indicators such as ability to spell correctly, speak appropriately, and general scores in examination such as KPSEA.
Girls drop-out of school:	Refers to girls leaving the school with no intentions of returning back before completing all the requirements for graduating to the next level of education such as from primary to secondary schools.
Girls' absenteeism:	Refers to girls missing schools for a period ranging from one day to more days due to reasons like menstruation, sickness, demotivation, lack of finances, and pregnancy among other reasons.

School environment:	The surrounding within a school set-up that shapes girls behavior, attitudes, well-being and aptitudes such as sense of security and belonging, school culture, teacher-learner relationships and school infrastructure.
Primary school:	Refers to an elementary level of learning for pupils at the age of 5 to 17 years

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter outlines experiences and existing knowledge published by other scholars who had common subject of interest. The literature is presented in an organized order starting with girls' transition and then the influence of FGM on girls' academic performance, dropout rate and girls' absenteeism in schools. The chapter also discusses the theoretical and conceptual framework respectively.

2.2 Empirical Review

Each objective of the study was reviewed separately and objectively. The order of the review was done in line with the study variables that is to start with the dependent variable, then the objectives on academic performance, school dropout and lastly girls' absenteeism. The literature was also discussed per objective of study and brings out the global, regional and local perspectives. The gaps for previous studies were also noted which strengthened the need for the investigation.

2.2.1 Girls' Transition from Primary to Secondary Schools

Improving the transition rate from primary to secondary schools is essential to a country since it is the major strategy through which anticipated middle and high ranked employees are secured. Through this, the country is able to keep abreast with the vision 2030. Learners' transition assimilates to the number or percentage of pupils who graduate from the primary basic level of education to secondary schools to further their studies (Nyagah

& Luketero, 2016). Regardless of one's gender, children enrolled in primary schools need to successfully finish their grade 8 examination and proceed to secondary schools without due advantage or discrimination. To qualify learners to join secondary school education, they need to meet the required criteria such as academic performance, have consistency, finish up the education curriculum, and possess literacy skills, communication skills and independence (Naibei, 2023). This section addressed the factors that influence girls' transition from primary to secondary education.

The value of girls' transition is a subject which cannot be overemphasized. This is because it forms the basic component of education through which experts seek to gauge the level of balance or imbalance the education program is between where the learners' transit from and to (Mbatia et al., 2018). Other benefits that are experienced as a result in monitoring learner's transition rate encompass social development, economic development, government return on investment on free education, improved social cohesion and active citizenship through education value addition (Naibei, 2023).

Despite the different government interventions, policies and laws which advocate for 100% transition to secondary schools, girls' transition is influenced by a number of compounding factors. For instance, different countries worldwide are bedeviled by poor transition rate due to school-based, social-economic and social-cultural factors (Ahinkorah, 2021). Other factors are distance from school, security, early marriages, teenage pregnancies, nomadism, nature of parents, parental educational status, political instability and FGM (Naibei, 2023; Nyagah & Luketero, 2016; Ahinkorah, 2021).

In the developed nations, the transition of girls from primary to secondary schools has gained a lot of popularity and it stands at a rate of 90% (Ahinkorah, 2021). For instance, in the US, France, Eastern Europe and Japan, the general transition rate of learners from primary to secondary irrespective of the gender stands at 96% (Spernes, 2022). Also, according to UNESCO (2011), learners who obtain the least grades are also permitted to join secondary education. However, research carried out discussing the transition rate of learners from primary to secondary is very scarce. Notably, few existing studies explore other factors hindering learners' transition such as issues of bullying (Spernes, 2022).

One such existing study was conducted by Spernes in 2022 in Japan. Spernes wished to understand the possible factors which impacted the transition rate of Japanese learners from primary to secondary schools. The research adopted a meta-analytics and systematic reviews of studies from peer review databases including ERIC and Scopus databases. Some of the notable factors were parents and teacher support, school environment, belonging and wellbeing, victimization and bullying and peer friendships. Some of the opportunities noted for improving the school environment included recommending the development of programs to which favor learner retention and transition from primary to secondary. For instance, policy makers were called upon to revise the curriculum to bring continuity from primary to secondary. Other reported were good collaborative communication between the two types of schools, building scaffolds for learners and relationship building between learners and teachers. The study wished to understand how FGM influences girl's transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

In Australia, teachers' perspectives were sought in bid to address the gap that existed between the rates of transition from primary to secondary schools. One such study which achieved this objective was that of Hopwood et al. (2016) which upon conducting 12 face to face interviews with primary school teachers, identified that the rate of transition was worrisome. Themes that were drawn from the qualitative data informed that, learners faced challenges such as poor teacher support, limited awareness and curriculum constraints. The best practices which were anticipated to rectify the trends ranged from curriculum continuity and awareness, communication between primary and secondary schools and improving teacher-student relationships. This study was informative in shedding light on some of the issues which influenced learners transition in Australia, however, the study was based on school-based factors. The current study holds that, socio-cultural practices such as girl circumcision influences girl transition to secondary schools. It also acknowledged that academic performance, drop-out rates and absenteeism as a result of clitoridectomy contribute negatively on girls' progress to secondary education.

Pupils and teachers' voices were also sought regarding the subject being discussed in the Netherlands. Some of the factors that hindered effective transition were children characteristics, family characteristics, academic performance, pedagogies and the school environment (van Rens, 2020). van Rens also submitted that some of the social, economic and cultural issues that hindered successful transition ranged from gender, race, discipline, minority cultures, practice of archaic traditions and poverty were detrimental to the transition process. In order to help pupils at risk of suffering poor transition to higher levels of learning, the researcher presented that guidance and counselling, child

mentorship, monetary support, providing boarding facilities, sensitizing the importance of education and creating a motivating school environment was recommended. Although the study was very informative and it even discussed the influence of social cultural aspects in limiting learner transition, the issues of FGM and girls' education was not in scope of the study. This study emphasized girls' education by addressing the transition hurdles.

In the developing countries, education for all is highly recognized. However, the transition challenges from primary to secondary education among the learners are evident. Notably, existing studies have underpinned the subject of pupils' transition rate by focusing on the challenges (Delprato & Farieta, 2023). Delprato and Farieta (2023) carried research about the sub-Saharan Africa and found that, in 2019, only 41% of pupils were able to complete lower education. The transition rate of learners was blamed to the poor completion rates. One of the reasons for the trend was individual factors, community trends and family characteristics. Delprato and Farieta adopted a three-level logit to understand the determinants for transitions across communities. Some of the leading sources of inequality noted were poverty, gender stereotypes and early marriages among girls. It was concluded that the achievement of sustainable development goals by African nations was still a nightmare citing the huge gaps between transitions from primary to secondary.

A study in Tanzania, majored on the community belief systems and how they influenced learner's completion among community school in Morogoro (Ndile, 2022). Focusing on girls just as the current study, head-teachers, parents and form four students gave information that the socio-cultural aspects which affects girls' achievement in education were household duties, parents' preference for boy education other than the girl, girl's

initiation rites and poor provision of girls' basic requirements (Ndile, 2022). It was henceforth concluded that, female cutting, home-making assignments and disregard for girl education correlated with girl dropping out of school and poor academic performance which ultimately affected the completion rates. It was recommended that; the government to put measures to enforce the education for all initiatives, provide girl' schools with boarding facilities and carry out campaign on the society to recall girls who dropped out due to early pregnancies. Notably, this study assessed the cultural factors affecting completion rate among secondary school girls. The current study focused on transition from primary to secondary education and the units of observations were girls, teachers and head-teachers in public primary schools.

Similar challenges were observed in Somali by Fara et al. (2022). The key hindrances to education were devalue for girls education, cultural practices, early marriages, teenage pregnancies, inadequate facilities, ineffective instructional delivery, teacher student ratio, inadequate education quality and the cost of education. When boys and girls were compared in terms of enrollment rates, boys were at 62% while 38% for girls. Moreover, the school-dropout rate was also high. In Uganda, Namatovu et al. (2023) noticed that, the factors which made girls not complete school were cultural, school and household factors. A cross-sectional design was adopted and data from teachers and learners was solicited. The results found out that family economic status, school environment, sexual issues, cost of education, love for dowry, giving girls a lot of home chores, devaluing girl education and having uneducated parents threatened the completion rates of girls in Uganda. Although the findings implicated the education of parents to value educating the girls, the

results faced limitations considering that a very small population of one was utilized to obtain the key informants. The current study adopted a representative sample size to assess the transition rate of girls from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

Locally, the intention to support girls' education is evidenced by the education for all policy and the provisions of free primary education to maximize education attainment even to the marginalized communities (Nyagah & Luketero, 2016; Nyaga, 2015). However, there are very many concerns regarding girl transition occasioned by access, enrollment, retention, equity, relevance and quality concerns. For example, in Kajiado County, Nyagah and Luketero in 2016 examined the transition rate of girls from primary schools and noticed that, teenage pregnancies, cultural, economic and school-based factors contributed to the transition trends among the pastoral communities. Grade six pupils were asked to participate in the study and the results revealed that, early marriage was the main cause for girls not transiting to secondary schools. For FGM, it was found to be the second leading cause of learners dropping out of school. Other factors were teenage pregnancies. Moreover, FGM was noted to be practiced in families where the parents were very poor and illiterate. However, the girls felt that, lack of school infrastructure was not a cause for alarming their drop out. Cultural practices were concluded as the major causes for girls not transiting to secondary even though no short-term and long-term recommendations were given for remedying the identified trend. The current study gave out recommendations based on the found findings in order to improve girls' transition rates.

In Bungoma County, Naibei (2023) also found a similar trend as that observed by Nyagah and Luketero that; FGM, distance from school and apathy for education has a lot of significant influence on the transition of girls to secondary schools. Naibei explained that, due to FGM practices in Mt. Elgon, girls felt mature and ready for marriage hence, they dropped out of school, had casual sex relations with boys and ended up impregnated. In Samburu County, Njogu (2015) underscored that, girls' enrollment in school was poor and the few who enrolled attended school irregularly due to the cultural ceremonies of female cutting. Absenteeism was also found to be rampant during the seclusion period to heal from the cuts. The studies raised an outcry to the government and faith-based organizations to rescue the future of girls by offering counseling services, building rescue centers, building boarding schools for girls and educate the community on the dangers of FGM. These studies were however, premised to understand the issue of FGM and how it influences learner participation in education. The current study revolved around girls' transition from primary to secondary schools.

2.2.2 FGM and Girls Academic Performance

FGM practice interferes with learners' progression in academic matters since when the ideal time for the custom to be carried out is due, the learners' attention shifts to thinking about the ritual experiences and what it may bring along (Bayen Bessem, 2016). In most cases, during this traditional transition, marriage is thought as the next endeavor for survivors, demeaning the importance of education (Fara et al., 2022). Individual learners' perceptions have mostly been shaped to accord education as not necessary after mutilation. Concerning the subject of poverty and socio-economic status, pupils from

poverty-stricken families have been perceived as sole rescuers of families through their marriage in exchange for dowry (Fara et al., 2022). The value for dowry has therefore been utilized as a weapon to discontinue girls from school and marry them off to men who can offer bride price to meet girls' family needs (Chematui et al., 2019). Persistent adherence to community circumcision education which is misleading puts pressure on young girls to drop out of school. It has also been hinted that, awareness on the repercussions of circumcising females bears fruits. Moreover, girls who luckily attain higher education are most likely not cut (Adetunji, 2018). Research shows that parents who were educated up to tertiary levels contradict FGM customs (Adetunji, 2018).

In the developed nations, the subject of female organs cutting is prevalent despite the limited studies underscoring the subject. Existing literature is also biased to the psychological and health effects of FGM on girls other than academic performance hence, a deplorable state of the subject being discussed. One existing research was carried out by Atkinson and Geisler (2019) in United Kingdom. The researchers articulated that FGC is increasingly prevalent despite the legal frameworks and barriers which have been instituted to eradicate the practice. Irrespective of this, the 2019 report underscored that, the teaching curriculum has failed to nurture health professionals on how best to handle the victims as well as, using the health sector to exacerbate the abandonment of FGC. Some of the noticeable effects of genital cutting were physical, health, sexual and psychological effects. The paper recommended the revamping of the education curriculum to incorporate medical education for FGC victims. The current study differed in scope in that the educational impact of mutilation was assessed.

Muteshi et al. (2016) study provides a list of side effects faced by girls who are cut. The researchers give a review that in the Middle East (Iraq and Yemen) and Asia particularly in Indonesia, girls exposed to cutting practices are at risk of both short and long-term effects of FGM which are detrimental. Some of the immediate effects are such as difficulties in child birth, fistula, difficulties in passing urine, bleeding, susceptible to infectious diseases and strong pains. Consequently, the social norms tend to alter the normal way of life of a female by denying them independence. These factors have been linked to interfere with social interactions and regular school attendance which affects their aggregate performance in the long run. However, the link between academic performance and transition to high school was not covered. This study was scoped to discuss FGM and girls' academic performance on transition to secondary school.

In the developing nations, the causes of poor academic performance of learners in Tanzania was assessed by Mbaruku and Otieno (2022). An ex-post facto research design and mixed methods approach was adopted by the researchers to understand the stated phenomena. One of the outstanding factor which influenced learners' achievement was absenteeism. Some of the causes of student absenteeism from school ranged from attending cultural ceremonies, night dances, pastoralism and early marriages. Also, it was noticed that, absenteeism made the learners do poorly in test scores, literacy and national examinations. Truancy among learners in the society was linked to cause long term effects on increased community illiteracy, failure to finish basic education on time and lack of skilled labor in the job market. Parents were urged to be educated in seminars on the need to abandon cultural norms and traditions such as clitoridectomy. The study however did

not discuss how poor achievement influence transition to secondary schools since it was out of the study scope. The current study advanced to address this gap.

Another iconic pioneer in Uganda (Chesang, 2018) brought solutions after seeking to understand the impact of culture on girls' secondary education. Some of the notable efforts recommended towards improving girls' participation in education included free education, strengthening food programs in the school, providing boarding facilities for girls in schools and community education. Despite these efforts, Chesang reported that genitalia cutting in Uganda was high and girl participation in education low. Consequently, FGM made girls attend school irregularly, get teenage pregnancies, end up in early marriages and less participate in co-curricular activities which contributed to poor achievement. The current research investigated the impact of FGM on academic performance among primary school girls.

Some efforts have been channeled by the government to enhance a conducive environment for fostering girl education. Some notable ones are the issuance of grants and prioritizing bursary awards to females (Mukadi, 2017). Such initiatives are meant to motivate girls to pursue education endeavors. Despite the efforts meant to assure a smooth learning experience for girl child, their academic achievement is on the contrary low (Mukadi, 2017). Researchers have delved in to find out the causative agents which lead to dismal performance of girls in schools. Moreover, the resurgence of FGM practices and the possible factors underlying it have been investigated. Some of the issues that have been uncovered by outgone researchers include the physical, health and social harm or constraints which come with the practice of FGM on girls. It has also been noted that after

FGM practice, girls' social behavior and the interest for education capsizes. Mukadi (2017) laments that dismal efforts have been made to enlighten girls to pursue academics.

Another dimension which is clearly pointing a negative influence of FGM practice on female education lies in the fact that, during the stage, the preparation, execution and healing takes too long (Warsame, 2019). Since it cannot be done in the school premise now that it is not advocated for, girls of age refrain schooling for months to be educated, prepared for the ritual, its execution and following a prolonged recovery duration (Warsame, 2019). This causes absenteeism, truancy and irregular school attendance. Apart from these observations, it has been found that; the more the girl is enlightened, the more the chances of them rejecting to be circumcised (Warsame, 2019). Therefore, the level of education has an influence on the girls' choice between performing the traditional ritual and pursuing further studies.

According to Njogu (2017), when girls are given the liberty to decide on whether to continue with schooling or transit to circumcision, they run for initiation. Later on, the choice for initiation comes with a number of health complications, delayed healing and pain which affects regular school attendance, which has direct implications on their academic achievement. In some instances, the health concerns may escalate to serious problems such as anemia due to hemorrhage. This may be worse in a scenario where the girl lacks access to adequate healthcare due to inaccessibility of health facilities and cost implications hence, poor performance at school (Njogu, 2017).

Sankok (2016) also illustrates that, FGM practices can interfere with the academic performance of pupils due to early pregnancies and early marriages. The research was

descriptive in nature and its major purpose was to identify the impact of cultural practices on girl academic performance. Focusing on Ilmungush sub-location in Kajiado, girls' performance was reported to drop drastically after cutting due to pregnancies, irregular school attendance, and disinterest towards studying. Some notable interventions which were considered applicable in addressing the trend included using the chief and village elders to advocate for girls' education and sensitization of abandoning the practices by the church. However, Sankok findings also noted that, some girls did well in their examinations even after being initiated to womanhood. This led to the discourse that, pupil counselling at the school premises was also a good intervention towards ensuring affected girls concentrate with their studies. The current study ascertained how academic performance influences girl transition to secondary education.

In 2019, Chematui et al. did a study that used triangulation convergence design to understand how traditions like circumcision of females influenced their academic achievement in West Pokot. Girls, boys, parents and teachers were engaged by the researchers. It was communicated that, the practice introduced girls to womanhood hence shifting their concentration to marriage other than pursuing their education. Also, teenage pregnancies were associated with the cut, a factor which made them drop out of school. The study also opined that men in the village admired the educated and cut girls hence the transition rate to secondary school was very little. It was encouraged that the church, NGOs, the government and charitable FBOs to intervene: to sensitize, fund girls' education as well provide boarding facilities in schools to protect girls from the harsh community values.

Three years later, similar research was carried out in Kajiado by Koriati (2022) to understand what hinders education progress in nomadic communities. Girls were issued questionnaires and the results opined that, nomadism, FGM and early marriages had negative impact on girls' performance in academics. In the same vein Andiemba (2021) revealed that the status of girls' education in West Pokot was low as opposed to boys. This norm was occasioned by the perpetuation of patriarchy norms which harmed the girls' future. Head-teachers and teachers gave their views on the impact of culture on girl education and it was reported that: early marriages, teenage pregnancy and cutting affected transition to secondary, acquisition of knowledge and termly performance. It was recommended that, county government collaborate with stakeholders in drilling boreholes, the government to strictly implement the anti-FGM laws and provide civic education to the society to end the negative impact of circumcising females.

To counter FGM, the ministry of education has mandated school heads to champion implementation of school by-laws. Anti-FGM organizations including FBOs, NGOs and humanitarians have also taken the initiative to create awareness and sensitization regarding girl circumcision. Although the area on the effects of FGM on health and social life of girls is not grey, it remains unclear how these effects of mutilation influences girls' transition from primary to secondary schools' education in Narok County. This gave a ground to carry out the research on the academic performance of girls due to FGM and its implications on transition rates from primary to secondary levels of study in Narok South Sub-County.

2.2.3 FGM and Girls' Dropout Rate from Schools

Chapter 4:20 of Kenya constitution- (bill of rights 2010) gives the statutes on the need for guarding the fundamental freedom, dignity and rights of each human. In light to these statutes, girl child need protection from any kind of harm and practice which interfere with their freedom, dignity and respect. The children Act Chapter 141 (2012) supports this demand by strengthening the need for safeguarding girls from detrimental and unfavorable norms, practices and patriarchal rites. Joint efforts are also evident where enlightening citizenry to battle the vice by emphasizing the importance of education for the girls. Guardians and parents have also been a target audience of concern by potential educators who speak of taking responsibility for their children care and wellbeing until an age where they are termed mature which is 18 years. This is pursued to meet the act requirements on right to education (The Basic Education Act, 2013).

It is good for emphasis to be made to give room for girls to get education so that they may be independent and address problems confronting them in life. The Action Aid Kenya (2018) also continually pursues the same notion by spelling out that since a child is four, they ought to be introduced to early childhood education. According to Halder et al. (2015), West Pokot leaders' support these imperatives and have come to a consensus that education empowers the society to heal, refrain and stop malpractices like FGM and cattle rustling. It is also worth noting that girls initiated to the FGM rite of passage perceive education less useful hence, prefer marriage to pursuing further studies. Those that resume to school after circumcision devalue academics and since they were earlier educated about their fate during the transition ceremonies; they feel they are now grown-up women ready to tend and bring up families. Pambazuka issue 173 also strengthen the idea in its findings

which echoed that in communities where FGM is practiced, it is a prerequisite for marriage. The Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO) 2002-2007 report also aligns with the proceeding argument which underscores that, the conduct of circumcision practice communicates girl transition to women hence, ready for marriage.

Globally, the issues of FGM and girls' drop-out of school are less discussed. Existing reports underscore its prevalence, the global trends, cutting and migration trends, the use of medical interventions to counter clitoridectomy practices and anti-FGM laws and policies guiding its abolishment United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2022) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2022), henceforth; a dearth in literature underscoring its impact on learners' transition. The reports presented by UNICEF and UNFPA report that, FGM practices are diminishing globally and the cause for the good news is credited to the enforcement of laws and policies, inculcating peer education interventions, digital media interventions, medicalization, and virtual advocacies. However, the reports by WHO (2022), UNFPA (2022) and UNICEF (2022) blame African residents migration to the dominance of female genital cutting practices amongst the European countries.

A report presented by the European Union presents that, FGM is a human right violation despite the fact that, its high prevalence in Croatia and the European Union is noticed. Despite the hopeful reports on the diminishing statistics observed across nations, Tordrup et al. (2021) observed that, when females are circumcised, their health condition, sexuality, psychological and learning discontinuation due to sickness and healing complication to school going children. This report was very comprehensive in outlining

the prevalence and consequences of female circumcision. However, its influence on girls' drop-out rates was scarcely done as the report biased on the psychological and health complications. The current research investigated FGM and girls drop-out rates in primary schools based in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

In the United States of America, the sanctuary for families (2013) carried out research in New York in order to understand how much FGM threatened the lives of girls. Borrowing from literature reported by the center for disease control and prevention, the body reported that approximately 200,000 women in the US are at risk of undergoing genital disfiguring. It was also reported that, during the time when illegal ceremonies take place to initiate the girls, they abandoned schools hence leading to high rate of absenteeism and dropping out. The report recommended the need to translate US rights protection frameworks into action so as to mitigate the deadly practices.

The consequences of genital mutilation were also studied by O'Neill and Pallitto in 2021. These two scholars did a systematic review of existing literature which was carried out in qualitative methods to understand the psycho-social changes associated with girls cutting fault norms and traditions. Literature based on Asia, Middle East and diaspora countries was retrieved from databases and upon scrutiny, the major efforts unveiled ranged from stigmatization, feeling inferior and societal exclusion. In particular, in Sweden, Netherlands, United Kingdom and the United States, the research underscored that, women who were not cut were highly stigmatized, felt shameful, did not fit in the society and hence failed to mingle in social gatherings. This led to their poor participation in religious societies and even in the education sector. Also, clitoris cut women were reported

to also go through trauma of their kind such as lack of acceptability, shamefulness, lack of self-acceptance, low self-esteem and poor performance at school for those who were in their school going age. These were very critical evidences which the current study took note to build on the subject matter. However, the review was only limited to psycho-social elements hence the impact of FGM on girls' transition rate to secondary school was not covered. This current research endeavored to uncover on this aspect hence filled the literature gap.

Regionally, in a country like Somalia, girls must be initiated to the practice to be viable for marriage. At such a time as that, girls are taught that they are mature for relationship hence befriend men with the purpose of proving their womanhood, which reiterate their ability to concentrate with studies (Magige, 2020). Girls having undergone FGM hardly concentrate in learning but rather grow difficulty, stiff-necked and undisciplined. Moreover, such girls have been noticed to become truants, champions of school drop out as a result of the strong cultural education they received while quarantined for the initiation customs. Such show up ego and high self-esteem towards womanhood hence elope to get married (Njogu, 2017).

Retaining girls within the school premises to enable them proceed with learning is a premise that the entire globe is attentive to. For this very reason, education practitioners have strived to understand the hindrances which confront learners' retention at school. Rasto (2015) an educationalist sought to understand this in a study among primary school enrolled girls in Scotland. It was unveiled that learners' retention at school was influenced by factors relating to instructional resources and reference materials. Notably, it was

expressed that, the primary schools had inadequate charts and maps. In the same vein, Jama (2015) sought opinions from school teachers and pupils on the surrounding socio-historic and cultural practices that influenced girls' education in Karkar Region, Somalia. The results remarked that female pupil retention is still dismal. Upon probing the underlying factors which resulted into the poor retention trend, it was opined that early marriages and domestic labor/chores contributed towards their drop out. Noticing this trend, Jama spelled out recommendations on enacting retention intervention measures to achieve girls' consistency in seeking education.

Namukwaya and Kibirige (2014) did inquiry to understand the underlying factors which deterred pupils' enrolment and retention in Kotido, Uganda. Data collection was done and when analyzed; the patterns expressed that factors such as culture, pastoral lifestyle, belief systems, strong ritual values such as FGM, negative attitude towards education and engagement in domestic work emerged as key issues which attracted low pupil enrolment and retention. Dropout rates are significantly higher among primary school girls compared to secondary schools' girls (Mackatiani et al., 2022). Most girls who leave primary schools do so in the last years of class six and seven, partly because they perform poorly or lose interest after undergoing FGM practice. The increased dropout rate among primary schools may be attributable to lack of role models that sustain motivation against FGM practice (Herrmann et al., 2016).

In bid to address the rate of girls' drop-out rates, Minja (2021) did a dissertation in Tanzania. Minja identified that, the trend was reported to be resulting from little parental support due to poverty, teenage pregnancy, girls fading interest for school due to long

walking distances, dismally equipped schools, unfriendly school environment and less regards for girl education. Some mitigation strategies for ending or reducing high rates of girls dropping out of schools were: building hostels in the school compound, enacting by-laws for safeguarding girls' rights, funding school feeding programs, NGO collaboration to give the society education and teachings on sex education. However, the detrimental impact of female genital cutting was not addressed. The current study bridged this gap.

Locally, existing studies also report the existence of bad cultural practices which pose impact on the education of the girl child. One study existing was that done by Korir in 2018. Korir used a literature review approach to examine the archaic traditions which contributed to girl child dropping out of school in Kajiado County. Korir found out that existing literature had examined the subject matter without focusing on the female gender but rather learner drop-out rates in primary schools. Moreover, the review reported that drop of school among learners in primary school was very high due to practices including: bridal wealth, cultural practices, teenage marriages, clitoridectomy and initiation ceremonies. These practices were associated with students' repletion, student diminishing interest towards schooling and poor academic achievements during examination. The study concluded that cultural beliefs in the society were a major barrier to girls' education as it leads to high rates of school dropout. The current study did an investigation of FGM and girls drop out from schools by collecting primary data from head-teachers, pupils and teachers in Narok South Sub-County.

In Migori County, Owino did research the same year just like Korir (2018) with an intention to understand what caused the high school drop-out rate among girls. The mixed

methods study revealed that, early marriages resulted to girls dropping out of secondary school. The causes of the trend were inability of parents to fund secondary education as well as rite of passage. It was henceforth concluded that, forced marriages and poverty contributed enough to the termination of secondary education among girls. The current study differed in scope in that; girl drop out of school was investigated among primary school setting and this was looked at in the angle of drop out as a result of clitoridectomy practices.

There are noticeable efforts to address the worrying impacts of pupils dropping out of school in Kenya. Some notable efforts were reported by Ngumo and Muasa (2022) in their research which was based in Kajiado. Being guided by an exploratory research design and a sample of 10 girls who had dropped out of school, it was informed that, enforcement of policy by government, sensitization of parents to fund their girl's education and parent education on the importance to treat both girls and boys as equal children were among the strategies which were utilized to address the menace of girl drop out. However, it was reported that, drop out trend was still high occasioned by teenage marriages, teenage pregnancies, poor regard for girl empowerment through education and regard for societal norms which interfere with girls' education. The study borrowed a lot to enrich the current study in bid to understand the aspect of drop out among girls. However, unlike Ngumo and Muasa who did a purely qualitative study, the current study used both quantitative and qualitative data methods to understand the issue of FGM on girls drop out and its influence on the 100 percent transition from primary to secondary. The current study also

adopted a big sample which represented Narok South Sub-County, Narok County unlike the outgone researchers whose scope was interviewing 10 girls.

Closer home, Mutai (2021) wished to understand the factors that determined female dropping out of school trend in Trans-Mara East Sub-County. Parents, girls who had stopped schooling and teachers were sampled to give opinions regarding the subject. Using document analysis and interviews, the results unveiled that strong archaic cultures, poverty, parent's education status, poor safety at school, living very far from school and gender discrimination made girls discontinue their primary education. Parental sensitization, investing in more boarding schools and government interventions were recommended as key deliverables for rescuing the future of girls. However, the scope of this research was meant to assess in broader view of the factors which contribute to girls' abstinence from school. This study endeavored to understand girls' drop-out of school due to FGM and how it influences transition rates to secondary education.

Undoubtedly, there are scanty studies detailing the construct of FGM and girl' drop out of school in influencing the transition rates from primary to secondary schools. Also, despite the government interventions to support girls' education, the advocacy and sensitization of the public on giving girls equal rights to education, drop out cases are still on the rise (Mutai, 2021). This necessitated the investigation of FGM practices and girls drop-out of schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya.

2.2.4 FGM and Girls' Absenteeism in Schools

Once a girl undergoes the hilarious rite of passage, they are normally left injured with wounds which take longer to heal. Due to the prolonged duration a girl takes to recover

from the condition, school going children tend to be absent at school. This trend normally goes on a long way to impact the learner performance when they are administered examinations. Apart from taking long to heal, absenteeism is also witnessed in the essence where before and after the rite of passage, girls attend educational ceremonies where they are taught on adulthood, which tend to take too long. It is as a result of the ceremonies also that, parents who value FGM literary withdraw their children from school to keenly observe the circumcision practices. When such happen, girls' attention to school shifts and this is preceded by lack of interest amongst them after the prolonged break from school. This trend grows into a habit where young female learners may not attend school persistently later after resumption.

Moreover, in circumstances where all does not go well during the cutting of the girls' genital organs, health complications may emerge due to excessive bleeding, which breed a course for irregular schooling (Klein et al., 2018; WHO, 2013). Due to the archaic patriarchal education offered to the girls during the rite of passage, girls who successful pass through this develop a sense of feeling out of place in school due to the illusion of maturity. This feeling of maturity tends to shift their attention from education to finding prospective men to marry them. Furthermore, the initiation ceremonies proceed for a couple of months, girls drop out of school to meet the preparation obligations such as counseling sessions before circumcision. This unfolds the basis of absenteeism of young girls. Girls' awareness about the initiation rite of passage about to come when they near the age has also been reported to cause about psychological disturbance which makes them less concentrate on class matters (Berg & Denison, 2012).

Globally, research carried out on the impact of FGM on girls' absenteeism to school is very scanty. The little research existing however, agree that, despite the fact that female genitalia cutting dominates in the African nations, developed countries such as United Kingdom, England, middle East and Europe recently experience a surge on FGM cases among the immigrants and refugee camps (Creighton & Hodes, 2016; Zurynski et al., 2017). Consequently, the issues of pupils' absenteeism as a result of FGM and its influence on successful transition to higher basic education systems is deplorable. One existing research by the England Business Unit (2019) focused on the consequences of FGM on under eighteens. The report findings uncovered that, genital organs cutting happens when they are age four to thirteen. Moreover, the findings underscored that when such a heinous act takes place, the girls experience loss of blood, get infectious diseases, health complications, emotional distress, psychological torture, poor sexual life and fatal hemorrhaging. However, these enlisted challenges were not assessed on how they influence learners absenteeism; hence, affecting transition from primary to secondary schools. This research henceforth filled the left gap.

In London, Creighton and Hodes (2016) carried research to understand the effects of female circumcision with the intention to give best practices to prevent the spread of the vice. The study adopted a literature review methodology to achieve its intended objective. Statistics borrowed from outgone scholars reflected that in the UK; the prevalence of female circumcision was high at an approximate figure of 1.3 thousand. The systematic review also gave information that among the effects circumcision had, the most predominate cases were health and emotional complications. In order to safeguard girl's

health, it was recommended that strict measures be put in place to require migrants to see pediatricians for examination before allowed to settle in the UK. However, this provision was meant to restrict migrants and refugees, an aspect which could not amply address and end FGM practices. Moreover, this research was scoped to understand the effects of FGM and undertake medical proactive actions towards managing the spread. The current study differs in scope in the essence that, girls' absenteeism to schools as a result of FGM and its influence in girl transition to secondary will be assessed. The current study was different from the earlier one in that; it utilized a descriptive survey design and collect first-hand information from primary schools to analyze the problem.

The situation in Australia is not in any way different to that of UK and England. A cross-sectional survey was done by Zurynski et al. (2017) to understand the prevalence and effects of this cultural practice among the residents in Australia. Doctors who were specifically pediatricians were involved to report children who had been noticed to have undergone circumcision. 76.5% respondents out of the 1311 sampled pediatricians' results informed that, 89.7% of children affected were born in Africa while the rest of the percentage in Australia. Moreover, clitoris cutting was reported to have health, marriage, sexual, psychological and educational effects. This led to the conclusion that, the cultural practice was being practiced within Australian premises and henceforth a call for cultural awareness, education, appropriate counselling and community awareness. The effects of mutilation practices on girl's school absenteeism were however not discussed. The current study assessed the influence of girl absenteeism as a result of FGM on transition to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

In Africa, some researches have been conducted to explore the impact of girls' genital cutting on their academic performance. Existing studies focus on the impact of FGM on psychological well-being and education. Research done by previous researchers also fail to link the effects of FGM practices on girl transition from primary to secondary school education. Some of the relevant exiting research blame that, FGM practices have influences such as early marriages, health consequence, psychological distress, poor emotional well-being (Pesambili & Mkumbo, 2018).

In Tanzania, the negative effects of FGM practices on girl's well-being were such as education underachievement and parental attitudes changes. Moreover, strong societal norms and cultural practices were reported as the major causes. The findings of Pesambili and Mkumbo in 2018 were based on the implication of circumcision practices in primary schools. To well illustrate this, a case study design was adopted and in-depth interviews were conducted with school head-teacher, parents, pupils and the village elders. The qualitative results revealed that the effects of genital cutting in girls is multi-faceted in nature and the dominant dimensions it experienced was through early marriages, parental perception towards girl education, poor girl interest in attending school and poor examination achievements. Another issue that was observed was the issue of stigma and societal isolation of girls who escaped the rite of passage. With the noted results, Pesambili and Mkumbo concluded that, girl's education, isolation and stigmatization for uncircumcised girls were the most felt implications of FGM practices. They henceforth raised concern that, despite the anti-circumcision programs taking place in Tanzania, the practice may continue to dominate if strong cultural practices are not forfeited. The study

was very informative in linking how FGM could lead to absenteeism such as negative attitude towards schooling. However, this was not linked to girl's transition from primary to secondary school. The current study adopted both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques such as questionnaires and interview guides to understand the influence of girls' absenteeism from school due to FGM and how it influenced transition to secondary education.

The determinants of FGM practices among girls and women in Ethiopia were analyzed by Alemu (2021). The results underscored that the prevalence of dominance of the practice among reproductive age females has reduced slightly in a span of ten years in the country. When a multi-level logistic regression was computed, some of the notable factors were; education level, religion, living in rural areas, age, nature of the job and marriage characteristics emerged as determined the predominance of FGM practices. Interventions which integrate the common noticeable determinants of FGM were, recommended in Ethiopia. The study however did not enlist the specific intervention mechanisms meant to abandon thrive of mutilation practices among girls in the country. Also, the impact of FGM on girl's education was not the scope of the study. The current research determined the influence of girls' absenteeism due to FGM on the transition rates to secondary schools.

Closer to the problem being investigated currently, the ORCHID Project (2021) presents a report which scrutinizes the current state of affairs regarding ending FGM in African countries. The corporate body presents that, since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, female genital cutting of girls has increased tremendously due to poor livelihood and

social-economic hardships. Also, it was reported that during the COVID-19 pandemic wave, the rate of practicing the rite of passage grew tremendously due to the curfews, lock downs and shutting off of schools. Despite this, the impact of FGM practices on girls' education noticed were, poor school attendance. This was attributed to lack of school fees as parents paid heavily to ensure success of FGM ceremonies. Another dimension explained was irregular attendance due to the feeling of womanhood and being out of place while in school. It was concluded that school drop-out and absenteeism were direct influences of FGM practices. Furthermore, school attendance was influenced by health issues, pain and stigma and bleeding. Some of the recommendations aimed at ending girls' genital cutting included: providing 12 years of free education, design gender transformative education curriculum, investing in research and investing money to non-information education empowerment programs. These findings are very informative in the current research. However, girl's absenteeism as a result of FGM and its influence on learners' transition to secondary school was not investigated. The current study bridged this gap.

Locally, the nation is also battling the abandonment of FGM practices among different communities. In Kenya, research covering the influence girl's absenteeism due to FGM on successful transition of girls to secondary education is likewise, scarce. Most empirical studies have majored on exploring the initiatives for promoting abandonment of the ill practices, FGM as a bad cultural practice and the effects of genital cutting among female children (Andiema, 2021; Mwendwa et al., 2020; Magige, 2020). Some of the effects of genital cutting were determined by Magige (2020), in a descriptive research design based

in Migori County. This researcher obtained data from primary schools and the findings noted that school absenteeism and early marriages were the major effects which were caused by community cultural activities such as female circumcision. In conclusion, the research found a significant relationship between FGM and girls' absenteeism from school. It was stressed that the government take its charge to sensitize the community on the importance of girl's education. FGM was also charged to be understood as gender violence and crime hence strict lobby for its abolition. This research has common features with the current study in aspects of the adopted design and the unit of observation. However, the influence of learner absenteeism on transition from primary to secondary school was not covered. The current study linked the influence of girl absenteeism from school on the 100% transition rates of pupils from primary to secondary education in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

It is also clear that the practice of cultural practices in communities like the Maasai promotes the dismal participation of girls' education. This concurred with the situation reported in Kajiado County by Mugania in 2021. Mungania assessed the school attendance trends between boys' and girls' secondary school in Kajiado County and found that the enrolment of boys in Kajiado was more than that of girls. Some of the key factors which demeaned girl participation in education were: early marriages and FGM cultural norms. Parents also perceived girls as a source of income when exchanged for bride price, had negative attitude towards education as well as poverty levels. Moreover, cases of absenteeism among the few girls who attended school were reported. The current study focused on learner absenteeism on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools.

The current study differed with the outgone one in that; public primary schools was observed as opposed to Mungania who did the research in secondary schools.

Micheni and Bright (2018) investigated the sociological consequences of FGM on girls' education in Kissi County. 133 girls were engaged in data collection and the results remarked that, girls suffered from depression because they were not ready to undergo female genital organ cutting. Moreover, girls who faced stigma as a result of escaping the cultural practices were found to perform poorly in their academics. For victims of FGM, the girls reported that, their education progress became a nightmare due to dropping out to get married. The study concluded that girls' education was very much affected in Kisii and another way this happened is the health complications that made girls to forfeit studies, attend classes irregularly and more so drop out of school. Micheni and Bright recommended that, the government ought to understand the underlying causes that make Kisii community practice FGM which will help them recommend responses that will work towards abandonment of the practice. Community awareness through informal education was also suggested as a working tool for eradicating the dominance of the practice among residents. This study borrowed from the strengths of Micheni and Bright study and went further to understand the influence of girl's absenteeism on transition rate from primary to secondary school in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County.

Despite the efforts indicated above, to improve the education of pupils of the female gender, the transition to secondary continue to dwindle. Also, it is noticeable that female pupils continue to do poorly in their academics. Furthermore, empirical research supporting the influence of girl's absenteeism on 100 percent transition from primary to

secondary school levels are insufficient. This study investigated this construct and aimed to understand how girl's absenteeism as a result of FGM cultural practices influence transition to secondary so as to improve access to education among women.

2.3 Theoretical Review

This research was underpinned by the liberal feminism theory.

Liberal Feminism Theory

Catherine Mackinnon developed the liberal feminism theory in 1970s, and by 1989s, it had gained its popularity. Mackinnon hinged on the premise that women in the society can have access to equity through social system reforms and legal means. This was based on the supposition that women have rights to be guarded, have freedom for their individual needs, need access to legal equality and need protection from any kind of societal discrimination such as sex-based.

The main point of argument by the theorist is that equity should be brought through education and legal changes. Also, the theory illustrates that women can achieve their equity through the choices and actions they take. Mackinnon argued that the society has a negative belief that naturally, women are weak, limited intellectually and physically hence, men overtake them through academic, leadership, job and other forms of discrimination. The liberal feminism theory goal is therefore, to, advocate for women equality by ending domestic violence, sexual violence and obstacles which hinder women from exploring opportunities that men have access to.

In this study, FGM socio-cultural practice acts as a barrier by denying women equity. It is also a form of sexual harassment against women. Therefore, the theorist calls for

affirmative action to liberate the society towards changing their view about women. The feminism theory helps in unveiling the different avenues of gender inequality in the society. Some of the themes it addresses include: discrimination, sexual abuse, appreciation of patriarchy norms, gender stereotypes, objection, women exclusion and oppression.

Although the theory evidence weaknesses including not underlying the causes of women oppression and harassment in the society, the liberal feminism theory was very significant in informing the study. It helped to demonstrate how the cultural practices such as FGM in Narok South Sub-County denies girls chances to education by exposing them to early marriages, early pregnancies and womanhood. It also aided in demonstrating the influence of independent variables (academic performance, drop-out rate and absenteeism) and the dependent variable (girls transition from primary to secondary school).

Further, this relation helps the researcher to understand the effects of FGM on girls' academic performance, school drop-out and absenteeism. This is because existing norms and traditions have been passed on by patriarchy and patriarchal societies demean women voices, less regard women development and leadership. A patriarchal society is also dominated by men ruler ship in decision making hence women do not have a say on who to marry, how many children to sire and also which gender should be taken to school. In this case, girls are demeaned the privilege to go to schools hence demeaning those equal chances for their development and freedom as boys do.

2.4 Summary of the literature gaps

The transition rate of girls from primary to secondary schools in Kenya is low especially in pastoralist communities, due to a number of compounding factors. It is also noticeable that the society plays a key role in shaping the education affairs of the girl child through the belief system, cultural practices and norms they practice or propagate. Studies existing point out that FGM practices and transition interferes with primary school education acquisition hence possessing a link on progression to secondary schools. Factors such as poor performance, dropping out of school and absenteeism link to be associate results of FGM practices young girls undergo. Moreover, guardians and parents are a key determinant factor towards shaping the future of the girl child as either ending up in teenage marriage or progressing with academics. The community also has a stake through the values they propagate that either foster education of children or misguide them to treasure something else. FGM practices that are propagated in the communities have also been linked to determine girls' concentration, attention and perception towards learning. Ultimately, these compounding factors work against the call to achieve 100% transition of pupils to secondary level of education.

From the existing literature, it is informed that the transition rates of girls from primary to secondary level is low. When focusing on schools in Narok South Sub-County in Narok County, the situation is not in any way different. Moreover, the extremity of the situation differs across sub-counties. Furthermore, it is also clear that the underlying foundational causes for poor transition to girls' education has scanty been assessed in Kenya. Consequently, existing research records that the rite of passage communicate the girls' maturity and hence expected to behave differently and in particular in starting their own

family. Girls who successfully survive the brutal action generally are reported to be disinterested in education progression. When such attitude escalates among the female gender, their urge and commitment to schooling reduces. Due to the underlying trend of behavior, such girls end up developing bad behavior such as forfeiting school and becoming truants. Such behavior is henceforth preceded by premature teenage marriages. In regard to these sentiments, it is noticeable that in any communities where FGM takes place, pupils' enrollment in basic educational systems is poor (Njogu, 2015).

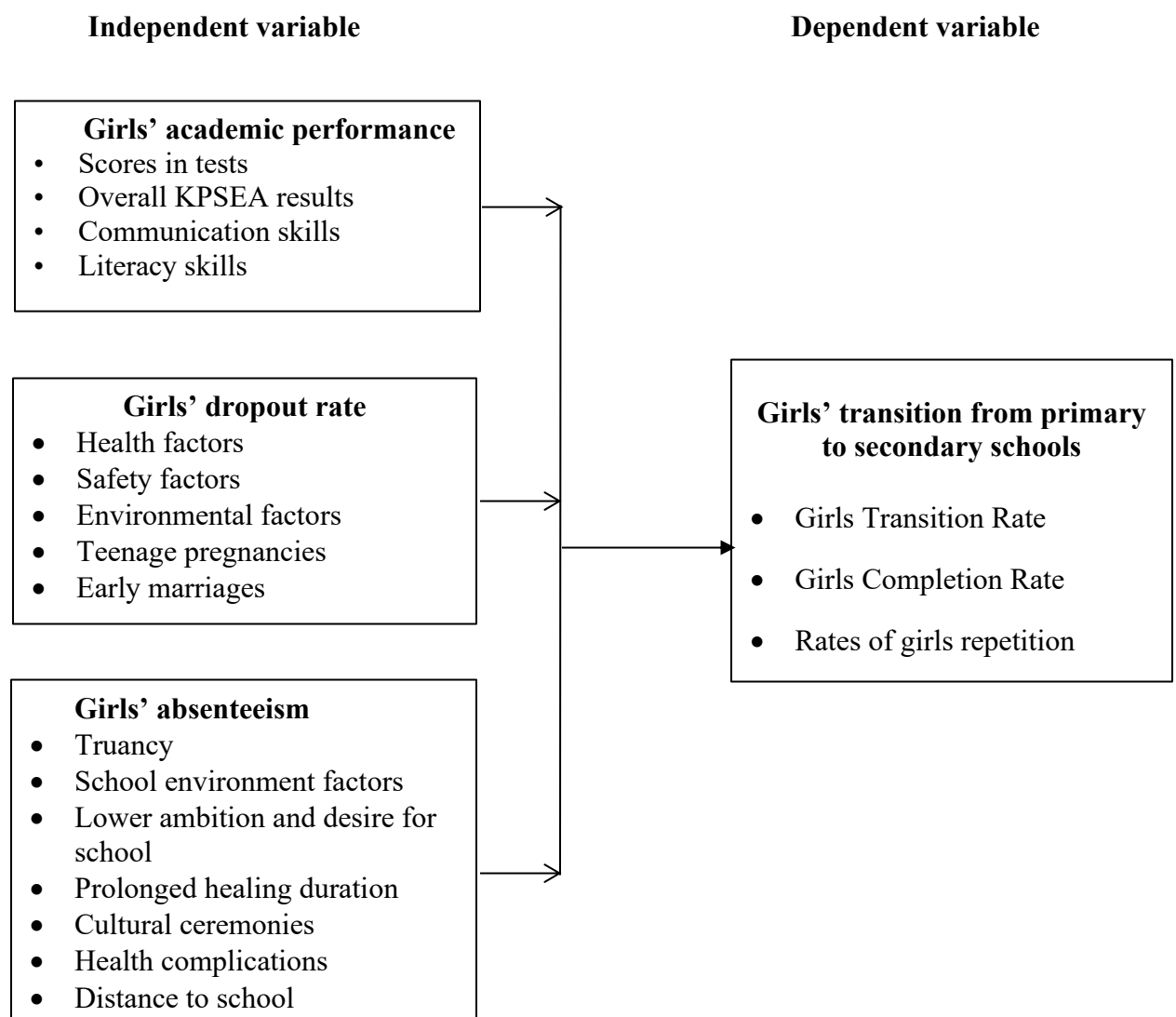
Njogu (2015) states that circumcised girls often perceive formal education negative, heading to their withdrawal. Generally, existing studies are in agreement that FGM practices affect girls' education in the world and hence, Kenya. However, the settings and dimensions from which they were done do not reflect the picture among residents of Narok County. Additionally, the studies have not shown focus on the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County, Kenya, which the current research addressed.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

In this study, the interaction of the key variables of the study were presented as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2. 1

Conceptual Framework



Description of Variables in the Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 shows how FGM influences the transition rate of girls as hypothesized in this study. The girls' academic performance, drop-out rates and absenteeism entail the independent variables purported to influence the transition rate to secondary schools in primary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

The first objective on academic performance as impacted by FGM was demonstrated by the scores obtained by learners during class tests, mid-term, end of term examinations and national examinations such as KPSEA. IT was further indicated by the level of communication skills and fluency, and literacy skills possessed by the girls in the respective schools.

FGM and girls' drop-out rate from school was determined by the records of girls' retention, trends of drop-out and teenage pregnancies among the girls. Evidence of girls drop-out was determined through health, safety, environmental factors, teenage pregnancies and early marriages. For girls' absenteeism, evidences of truancy, poor consistency in class work, irregular school attendance and inconsistent termly, weekly and monthly attendance registers indicated absenteeism. School environmental factors, cultural factors, distance to school and health complications also determined girl's absenteeism.

The dependent variable in the study was girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County and was predicted to be modified favorably or adversely by girls' academic performance, drop-out rates and absenteeism as a result of

FGM practices taking place. The dependent variable was measured by assessing transition rates, completion rates and girls repletion trends.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three describes the methodology for conducting the research. The covered elements constituted the research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, instruments, validity, reliability, data collection and analysis procedures and ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Location of the Study

The research took place at public primary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County. The county's principal economic activities are majorly pastoralism. Narok South sub-county is the largest sub-county and has a total of 179 primary schools hence, was considered for the study given its vastness to other sub-counties. Narok South Sub-County was also selected as a location of the study due to poor rate of girls' transition (40%) to secondary schools as compared to the other sub-counties within the county and this sub-county has only three girls' schools (Chematui et al., 2019).

Moreover, when compared with Transmara West, Transmara East, Narok North, Narok West and Narok East; Narok South sub-county has very high pregnancy and early marriage rates which affect the overall rate of transition among girls (Kenya Demographic Health Survey [KDHS], 2022). Moreover, KDHS in 2022 overall ranked Narok County position four in teenage pregnancy after the county scored 28 percent against the national average of 15 percent. Apart from the low girl's transition rate, the influence of FGM

(academic performance, drop-out and absenteeism) on transition of girls to secondary education in Narok South Sub-County, had not been established. Therefore, this explained why this location was selected for specific research focus of the influence of FGM on transition of girls from primary to secondary education in Narok South Sub-County, Kenya.

3.3 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to achieve the study aim. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), this design aims at enabling a researcher to systematically understand the population characteristics in both an accurate and objective manner. Mugenda (2011) opined that the major strengths for adopting a descriptive survey lies in the sense that it allows the investigator to get a clear picture of the way things are. Bhattacharjee (2012) also echoed that a descriptive survey design intends to bring up findings which bring applicable relevancy to different interested stakeholders in the education sphere.

Therefore, the study blended well within the provisions of a survey design because it was carried out within the provision of the university calendar timeframe. Moreover, the investigator relied on field data, which was analyzed and reported with utmost honest for all the study variables. In order to get detailed information, questionnaires and interview schedules were utilized for fact finding. Secondly the study sought to understand the situation experienced in Narok through the participants consciousness, feeling, experiences and norms. This design also remained favorable for use in the current study

since the target population was large. The design is also appropriate since it encompasses holistic approach and real practical experience of primary school stakeholders.

3.4 Target Population

This is the intended audience from which a representative sample was administered with research tools to get ideas regarding a research problem. Kothari (2014) defines target population as the core audience that interests the researcher investigation from the whole location scoped to be studied. For this study, the researcher was interested in engaging the head-teachers, teachers and female pupils in public primary in Narok County. According to the Narok South Sub-County Ministry of Education statistics, Narok South has a total of 179 primary schools with a total of 179 Head-teachers, 1, 288 teachers and 6, 998 girls. This implies that the study engaged total target population of 8, 465 respondents (Ministry of Education Narok South Sub-County, 2022).

3.5 Sample Size, Sample Frame and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a typical population chosen to represent the whole target population from the total core elected for observation. A feasible sample should not be too small but rather just adequate to serve as an adequate representation of the entire population. A sizable sample is economical in essence since it helps the investigator to both balance time, money and subject availability requirements. Sample frame is the total number of respondents targeted by the researcher.

To get sample size for this study, the researcher used the Krejcie and Morgan table (1970) to determine the sample size for participating primary schools, teachers and female pupils

in Narok South Sub-County. For each population size (179 primary schools, 179 Head-teachers, 1, 288 teachers and 6, 998 girls), the researcher located the corresponding sample size in the Krejcie and Morgan table. Where the population size is not exactly listed, the researcher used the next highest value in the table. This led to a sample size of 118 primary schools and the specific participants being: 118 head-teachers, 291 teachers and 361 girls, making an overall sample size population of 770 respondents. The application of this formula resulted to a sample size as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Target Population, and Sample Size

Respondents	Total Population	Sample Size
Total number of primary schools	179	118
Number of Head teachers in the schools	179	118
Number of teachers (Grade 6-8)	1,288	291
Total number of girls (Grade 6-8)	6,998	361
Total	8,736	770

3.6 Sampling procedure

The grade 6, 7 and 8 teachers and learners were stratified into strata with relation to the specific grade types where, proportionate stratified sampling technique was implemented to ensure equal chances of representation. A simple random sampling technique was utilized to get participants from the strata of girls and the teachers' categories. Simple random sampling method provides equal chances of participants being included in the study; something that promotes objectivity. The 118 head-teachers were purposively requested to participate in this study. The randomly selected girls from the participating

schools comprised of grade 6, 7 and 8. The choice for this preference lied in the essence that, girls at these grades are entering their adolescent age, understand the dynamics of FGM and to some extent, some are likely to be survivors of the toxic ritual. This led to a sample size of 770. Table 3.1 illustrates the sample size of the target population.

3.7 Data Collection Tools

This research used questionnaires and focused group discussion as tools for obtaining data from grade 6-8 teachers, grade 6-8 girls and head-teachers. There were questionnaires for teachers and grade 6, 7 and 8 pupils whereas, focus group discussions were conducted with the school heads.

3.7.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was considered a good tool for this study since it protected the participant's privacy. It also allowed the gathering of objective and subjective information from the population that was sampled. Moreover, questionnaires helped the researcher obtain detailed data which assured better presentation of results (Kothari, 2004). Furthermore, due to their capacity to ensure anonymity, questionnaires were suitable in this study because they helped gather data from the teachers and learners freely. They were also advantageous by the reason that, questionnaires usually enable data to be collected from a large sample size quickly and within a short time, considering the big sample size of the two sets of respondents.

Other conveniences that come by adopting questionnaires are such as: they are easy to design, quantify and analyze data in SPSS. For both questionnaires, the sentiments and open needed questions were informed by the reviewed literature in chapter two. The

conceptual framework was also instrumental when developing statements which the teachers answered by ticking where their best opinion lied in a 5-Likert scale.

The grade 6-8 teachers' questionnaires were majorly comprised of close-ended questions and few open-ended ones, while girl's questionnaire dominated by open ended questions. Grade 6-8 teachers and grade 6-8 girls' questionnaires were sectioned into 5 sub-headings. Section A outlined the biographic characteristics of specified answerer. Next, sections B, C and D covered items on; academic performance, school dropout rates and absenteeism resulting from FGM. The last sections were E which contained questions on girls' transition from primary to Secondary school education in Narok South Sub-County. For the two sets of questionnaires, see appendix III and IV, respectively.

3.7.2 The Focus Group Discussion

This refers to an organized, simple and small discussion comprising a leader who acts as a moderator specifically collecting data and a group of individuals bearing similar characteristics (Prasad & Garcia, 2017). The study grouped the head-teachers into nine focused group discussions. The focused group discussions were held at Ololulunga Boys High School where the head-teachers had converged for a KNEC briefing. The researcher had been introduced to the KNEC officials by the sub-county director of education and given permission to engage with the head-teachers after the official meeting.

A focus group discussion guide was used to obtain information from the sampled primary school head-teachers. By including this tool, the researcher was privileged to ask supplementary questions while seeking more clarification on the responses regarding academic performance, drop out, absenteeism and the transition rate of girls from primary

to secondary schools. Concerning the composition of the focus group discussion guide questions, all questions were open-ended and non-structured in nature, which gave room for the head-teachers to respond by giving descriptions when a question is posed to the audience.

For the focus group description, the sampled head-teachers participating in the debate were guided by the researcher through lead questions covering all the study variables. The tool henceforth acted as a guide, to help the researcher who moderated at that time to ensure respondents remain in the scope of the study. The researcher took down some notes in a notebook and at the same time recording was done using an electronic device to capture adequate information. Both taking notes and voice recording was done after consent was granted. The focus group discussion guide was purely composed of open-ended questions meant to evaluate the academic performance, school dropout rates and absenteeism resulting from FGM and their influences on girls' transition. The focus group discussion tool for this study is provided in appendix II.

3.8 Piloting of Research Instruments

Piloting was carried out purposely to identify and rectify inconsistencies in the design, content and suitability of the language of the instruments. This enabled the researcher to achieve a high level of clarity, accuracy and comprehensiveness. Furthermore, insightful feedback that was suggested by the pilot population was helpful in influencing decision-making such as modifying the content in the questionnaire as well as the interview guide. Another significance that justified the undertaking of a piloting exercise for the research

instruments lies in the fact that, the obtained informed testing the validity and reliability of the data collecting tools (Kothari, 2004).

In this research, the pre-testing of both questionnaires and the focused group discussion tools happened in Samburu County where five primary schools participated. The sample size for the pre-testing was obtained using the recommendation of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) that, a range from 1% to 10%, of a pre-testing population is sufficient. The participating five public primary schools were randomly selected to participate in the pretesting. Samburu County was selected as an area for doing the piloting owing to similar characteristics as the Narok County. Some of the commonly exhibited characteristics alike to those in Narok South Sub-County include the learning environmental conditions, economic activities and pastoralism as the major way of life. The primary schools were also experiencing similarities in the aspect of poor transition rate of girls from primary to secondary schools including the predominant cases of FGM practices among the communities.

3.9 Validity of Instruments

According to Kothari (2014), validity measures the extent to which an instrument unveils the real situation in the study area. The validity of research instruments in this research was assessed through content, construct and face validity. The developed tools were gauged for content validity which is the level to which the specific domains, indicators and parameters being looked at in each study objectives are asked to the respondents. In line with this, expert opinions were considered to align the tools as per their advice for

each statements written to cover each objective. In the same vein, literature reviewed in chapter two on each objective being investigated was utilized by the researcher to develop the different questions and statements. The face validity was ascertained by the researcher through seeking expert judgment from the research supervisors. Also, the pre-testing of the research instruments at Samburu County among the head-teachers, teachers and grade 6, 7 and 8 girls who were not part of the main study respondents helped in addressing any errors and mistakes. For construct validity, both the questionnaires and focus group discussion tools were sub-divided into demographic, academic performance, girls drop-out rate and girls' absenteeism' sections, hence enabling each section to cover questions related to that particular objective alone.

3.10 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability is making the tools error free such that, when tested in a population of similar characteristics, the results become consistent as many times as possible (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). Reliability measures a research instrument's precision, trustworthiness, consistency and duplicability (Chakrabartty, 2013). To achieve this, the researcher conducted a pretesting of the tools to confirm internal consistency. This was ascertained by computing a Cronbach alpha test in SPSS. A Cronbach's coefficient greater than 0.7 was used to interpret the results as reliable (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Additionally, the classification of Cronbach's alpha values starting from 0.7 and above was deemed adequate (Kothari & Garg, 2014).

3.11 Data Collection Procedures

A research permit was obtained from NACOSTI which was applied after the researcher got issued an introduction letter by Kenya Methodist University. Having these two documents at hand, the researcher wrote an official letter to request the Narok South Sub-County Director of Education (CDE), and the County commissioner permission to engage the primary schools in data collection. Since the teachers and pupils were many, two research assistants were trained to administer, facilitate data collection and required behavior in the field. On agreed date and time for each school, the researcher in company of the research assistants travelled to the sampled schools and administered the questionnaires to both the pupils and teachers.

The head-teachers sampled to participate in the focus group discussions joined a WhatsApp group. This helped do communication and grouping the head-teachers into their respective groups. The number of focus group discussions were nine in total. After the sub-county director for education approved the researcher to engage the head-teachers in the sampled schools, arrangements for the discussion during the KNEC briefing meetings that happened the second term 2025, was approved for consideration and communicated. The sub-county director for education gave this permission after mutual agreement on the day and time for doing the focused group discussions. The researcher finished one group discussion before going to the other. The focused group discussions were successful because of the sub-county hold briefing meetings.

Face to face discussions were conducted with the head teachers of the selected schools in Narok South Sub-County at Ololulunga Boys High School. When the conversation went on, note taking was done to pick relevant information been shared by the school heads.

Also, an audio recording was done to ensure important notes not written down were captured. This happened at the consent of the head-teachers.

3.12 Data Analysis Procedures

Before entering the quantitative data into SPSS, the data was cleaned. Quantitative data from the ticked table sections in the questionnaires were coded in line with each objective of the study. Coded quantitative data were analyzed descriptively and tables and figures containing the mean and percentages generated. Multiple linear regression was conducted to determine the overall goal of the study. The following function showed the relationship between variables in a multiple regression model.

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + e, \text{ Where:}$$

Y= Girls transition from primary to secondary schools

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = regression coefficient weights for x_1, x_2, x_3 as shown below:

X_1 = Girls academic performance

X_2 = Girls drop-out rate

X_3 = Girls absenteeism

ε = is the estimated error of the model.

The diagnostics were also analyzed so as to test the assumptions of regression analysis such as normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation and multicollinearity tests. This was informative in ascertaining the type of regression analysis.

Information obtained from the focus group discussions and open-ended questions in the questionnaires was thematically analyzed. Head-teachers' responses were transcribed to

get cross examining themes and subjects. Identified patterns enabled the researcher to get specific broad and narrow themes in line with each objective being studied. Narration was the major way of presenting the qualitative data while in some stances, direct quotes and verbatim were incorporated to lay the voice of respondents in the findings presentation.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

The respondents' consents were obtained before administering questionnaires or conducting the focus group discussions. The researcher did personal identification before respondents by clearly stating the mission of the research. The researcher observed confidentiality by maintaining anonymity of respondents before, during and after the data collection process. One way of meeting this standard was when the researcher asked the respondents not to write their names on the data collection tools. Data obtained from respondents was not used for any other purposes other than educational, as it was stated in the introductory letter.

The researcher carried an identification badge for easier identification as bona fide student of KeMU. The researcher also carried their national identification card, an introduction letter from KeMU, authorization to collect data from the concerned offices such as the County Director of Education in Narok County, consent from the school head-teachers as well as the letter giving authority to conduct research from NACOSTI. The researcher also made sure that there is no falsification of data of any kind in the field. Finally, all sources of information and citations were acknowledged accordingly using the APA referencing style.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the found results and also discusses them. The descriptive outcomes presented in tables and figures cover response rate, reliability tests and demographic details. The results are also discussed per objective starting with; academic performance, drop-out cases, absenteeism and girls transition from primary to secondary schools. Each table or figure is preceded with a discussion respectively. Qualitative data is presented thematically with narrations to build up the findings.

4.2 Results on Response Rate

235 questionnaires issued to teachers were returned from the 291. 8 amongst the completed ones were excluded for use in the study due to missing response and blank spaces when the researcher was doing data cleaning. Due to this, 227(78.0%) made the return rate for teachers' questionnaires. All head-teachers took part in the focused group discussions (100%) while grade 6, 7 and 8 girls that responded were 287; as opposed to the anticipated 361. Table 4.1 tabulates the respondents' numbers that responded and their frequencies.

Table 4.1*Response rate*

Respondents	Sample Size	Number that responded	Response rate (%)
Head-teachers	118	118	100.0%
Teachers	291	227	78.0%
Girls	361	287	79.5%
Total	770	632	85.8%

The results demonstrate a favorable overall response rate from the three categories of school stakeholders which, is 85.8%. This return rate was considered good in social science as informed by the recommendation of Mugenda (2019) which affirms that a return rate from 70% onwards is adequate representation of study participants. Additionally, the research done by Sheikh et al. in 2023 also got an adequate response rate of 76.1. The good response rate was due to the support given by the Sub-county Director of Education who allowed the researcher to do focused group discussions during the KNEC briefing meeting at Ololulunga Boys High school. This made all head-teacher to turn-up due to official job commitment. Furthermore, grade 6-8 teachers and girls were available because the researcher set a data collection date on a school day.

4.3 Reliability Test

The study also assessed the correctness of the obtained information to gauge its adequacy in informing the objectives and achieving the aim of the study. Reliability was henceforth,

computed by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for academic performance, drop-out cases, absenteeism and girls transition variables. Table 4.2 tabulates the findings.

Table 4. 2

Reliability result based on the four study variables

Main constructs of the study (N = 227)	Cronbach's Alpha
Academic performance (X1)	0.710
Girls' school drop-out (X2)	0.731
Girls' absenteeism (X3)	0.797
Girls transition to secondary schools (Y)	0.837
Overall	0.769

The results in Table 4.2 indicate that academic performance, drop-out, girls' absenteeism and the transition to secondary schools obtained 0.710, 0.731, 0.797 and 0.837 respectively. The results outline that all obtained Cronbach's coefficients are greater than 0.7 ($\alpha < 0.700$). The study deemed the data reliable and sufficient for analysis and achieving its aim owing to the advice given by Yin and Du (2022) that coefficients greater than 0.7 indicate data reliability.

4.4 Respondents' Demographic Profile

The participants in the study comprised of grade 6-8 teachers, head-teachers and grade 6, 7 and 8 girls. In this hand, teachers' gender, education level and work experience was sought. On the other hand, the girl's current grade, age, participation in initiation ceremonies, age for circumcision and reasons for clitoridectomy was also obtained to inform the composition and dynamics of the participants. This information regarding the teachers and girls is shown in Table 4.3 and 4.4 respectively.

4.4.1 Background characteristics of teachers

Teachers ticked their gender as illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Demographic Characteristics of teachers

	Description	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	120	52.9
	Male	107	47.1
	Total	227	100.0
Highest education qualification	KCPE certificate	1	0.4
	KCSE certificate	5	2.2
	Diploma	125	55.1
	Undergraduate degree	96	42.3
	Master's degree	00	00.0
	PhD	00	0.00
	Total	227	100.0
Working experience in the current school	Less than a year	9	4.0
	Between 1-5 years	109	48.0
	Between 6-10 years	98	43.2
	Between 11-15 years	9	4.0
	Between 16-20 years	0	0.0
	over 20 years	2	0.9
	Total	227	100.0

The table 4.3 shows there were slightly more female teachers 120(52.9%) than 107(47.1%) male. Regardless of the slight dominance of females, the research noted a somewhat balanced gender ratio which informed more inclusive and diverse results. The

results do not agree with what Maiyo et al. (2018) reported that; teachers in Narok County are dominated by the male gender (73.7%) in comparison to the females.

The participants' dynamics were also informed by the education qualifications. Table 4.3 shows a dominance of 125(55.1%) as diploma holders, 42.3% had undergraduate qualifications and only one 1(0.4%) with KCPE certificate. This implied that in Narok South Sub-county, employees had requisite qualifications in general although there was no noticed advancement in careers due to lack of masters and PhD qualifications. On the other hand, the results contrast with the findings published by Kaluo (2018) where bachelor of education qualification dominated most schools. Kaluo also noticed traces of form four and primary school leavers to be amongst teacher population in Narok County. As opposed to Kaluo, the current results could mean teachers recently employed and posted in Junior secondary hence were in their early years of career.

Moreover, it is indicated on work experience that; majority of teachers having worked between 1-5- years 109(48.0%) and 6-10 years by 43.2%. Those who had been in the profession the longest (over twenty years) were only two. The results somewhat compare with the report presented by Kaluo (2018) that the domiciled period of experience for teacher was 1-5 years.

4.4.1 Background Characteristics of Girls

Girls were asked to write their characteristics such as age bracket, age when initiation occurs and the grades they were.

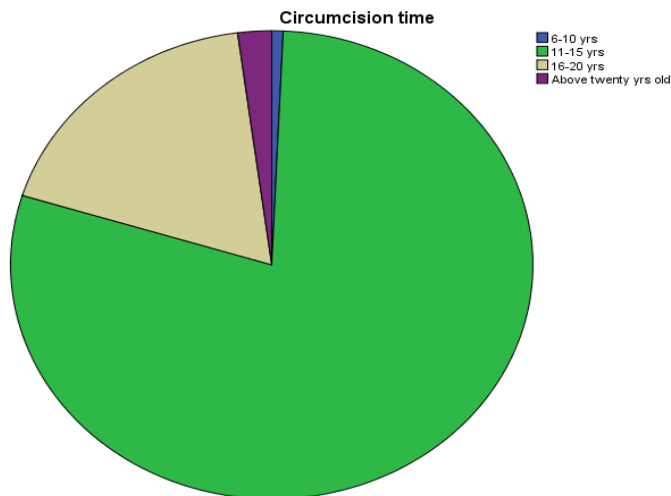
Table 4.4*Demographic characteristics of girls*

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Girls age bracket	1-10 years	6	2.0
	10-20 years	281	98.0
Total			100
Current girls' grade	Grade 8	131	45.6
	Grade 7	89	31.0
	Grade 6	67	23.3
Total			100
Age when girls are circumscized	1- 5 years	0	0.0
	6 -10 years	2	0.7
	11-15 years	227	79.1
	16-20 years	52	18.1
	20 years old	6	2.1
Total		287	100

Table 4.4 shows that almost all girls 281 (98%) were aged between 10-20 years. Majority of respondents were grade 8 pupils (45.6%) and the least were grade 6 23.3%. It was also the concern of the study to know the age when girls in Maasai community in Narok County get circumcised. Figure 4.1 illustrates the opinions given by the girls.

Figure 4.1

Circumcision time for girls



Predominantly, the results present that 11-15 years is the general time when initiation takes place given by 227(79.1%) responses. As noted in chapter three, head-teachers participated in a focused group interview. On answering the question on the age when girls in Narok South Sub-county get circumcised, 11-15 years was emphasized hence, unanimous agreeing with the results from the learners themselves. These findings underscored the report that girls who undergo FGM are aged between 5–14 years according to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2021). The results also concur with the observation of Matanda et al. (2018) policy brief that 14 years and underneath is the rich age for most initiations in Kisii and Narok Counties in Kenya.

The study was also interested in understanding the distribution of girls with regard to the number that participated in FGM practice as initiates and those that had not. Moreover, it concerned the study to understand the most common reasons for the continuity of FGM practice among the Maasai in Narok South Sub-County. The findings on status of participation and reasons for endurance of FGM were important particularly in informing the psychosocial programs needed in addressing the specific needs affecting girls. The results are as illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Participation in circumcision and common reasons for FGM

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Participated in circumcision ceremonies status	Yes	50	17.4
	No	237	82.6
Total		287	100.0
common reason for circumcising girls in Maasai community	Respect	15	5.2
	Maturity	143	49.8
	Identity	43	15.0
	Prevent immorality	86	29.9
Total		287	100

The data in Table 4.5 represent the status on participation in circumcision as initiates in most primary schools in Narok South where; 50(17.4%) were victims and the rest 237(82.6%) had not undergone the heinous rite of passage.

The other aspect sought from the respondents was the common reasons that informed the FGM practices in the community. Among the four reasons indicated, the most common

reason why the practice endured in the Maasai community was to ensure initiation to maturity into adulthood 143(49.8%), followed by a means to prevent immorality 86(29.9%). The least common reason was obtaining respect among the peers which was represented by 15 opinions. Actually, to support this, all the focused group discussions carried out with the head-teachers gave that circumcision ceremonies-initiated girls to adulthood which was for marriage purposes, a means to curb immoral behavior such as irresponsible sexual practices and it enabled achieve identity in the society. The results presented in a policy brief by Matanda et al. (2018) in this hand outlines that Maasai and Gusii communities believe that cutting girls genitalia promote sexual restraint, hence upholding morality in the community and fidelity in marriage. On the other hand, Mutundu et al. (2023) reported that, the continuity of FGM in Kajiado and Narok residents thrive so as to ensure cultural continuity and preservation.

Head-teachers were also requested to comment on the extent of FGM practices in Narok South Sub-County. Among the nine focus group discussions, 8 focus groups opined that FGM predominance was prevalently high at 70%. The same was confirmed using the teachers' responses in Table 4.6.

Table 4. 6

FGM Prevalence

Extend	Frequency
Very low	0(0.0%)
Low	0(0.0%)
Moderate	10(4.4%)
High	56(24.7%)
Very high	161(70.9%)

Table 4.6 submits that, the prevalence of FGM among Narok South Sub-County stood high as given by 70.9% underscoring that the head-teachers responses agreed with the teachers results. In concurrence, Matanda et al. (2018) underscored FGM prevalence remains high in many ethnic groups such as the Somali (94%) and the Samburu (87%).

4.5 Results on Academic performance

The academic performance of girls was the first objective in the study. Its indicators largely focused on influences: prolonged healing period; health hazards; participation in class activities; concentration in class activities; learner behaviour; marriage mentality; gender responsive pedagogy. Data collected regarding it was given by the head-teachers, teachers, and grade 6, 7 and 8 girls. Quantitative data collected from the teachers, was presented and discussed while the qualitative data given by head-teachers group discussions and girls open-ended questions in the questionnaire was sufficed to better explain the phenomena. The teachers' questionnaire contained closed-ended questions which comprised various statements on a Likert scale, where: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree and 5 = strongly agree as indicated by Table 4.7. When interpreting the descriptive results, responses on agreed and strongly agreed represented an agreement status; while the sum frequencies on disagreed and strongly disagreed stood in for disagreement status.

Table 4. 7*Academic performance*

Sentiments on academic performance (N = 227)	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean
FGM practices contribute to poor performance of girls	1 (0.4%)	94 (41.4%)	2 (0.9%)	12 (5.3%)	118 (52.0%)	3.67
The prolonged healing contributes to low performance period after the practice	28 (12.3%)	67 (29.5%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (7.9%)	114 (50.2%)	3.54
Health hazards experienced during the practice may cause poor performance	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (7.0%)	210 (92.5%)	4.91
I am able to identify significant difference in general performance between girls who have undergone FGM and those who have not	99 (43.6%)	0 (0.0%)	106 (46.7%)	10 (4.4%)	12 (5.3%)	2.28
FGM affects girls' participation in class activities	5 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.6%)	97 (42.7%)	119 (52.4%)	4.43
Psychological impacts of FGM affects learner concentration in class	31 (13.7%)	22 (9.7%)	48 (21.1%)	91 (40.1%)	35 (15.4%)	3.54
Psychosocial effects of FGM impact learner behaviour and ultimate performance	28 (12.3%)	14 (6.2%)	54 (23.8%)	100 (44.1%)	31 (13.7%)	3.41
The promise for a future to girls who undergo FGM through marriage make them devalue performance in academics	6 (2.6%)	10 (4.4%)	69 (30.4%)	103 (45.4%)	39 (17.2%)	3.70
Gender responsive pedagogy influence girls' achievement in education	15 (6.6%)	31 (13.7%)	93 (41.0%)	49 (21.6%)	39 (17.2%)	3.29

The findings shown in Table 4.7 on academic performance of girls indicate high mean values between 4.91 and 3.291. This demonstrates a high level of influence of FGM practices on the academic achievement of girls in Narok South Sub-County. This illustrate

that the results critically inform on the needfulness of strategies for addressing the adverse effects of FGM practices on girls' achievement. FGM practices contribute to poor performance of girls.

FGM practices was also found to attribute to poor performance of girls where 130 (57.3%) agreed and strongly agreed. This illustrated the perception that circumcision practices among girls influence their education, requiring strategies to suppress FGM practices in Narok South Sub-county. In support, Muteshi et al. (2016) study provides a list of side effects faced by girls who are cut in the Middle East where: difficulties in passing urine, bleeding, infectious diseases and strong pains make girls have poor social interactions and irregular school attendance which affects their aggregate performance in the long run.

Notably, a significant majority 210 (92.5%) of teachers strongly agreed that health hazards experienced during FGM practices affects the performance of girls. Moreover, the prolonged healing period was also considered a causative contribution to low performance after the practice by 114(50.2%) teachers who gave strongly agreed opinions. This result suggests that health complications occurring during (refrain schooling for months to be educated, preparations before the ritual, its execution) and after the FGM practice such as hemorrhage, urinal track infections, menstrual cycle disorders possess significant influence and should not be overlooked. Likewise, according to Warsame (2019), the negative influence of FGM practice on female education lies in the fact that, during the pre-stage, the preparation, execution and healing after FGM takes too long.

Most teachers 119(52.4%) and 91(42.7%) generally agreed that FGM practices influences girls' participation in class activities while psychological impacts of FGM affected learner

concentration in class at a mean of 3.54. This indicate that the impact of FGM is far weighty and directly deter girls' participation and concentration therefore, a need for localized solutions to manage the reported effects. The results closely correlate with Andiem's (2021) submissions that linked FGM to poor learner acquisition of knowledge. The impact on girls concentration, knowledge acquisition and participation in school activities therefore, point for needfulness to strictly implement the anti-FGM laws.

The results also report that a large proportion 143(62.6%) of teachers agreed that the promise for a future among girls who undergo FGM through marriage make them devalue performance in academics. The findings indicate FGM practice shift the mind set of girls to a feeling of maturity, desire for adulthood through marriage, hence, the less regard for education. This calls for personalized approaches that demonstrate the relevance of education to affected girls, so as to significantly boost their concentration on education.

Other reported behaviors resulting from girls' circumcision include general change of learner behaviour due to psychosocial effects of FGM. Some psychosocial behaviours that affect girls may range from fear, anxiety, depression, loos of interest for school, post-traumatic disorders like nightmares and the act flashbacks, defiance stigma, aggressive behaviours and withdrawal from others. These results agree with the submission made by Muteshi et al. (2016), that, when girls transit to circumcision, they develop short and long-term behaviors including disengagement with others, withdrawals, poor social interactions and loss of schooling interest which eventually affect their education.

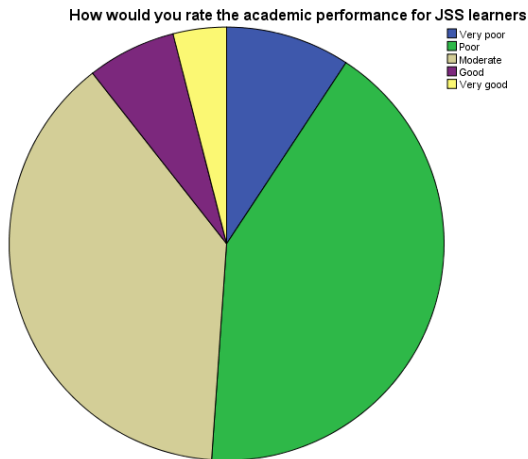
Although the results generally report the influence of girls' circumcision rite on their education, teachers confessed that they were not able to identify significant difference in

general behavioural performance between girls who have undergone FGM and those who have not where 99 (43.6%) strongly agreed and 106 (46.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed. This points out weaknesses in teachers' ability to learn girl's behavior hence the needfulness for teacher empowerment on life skills which are critical in identifying and managing learners so as to achieve their performance.

Despite the noted impact of FGM on girls' participation in education and achievement, 88 (38.8%) of teachers believe that gender responsive pedagogy influences girls' achievement in education. The results imply that gender responsive pedagogies showcased by non-discriminatory class-rooms, participative learning, emotional safety environment, and the emphasis of belief in equal potential despite one's gender are fundamental for girls' effective participation in education. This points on the need to diverse teacher training to include comprehensive skills that will enable teachers handle girls hence influence their performance. These pose implications on the revamping of the teaching and learning curriculum in teacher training institutions. The results confirm with those by Geisler (2019), in United Kingdom which emphasized the needfulness for the teaching curriculum to nurture teaching professionals on how best to handle FGM victims.

Figure 4.2

Level of academic performance



The research also rated the general academic performance of girls. Figure 4.2 illustrate the same. Figure 4.2 bring to attention that majority of the respondents who were 95(41.9%) said it was poor, 21 (9.2%) very poor and 87(38.3%) said it was moderate. Generally, nearly a half of the teachers' population 116(51.1%) indicated poor as the status of academic performance, hence the research concluded that the performance of girls at Narok South Sub-County was at low extent. Studies such as Chematui et al. (2019) on effects of FGM on girls' academic performance in West Pokot also reported low performance of girls due to the negative influence of FGM.

Grade 6, 7 and 8 girls were asked to compare the general performance between girls who had gone through the initiation ceremony and those who had not. Table 4.8 gives the frequencies of responses given.

Table 4. 8*Level of academic performance*

Extend	Performance for girls Undergone FGM	Performance for girls Not undergone FGM
Poor	106(36.9%)	8 (2.8%)
Fair	109(38.0%)	80 (27.9%)
Good	39(13.6%)	59 (20.6%)
Very good	18(6.3%)	54 (18.8%)
Excellent	15(5.2%)	86 (30%)

The results in Table 4.8 give an impression that generally, the performance of girls in grade 6, 7 and eight is not satisfactory. Although this may be the case, notable differences exist among girls who had undergone FGM and those who had not. The trend of frequencies showcases that girls who have participated in genital cutting ceremonies as initiates perform badly in comparison to counterparts. Girls who have not suffered the heinous practice perform better as indicated by 59(20.6%) and 54(18.8%) for good and very good performance while 109 (38%) and 106 (36.9%) with poor and fair performance among those undergone clitoridectomy.

The focused group discussion conducted with the head-teacher also mirrored a similar trend on answering the question that required them to compare the achievement of girls who had and those who had not undergone through FGM practices in Narok South Sub-County. All the 9 focused group discussions conducted with the head-teachers unanimously indicated the existence of a difference among girls who and those who had not undergone FGM where the former performed poorer than later. These results do not

align with the observations reported by Njogu (2015) who submitted that, girls recorded average and low performance in academics as compared to the girls who have not undergone FGM.

The researcher asked the teachers in an open-ended question and head-teachers during the focused group discussions to illustrate how Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has profound effects on girls' academic performance and their transition to secondary school, in Narok County. A total of 50 suggestions were received. These statements were analyzed with a view to identifying main themes results to seven themes:

- i. Immediate and long-term health issues—such as pain, infections, and menstrual complications
- ii. Psychological trauma, depression, and low self-esteem that burdens concentration and participation
- iii. Early marriages that pull girls out of school
- iv. Psychosocial effects of stigmatized, ridiculed, or feel alienated
- v. Teacher insensitivity due to poor training on handling affected girls
- vi. Recovery time post-FGM
- vii. Girls may miss key national exams like KCPEA

On similar observation, Focused Group Discussion 002 echoed that *“teachers in primary schools lack training skills and sensitivity to handle trauma-related behaviors among girls, that make them feel isolated affecting their concentration, participation and transition to secondary schools due to drop-out.* Focused Group Discussion number 007 pointed out, *“Even when girls are willing to continue, lack of community support and reprisal make it difficult to do so; girls are often forced to choose between cultural*

conformity and academic progression, which in many cases they prefer conformity to progressing their education.

To maximize achievement of girls in education, head-teachers were asked to suggest ways in which the schools can enhance the performance of girls and further their education. Community sensitization to change cultural attitudes through emphasizing importance of education, making schools safe spaces and rescue centers where girls escaping FGM or early marriage can be educated, psychosocial support in schools to help affected girls recover and reintegrate, and bursaries/scholarships support for at-risk girls were considered important.

4.6 Results on Girls Drop Out from School

Girls drop-out from school influence of FGM was assessed through factors such as discipline, school attendance patterns, shifted attention and focus, pregnancy cases, early marriages and guidance and counselling cases. In this study, the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each girl drop out statement provided in tabular form; where, SA = strongly agree (5), A= agree (4), N= Neutral (3) D = disagree (2) and SD= strongly disagree (1). When interpreting the descriptive results, the researcher combined the frequencies of responses on agreed and strongly agreed options. This was considered to represent the agreement status; while the sum frequencies of responses on both disagreed and strongly disagreed options stood in for disagreement status. Neutral options were considered to be undecided; however, the values were considered in computing the mean score for each statement which further helped to rank the average value in a 5 points Likert Scale. Summary of the responses gotten is presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9*Girls drop out of school*

Sentiments on girls drop-out of school (N = 227)	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean
FGM contribute to girls' dropout rates from schools	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.2%)	101 (44.5%)	105 (46.3%)	15 (6.6%)	3.56
Girls become indiscipline after undergoing the rite of passage	1 (0.4%)	8 (3.5%)	89 (39.2%)	104 (45.8%)	25 (11.0%)	3.63
FGM has a relation with issues like girls not completing their education	98 (43.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (7.0%)	113 (49.8%)	3.20
School attendance is usually affected after FGM performance	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	112 (49.3%)	114 (50.2%)	4.49
FGM causes girls to focus more on outside issues apart from education	1 (0.4%)	5 (2.2%)	2 (0.9%)	106 (46.7%)	113 (49.8%)	4.43
Majority of girls drop out of school due to early pregnancy	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	111 (48.9%)	115 (50.7%)	4.49
After FGM girls focus more on marriage life than on education issue	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.8%)	18 (7.9%)	204 (89.9%)	4.87
We have guidance and counseling services for students who have undergone FGM so that they can feel accepted within the school environment	6 (2.6%)	46 (20.3%)	94 (41.4%)	14 (6.2%)	67 (29.5%)	3.40
We have guidance and counseling services for students who have not undergone FGM so that they can feel accepted within the school environment	32 (14.1%)	115 (50.7%)	20 (8.8%)	10 (4.4%)	50 (22.0%)	2.70

The results in Table 4.9, reveal four aspects of FGM which were perceived by the teachers to have strong influence on girls drop out of school. The aspects were: girls focus on marriage life than education (mean = 4.87), early pregnancies (mean = 4.49), regular school attendance usually affected after FGM performance (mean = 4.49) and girls focus on outside issues apart from education (mean=4.43). From the results, it was also established that girls become indiscipline after undergoing the rite of passage (mean=3.63), FGM contribute to girls' dropout rates from schools (3.56) and FGM has a relation with issues like girls not completing their education (mean = 3.20). Although the schools had guidance and counselling services, there were many undecided opinions

94(41.4%) of their extension to students who have undergone FGM so that they can feel accepted within the school environment. The results also indicate diversity of opinions on the presence of guidance and counseling services for students who have not undergone FGM so that they can feel accepted within the school environment as indicated by 147(48.8%) who, disagreed. This presents gaps on the comprehensiveness of such services in the school settings.

Grade 6, 7 and 8 girls in Narok South Sub-County given the pupils questionnaire were required to answer the question if they knew any of their class mates who did not continue with schooling after FGM. From the responses given, an average of 2 classmates were reported to drop out of school after FGM given by 258(90.0%). The girls were further requested to tell where those classmates went after dropping out of school after FGM. The responses exposed that such girls got married early, some stayed at home doing domestic chores, their parents discontinued them from school to take care of the babies they sired and went to the market and nearby towns to get manual employment especially housekeeping.

The descriptive results from the teachers have narrowed down on seven aspects which were perceived as influential aftermath of FGM practices which resulted to girls dropping out of school in Narok South Sub-County. These aspects were: preference for marriage to education issue, early pregnancies, irregular school attendance, increased indiscipline after undergoing the rite of passage and girls not completing their education. These results collaborate the observations made by Magige (2020) who reported that, girls having undergone FGM hardly concentrate in learning but rather grow difficulty, stiff-necked,

undisciplined, become truants and general champions of school drop-out. Additionally, Minja (2021) in Tanzania also identified that, FGM had much effects including, teenage pregnancy and girls fading interest for school.

When the teachers were asked in an open-ended question to suggest what should be done to reduce the girls drop out cases in public primary schools, they provided eighty-three suggestions. The researcher synthesized the given suggestions and from the repeated suggested statements, few themes were drawn out of the eighty-three responses. Four themes stood out distinctively which were: strict enforcement of anti-FGM laws especially on early marriages by the school heads and local government authorities (the chiefs), investing in girls empowerment programs to help them know their rights, reintegration of come back to school programs after dropouts, involving all stakeholders such as men, women, government authorities, parents, students and the elderly in conversations to shift harmful gender norms and promotion of equality in the society. Teacher number 89 emphasized that *‘community education to parents, guardians, and community leaders about the harmful effects of FGM and the importance of keeping girls in school need to be emphasized so as to change their attitudes and traditions through dialogue and lead to reduced pressure on girls to drop out’*. The response received from teacher 109 in the open-ended question prominently featured the issue of *‘schools having alternative sources of income, putting measures to ensure availability of financial assistance or scholarships to girls at risk of dropping out’*.

The above discussed results underscore that teachers and the female pupils who were the main participants in the research were aware of what was needed to be in place to alleviate

girls school drop-out. Their responses underscored the need for schools to not only have clear anti-FGM policies but also ensure their enforceability. Such policies are deemed to provide guidance to the school heads, the chiefs, sub-chiefs and other officers responsible for ensuring girls continuation in education. The aspect of implementing and enforcing anti-FGM policies by government was emphasized by Ngumo and Muasa (2022) in Kajiado.

The results have identified the value for girls' empowerment programs to help them know their rights which includes right for education. According to Mutai (2021), understanding individual rights empowers girls to say no to harmful practices that interfere with their inclusion, equity and respect to human rights.

The results also regard holistic engagement of stakeholders who are in the circle of concern to girls such as men, women, government authorities, parents, students and the elderly in conversations to shift harmful gender norms and promotion of equality in the society as key strategy to counter girls drop-out. These findings on stakeholder engagement are also consistent with UNICEF (2020) who called that concerted efforts between teachers, parents, learners, government officials, religious affiliations, NGOs and other interested parties is needful to achieve tangible results on inclusive education.

The issue about awareness creation, community education and training and development also featured prominently. This implies the need for teacher retooling and continuous professional development. The head-teachers and teachers especially those in premise of guidance and counselling in primary schools requires re-sharpening of their skills to remain relevant and valuable.

Head-teachers were asked to tell the ways they helped in getting dropped-out girls back to school. The open-discussions had illustrated that 5 to 10 girls drop out of school each year due to undergoing FGM practices although variations existed depending on the year and the level of awareness in the community. The nine focus group discussions predominantly featured that: they offer counselling and emotional support to help girls recover from FGM traumas, doing close monitoring and support to prevent further drop-out cases, organize awareness meetings that challenge the community that FGM usher's girls to adulthood infers with girls' education. The focused group number 005 added *"We work with teachers, guidance counselors and local education officers to identify girls who have dropped out and conduct home visits to speak with parents or guardians; during the home visits, we encourage them to allow their daughters to return to school and explain the long-term value of education"*.

Head-teachers also informed that collaboration with NGOs, churches and government organizations helped in securing drop-out girls back to school. This was well illustrated in the Focused group discussion 003 saying *"We collaborate with child protection officers, NGOs and local authorities to access scholarships, uniforms, or sanitary supplies for girls who may be economically disadvantaged after FGM"*. This finding underscores the significance of collaboration and seeking aid to secure girls needs and afford them staying in school.

4.7 Results on Girls Absenteeism

Girls' absenteeism due to FGM was the last objective of the study and it was assessed through causative factors such as prolonged preparation and healing time, health

complications forcing girls out of school regularly, disobedience to school rules due to tendency of feeling mature, and psychological disturbance. In this study, the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each girl drop out statements provided in tabular form; where, SA = strongly agree (5), A= agree (4), N= Neutral (3) D = disagree (2) and SD= strongly disagree (1).

When interpreting the descriptive results, the researcher combined the frequencies of responses on agreed and strongly agreed options. This was considered to represent the agreement status; while the sum frequencies of responses on both disagreed and strongly disagreed options stood in for disagreement status. Neutral options were considered to be undecided, however, the values were considered in computing the mean score for each statement which further helped to rank the average value in a 5 points Likert Scale.

For qualitative results from the grade 6-8 girls' questionnaires, head-teachers focused group discussions, and one open ended-question in the grade 6-8 teacher's questionnaires: the researcher synthesized them and made themes. Both themes and verbatim were integrated to beef up the quantitative findings from teachers. Teacher's quantitative results were reported in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10*Girl's absenteeism*

Sentiments on absenteeism (N = 227)	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean
FGM contribute to girls' absenteeism from schools	1 (0.4%)	9 (4.0%)	93 (41.0%)	13 (5.7%)	111 (48.9%)	3.99
The prolonged preparation and healing keep girls out of school	1 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	121 (53.3%)	105 (46.3%)	4.45
Some health complications forces girls to be out of school regularly	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	107 (47.1%)	119 (52.4%)	4.51
Tendency of feeling mature conflicts with school rules and regulations keeping girls out of school	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (2.2%)	112 (49.3%)	109 (48.0%)	4.44
Psychological disturbance linked to FGM contributes to absenteeism	1 (0.4%)	77 (33.9%)	18 (7.9%)	122 (53.7%)	9 (0.0%)	3.27
Girls' absenteeism from school contributes to poor performance	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (2.2%)	20 (8.8%)	201 (88.5%)	4.85
There are high cases of absenteeism among girls in grade 6,7 8	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.6%)	14 (6.2%)	115 (50.7%)	91 (40.1%)	4.27
Knowledge Sharing and Awareness Fora address absenteeism challenges in our school	1 (0.4%)	10 (4.4%)	47 (20.7%)	123 (54.2%)	46 (20.3%)	3.89
Community Engagements towards Social Harmony and Socio-economic well-being enables girls who have undergone FGM resume school hence addressing absenteeism challenges	12 (5.3%)	42 (18.5%)	82 (36.1%)	63 (27.8%)	28 (12.3%)	3.23

The results report that, FGM contribute to girls' absenteeism from schools as indicated by 123(58.6%) participants who agreed and a corresponding mean value of 3.99. Apart from this, the study sought to understand the prevalence of absenteeism cases in Narok South Sub-county. A statement posed to teachers stating 'there are high cases of absenteeism among girls in grade 6, 7 8 recorded 206 responses that agreed on the same which is equivalent to 90.8% (mean=4.27). The pupils' questionnaire also recorded 79% agreement on high cases of absenteeism among girls who have undergone FGM. The nine focused group discussions conducted with the head-teachers also required them to comment on

absenteeism cases among girl after the FGM with responses dominating high occurrences hence agreement between teachers, the female pupils and head-teachers' responses.

Table 4.10, uncovers four aspects of FGM which were perceived by the teachers to have strong influence on girls' absenteeism. The aspects were: health complications that force girls to be out of school regularly (mean- 4.51), prolonged preparation for FGM and healing after (mean = 4.45), that tendency of feeling mature conflicts with school rules and regulations keeping girls out of school (mean = 4.44) and psychological disturbance (mean = 3.27).

From the results, it was also established that girls' absenteeism from school contributes to poor performance in their academics as agreed by 221 which corresponds to 93. % of the sample population (mean=4.85). The results illustrate that; school absenteeism has far reached impact on the performance and achievement of girls. Klein et al. (2018) also concurred that, in many circumstances, all does not go well during the cutting of the girls' genital organs; health complications may emerge due to excessive bleeding, which breed a course for irregular schooling.

The results also present that knowledge sharing, awareness fora and community engagements towards social harmony and socio-economic well-being enables girls who have undergone FGM resume school hence addressing absenteeism challenges mean values of 3.89 and 3.23 respectively. In support, the ORCHID Project (2021) report scrutinizes the current state of affairs such as girls drop-out, absenteeism, truancy, early marriages and teenage pregnancies; emphasizing it can be alleviated through education and community empowerment programs.

An open-ended question posed to head-teachers during the focused group discussion sought to understand the ways girls' absenteeism impacted girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. The study recorded 49 statements as answers given from the nine focused groups carried out. The 49 responses given were hence deduced and then the researcher identified common themes among them. The general themes identified were: poor examination scoring, early marriages transition barriers, menstrual health challenges, psychosocial factors such as self-esteem, unfriendly school environment due to lack of sensitivity and accommodation. To strengthen the themes, Focused Group 001 added that *"Frequent absenteeism leads to gaps in learning, missed lessons and mid-term tests and assignments making it difficult for girls to catch up with their peers"*. Additionally, Focused Group 006 gave their opinions stressing that *"Lack of girl-friendly facilities among schools for instance separate toilets, privacy, and supportive teachers may push girls to miss school more frequently"*.

The results from teachers, head-teachers and female pupils exhibited high cases of absenteeism among girls initiated in circumcision. The study noted a general consensus from the three categories of respondents that, the absenteeism cases reported across were playing an influential role on girls' transition to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County. Absenteeism resulted due to FGM happened due to: menstrual flow challenges, psychological issues such as stigma and low self-esteem, psychological factors, marriages, pain and delayed healing and naughty behavior due to feeling mature. These results agree with the findings given out in the published article by Andiemma (2021). The research found the existence of a significant relationship between FGM and girls absenteeism from

school. Micheni and Bright (2018) investigated the sociological consequences of FGM on girls' education in Kissi County and reported that stigma, isolation and self-esteem affected school attendance.

The results further build evidence that absenteeism compounds existing social, economic, and cultural barriers for girls in Narok South Sub-County. These barriers severely undermine girls' ability to transition from primary to secondary school. Addressing absenteeism through menstrual hygiene programs, community sensitization, safe school environments, and support systems is critical for improving girls' educational outcomes in the region. The results feature one aspect that dominates in the results of Micheni and Bright (2018) which opined that community awareness through informal education was an effective tool for eradicating the dominance of FGM among residents.

When teachers were asked in an open-ended question to suggest what should be done to alleviate girls' absenteeism cases in Narok South Sub-County, they provided twenty-nine suggestions. Common and repetitive phrases helped to draw out themes cutting across the many responses. Six themes stood out distinctively which were: menstrual health management, community sensitization and awareness, school feeding programs, safe transportation and boarding options, supportive school environment and strengthening school attendance policies and guidelines. Concurrently, community awareness and government funding was termed critical in alleviating the harmful practice of FGM on girls' education by Njugu et al. (2017).

In an open-ended question, teachers were asked to state how else they ensured control of absenteeism cases for girls in primary schools. Teacher number 10 responded that

“Guidance and Counseling should be strengthened through having qualified school counselors or trained staff to support girls facing challenges at home or in school’.

Additionally, teacher number 91 wrote that *‘the schools should provide government-funded or donor-supported sanitary products to keep girls in school’*. Moreover, Teacher 29 submitted that *class teachers should closely monitor absenteeism through the use of school attendance records to identify at-risk girls early and intervene accordingly’*.

Other suggested recommendations featured: enforcement of child protection laws, working with NGOs and communities to promote safe, educational alternative rites of passage that honor tradition without harming girls, training female teachers to become role models or mentors and provide psychosocial support and prioritize primary schools boarding facilities for girls. Lastly, the results echoed the needfulness to build girl-friendly toilets with water, privacy and proper disposal units.

4.8 Results on Girls Transition from Primary to Secondary Schools

The transition of girls from primary to secondary schools was the dependent variable in this study. Data collected regarding it was given by the head-teachers, grade 6-8 teachers, and grade 6, 7 and 8 girls. Quantitative data collected from the teachers, was presented and discussed while the qualitative data given by head-teachers focused group discussions and girls open-ended questions in the questionnaire was sufficed to better explain the phenomena. Mechanisms characterizing school regulations on 100% girls’ transition and government’s directive on girls’ transition from primary to secondary schools were assessed. Also featured were the dimensions that influenced girls’ transition to secondary

schools including: girls' performance, teenage marriages girls drop-out rate, absenteeism and teenage pregnancy cases.

In this study, the teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement provided in tabular form; where, SA = strongly agree (5), A= agree (4), N= Neutral (3) D = disagree (2) and SD= strongly disagree (1). When interpreting the descriptive results, the researcher combined the frequencies of responses on agreed and strongly agreed options. This was considered represent the agreement status; while the sum frequencies of responses on both disagreed and strongly disagreed options stood in for disagreement status. Neutral options were considered to be undecided; however, the values were considered in computing the mean score for each statement which further helped to rank the average value in a 5 points Likert Scale. Summary of the responses gotten is presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11*Girls transition to secondary schools*

Sentiments on girls' transition (N = 227)	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean
We have put in place school regulations on 100% girls' transition from primary to secondary schools	100 (44.1%)	88 (38.8%)	8 (3.5%)	18 (7.9%)	13 (5.7%)	1.93
We have implemented the government's directive on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	102 (44.9%)	111 (48.9%)	13 (5.7%)	3.59
FGM contributes to low trend in girls' performance hence poor transition	5 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.6%)	102 (44.9%)	114 (50.2%)	4.41
Early teenage marriages due to FGM influences girls' transition from primary to secondary schools	1 (0.4%)	4 (1.8%)	5 (2.2%)	201 (88.5%)	16 (7.0%)	4.00
Girls drop-out rate due to FGM influences transition from primary to secondary schools	5 (2.2%)	177 (78.0%)	0 (0.0%)	25 (11.0%)	20 (8.8%)	2.46
Girls' absenteeism due to FGM influences transition from primary to secondary schools	5 (2.2%)	10 (4.4%)	4 (1.8%)	188 (88.2%)	20 (8.8%)	3.92
Girls' teenage pregnancies due to FGM influences transition from primary to secondary schools	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.8%)	200 (88.1%)	22 (9.7%)	4.07
Cultural practices like FGM influences transition from primary to secondary schools	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.8%)	25 (11.0%)	197 (86.8%)	4.84
FGM lowers girls' ambition for education	6 (2.6%)	33 (14.5%)	63 (27.8%)	73 (32.2%)	52 (22.9%)	3.58

From the findings in Table 4.11, the teachers perceived cultural practices particularly FGM influences girls transition from primary to secondary schools (mean = 4.84). This was supported by the specific factors where girls' performance (mean = 4.41), teenage pregnancies (mean= 4.07), teenage marriages (mean = 4.00) and absenteeism (mean= 3.92), were ranked as the top most aspects that influenced the transition from primary to secondary schools. In each case, the agreement level was from 88% and above, meaning more than two thirds of primary school teachers considered the aspects influential. Other aspects which also had close to an average mean score was girls' drop-out rate due to FGM (mean value of 2.46).

The results in Table 4.11, also reveal that FGM practices lowers girls' ambition for education (mean= 3.58) and an agreement frequency of 125(55.1%). This report concurs with what Ndile observed in 2022, where FGM affected regular school attendance, caused learner isolation and fervent absenteeism cases.

Although the public schools had put in place the government's directive on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools, (124 54.6%, mean = 3.59), enactment of school regulations addressing 100% girls' transition from primary to secondary schools had hardly taken place (mean = 1.93) as showcased by 188 teachers who disagreed corresponding to 82.9%. These results communicate the struggles primary schools faces in implementing the 100% transition directive by the ministry of education probably due to lack of roadmaps and localized actionable guidelines.

The descriptive results from teachers, have narrowed down on five aspects which were perceived as influential on girls' transition to secondary schools. These aspects were:

girl's academic performance, absenteeism, school drop-outs, teenage pregnancies and marriages. Differently, girls transition in the results of Fara et al. (2022) highlighted key hindrances to education like; devalue for girls' education, cultural practices, early marriages, teenage pregnancies, inadequate facilities, ineffective instructional delivery, teacher student ratio, inadequate education quality and the cost of education. Having established the factors that impacted the transition of girls from primary to secondary schools, the transition rate was also assessed as presented in the following sub-section.

The transition rates of girls from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County

The replies given above led to a further examination to be able to present the rate of girls' transition from primary to secondary schools as perceived teachers. Teachers were asked to assess the rate of transition and compare between transition rate among girls who had undergone FGM and those that had not. The results were as given in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Rate of transition to secondary schools

Extend	General transition regardless of gender (%)	Transition for girls Undergone FGM (%)	Transition for girls Not undergone FGM (%)
Very Low	0(0.0%)	49(22.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Low	0(0.0%)	97(42.8%)	52 (22.9%)
Average	7(3.1%)	63(27.9%)	23(10.2%)
Above average	31(13.7%)	18(6.3%)	131(57.6%)
High	186(83.1%)	0(0.0%)	21(9.3%)
Very high	3(0.1%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)

The results in Table 4.12 are showing a high level (83.1%) of transition for pupils from primary to secondary schools regardless of their gender. When results are mirrored to the female gender, the rate of transition is still low. Surprisingly, 131 (57.6%) of the teachers admitted that the rate of girls' transition to secondary among those who had not undergone any FGM practice was above average. While, 97 (42.8%) said that it was low among girls who had undergone FGM practice in Narok South Sub-County. In general, the findings indicated that the general transition rate among girls in Narok-South is low with distinct disparities observable between girls affected by FGM and those not. These results compared with the findings of Omuse (2017) who submitted that there is a lower transition rate of girls as given by 48.7% from public primary schools to secondary schools in Teso South Sub County although the results did not compare the difference in transition among girls affected by FGM and those were not.

The researcher went ahead to confirm the transition of girls in Narok South Sub-County by asking the head-teachers to remark based on their observations. All the 9 focused group discussions provided related answers that the general transition rate lies at 82% although, it was at average level among female pupils. Members of Focused group discussion 005 and those in 009 respectively admitted that girls who undergo through FGM ceremonies as initiates perform poorer compared to counterparts due to the health and social impacts that come along. These results agree with the findings submitted by Omuse (2017) that, cultural practices like FGM, early marriages, teenage pregnancies and preference for dowry by family members significantly affected the rate of girls' transition from primary to secondary education.

Grade 6, 7 and 8 girls in the questionnaire were asked to state if there were any arrangements from government agencies to assist girl students to continue with their education after FGM so as to improve transition. 89 answers given by the girls were scrutinized and few themes emerged out of them. These were: some schools have rescue centers in form of boarding facilities so that girls stayed in the school environment, schools receiving free sanitary towels every term and available sub-county bursary awards. Pupil number 201 wrote *“I got a bursary incentivize because my parents refused FGM to be done to me.* Additionally, Pupil number 11 wrote *“I was enrolled in this mission school because the school head-teacher and the sub-chiefs offered support for education to girls affected by FGM and child pregnancies like me’.* These results elaborate of notable efforts including rewarding bursaries and scholarships conditioned on refusing FGM in ensuring progression of girls’ education.

The results given by the grade 6, 7 and 8 girls in Narok South Sub-County agreed with the focused group discussions carried out with the head-teachers where answers on government directives and regulations on education were emphasized. The researcher noted down answers which included: Narok County has officially implemented an Anti-FGM Policy which guides legal enforcement with community mobilization, using traditional leaders, educators, and legal channels to deter FGM. These results underscore a significant stride undertaken by the ministry of education to ensure community, school heads and government representatives champion access and education equity to all which gives room for girls’ transition. Ahinkorah (2021) results compare with the found results in the aspect of government interventions, policies and laws which advocate for 100%

transition to secondary schools, showcasing the place of policies in shaping learners' transition.

Head-teachers were also asked to give the different local school regulations supporting girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-county. 28 responses were recorded and they were scrutinized to obtain themes. Three themes arrived at included: re-entering strategy to secondary school after drop out due to pregnancy and maternity needs, home visits at each school-opening to identify pregnant and teenage mothers who have not returned to school and promoting the 100% transition directive as given by the ministry of education. Focused Group Discussion 004 added '*we provide self-defense training to girls at risk to help them keep safe even after FGM; this contributes towards school retention and progress through secondary school*'.

The study further asked teachers in an open-ended question to suggest what they thought needed to be done to improve girls' transition from primary to secondary in your schools. 130 written responses were thematically analyzed and the researcher was able to gather themes including: early identification and tracking of girls at risk earlier, strengthen academic performance, involving parents and guardians on education of their children, strengthening financial support to girls from extremely poor backgrounds, strengthening confidential counselling services, addressing menstruation and health barriers and celebrating transition through the use of FGM affected alumnae role models to motivate other girls. Another teacher informed '*teachers and school authorities to make good use of churches and mosques to advocate for girls' continued education*' (Teacher Number 113). Furthermore, Teacher number 10 stressed on the needfulness for schools to offer

safe spaces where girls can talk about challenges whether from home or school without fear by dedicating a guidance and counselling room with necessary resources and facilities and training the guidance and counselling teacher for effective counselling outcomes.

The results have identified the value for academic performance in achieving good girls transition to secondary school. According to Ndile (2022), adequate learner performance plays a critical role in promoting their transition to higher levels of learning.

The findings have also regarded menstrual well-being as of essence in addressing drop-out cases and absenteeism in promoting high transition. This implies on the need to establish measures for girl's health well-being such as reproductive health education, hygiene and life-skills which may even be included in the teaching curriculum. Moreover, the results implicate on funding for facilitating distribution of menstrual hygiene kits in schools every month. In closer relation were the results presented by Chesang (2018) which submitted that, health and community education promoted girl education although the specific dimensions were not discussed.

It is also noted to be of essence that schools adopt motivation as a strategy to achieve retention and successful transition of female learners. They can do this by conducting successful transition ceremonies to celebrate resilient girls and inviting former students who made to secondary school and beyond to mentor and speak to existing girls

4.9 Assessing the Overall Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to assess the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County in Kenya. In order to test and validate the model, diagnostic tests were computed to ascertain the type of

statistical test to be adopted. The study intended to use regression analysis and therefore, the assumption of this statistical test had to be carried out. The assumptions tested were normality, autocorrelation, multicellularity, heteroscedasticity and linearity of the data. The findings on these tests are found in sub-sections within 4.13.

4.9.1 The test on normality of the data

Table 4.13, presents data and obtaining values for both the Kolmogorov- Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests for testing the normal distribution of the data. Also, the researcher utilized the P-values to assess the normality of the data. Table 4.13 illustrates the obtained figures after analysis in SPSS.

Table 4.13

Normality test results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
X1	.058	227	.019	.991	227	.215
X2	.058	227	.070	.990	227	.156
X3	.051	227	.200*	.994	227	.574
Y	.036	227	.200*	.994	227	.567

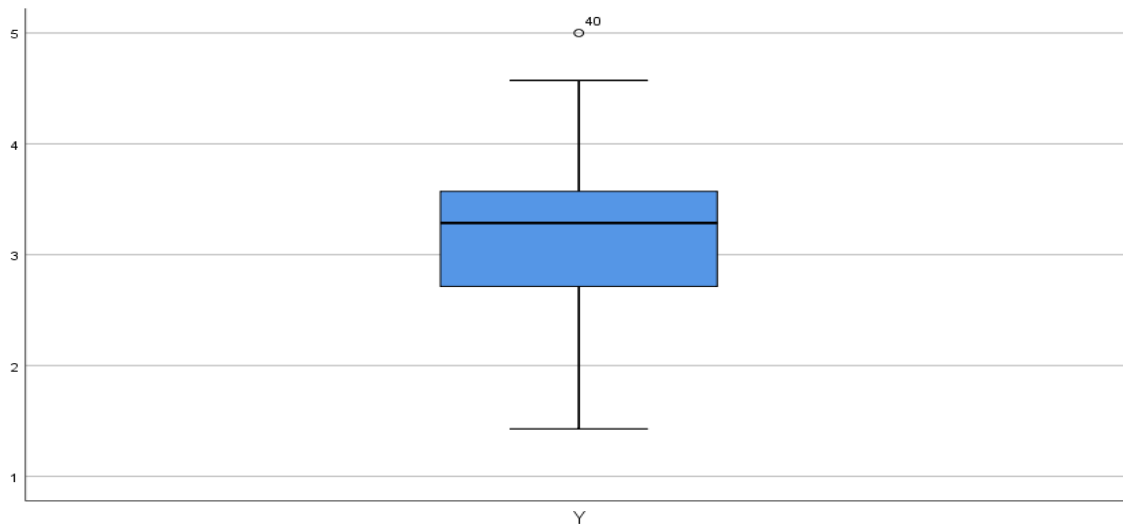
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 4.13 displays that the P-values for both the Kolmogorov-Smirnovtest and Shapiro-Wilk are insignificant for the four constructs because the P-value are more than 0.05). In this case normality was observed in Y, X1, X2 and X3 and the researcher concluded that the data was obtained from a normally distributed population. The researcher went ahead to counter-confirm the extent of normality of the data using a graphical method. The box plot results in Figure 4.3 shows the obtained pattern of the plots.

Figure 4. 3

Box plot on girls' transition



As observed in Figure 4.3, the whickers in the box plot indicate just a slight skewedness in the data. However, the skewedness is insignificant as indicated by the very minimal deviation of whickers; hence, conclusively, the data was normally distributed.

4.9.2 The test on linearity of the data

The study used a Q-Q plots to examine the linearity of the data as presented in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4

Q-Q Plots on dependent variable

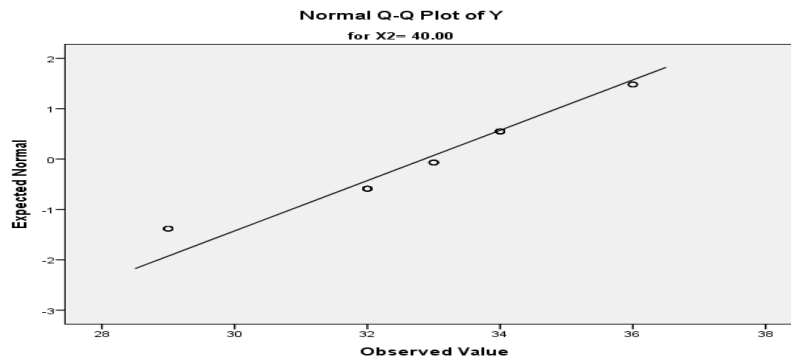


Figure 4.4 illustrates that the Q-Q plots are aligning in the line of best fit unless for extremely few points. Given that the Q-Q plot that are not fitted along the line of the best fit are very few, the researcher deduced a good linearity of the data was noticed.

4.9.3 The test on Autocorrelation and multicollinearity of the data

Table 4.14 displays the results of the autocorrelation and multicollinearity tests.

Table 4.14

Autocorrelation and multicollinearity of study objectives

Variables	R square change	Durbin-Watson	VIF
X1	.155	1.860	2.763
X2	.106	1.737	2.770
X3	.101	1.928	1.057

Autocorrelation was assessed by interpreting the Durbin-Watson values and the recommended threshold is that they should be close to 2. Accordingly, in Table 4.13,

Durbin-Watson values, for, $X_1 = 1.860$; $X_2 = 1.737$; $X_3 = 1.928$. The researcher concluded that is the data had no autocorrelation problem.

Multicollinearity condition was assessed by interpreting the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) using a threshold of 1-5 to underpin absence of multicollinearity (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). According to the findings in Table 4.13, the VIF values for, $X_1 = 2.763$; $X_2 = 2.770$; $X_3 = 1.057$ were not greater than 5 hence concluded no multicollinearity problem in the data.

4.9.4 The test on Heteroscedasticity of the data

The research adopted a scatter graph to predict existence of an established pattern as a gauge for presence or absence of the condition.

Figure 4. 5

Heteroscedasticity Test

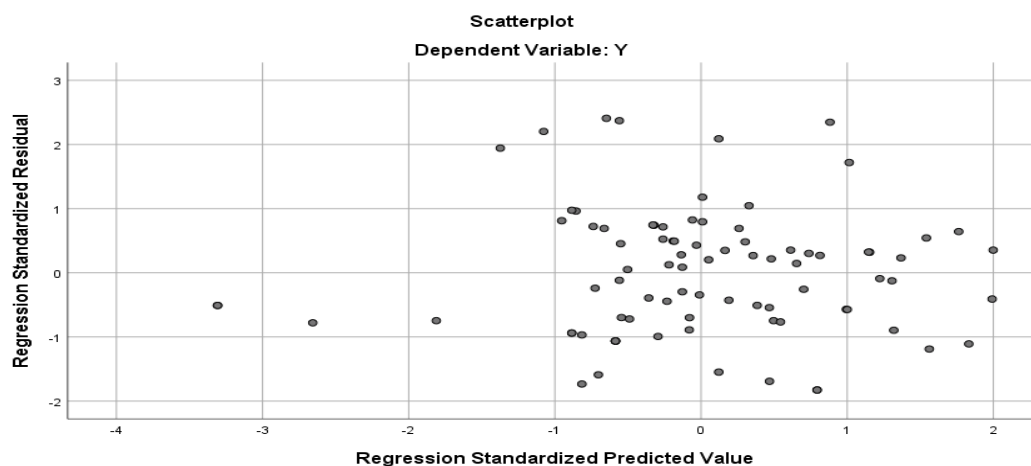


Figure 4.5 illustrates the generated residuals. The findings in Figure 4.5 are showing scatter points that are dispersed without any form of established pattern as one moves from left to right. This implies the absence of heteroscedasticity problem in the data.

4.10.2 The overall purpose of the study

Considering that the data did not show violations of the aforementioned conditions, (normality, linearity, autocorrelation, multicellularity and heteroscedasticity), a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The predictors included in the regression model were Academic performance (X1), School drop-out (X2), Absenteeism (X3) and girls transition (Y). The regression analysis results are presented in Tables 4.15, 4.16, and 4.17.

Table 4.15

Model Summary regarding FGM influences

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.749 ^a	.562	.556	.59901	1.792

a. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2

b. Dependent Variable: Y

The model summary in Table 4.15 displays that when FGM influences' academic performance (X1), School drop-out (X2) and Absenteeism (X3) are regressed in a single model, they form a significant model that influences girls' transition from primary to secondary school due to the observed positive correlation. This is demonstrated by the obtained the R-value is 0.749; while, the R-square value ($R^2 = 0.562$). This means the results depict that the three predictor aspects explain for 56.2% of variation in the transition of girls to secondary schools. The researcher went ahead to investigate the validity of the model using ANOVA which is displayed in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16*ANOVA results regarding the model*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.937	3	5.134	45.188	.000 ^b
	Residual	15.332	223	.213		
	Total	44.269	226			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2

The results on FGM influence model as depicted by the linear regression conducted in ANOVA Table 4.16, explains its validity as predicted by; ($F_{(3,223)} = 45.188$, $P.000$). This implied that girl's academic performance, drop-out and absenteeism, made a statistically significant model (p-value being less than 0.05) for explaining the influence on girls transition to secondary in Narok South Sub-County. Table 4.17 displays the regression weights for each predictor variable in the combined model.

Table 4. 17*Regression coefficients results of the model*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.375	2.003		.686	.0493		
X1	.230	.028	.368	8.294	.000	.830	1.137
X2	.366	.054	.420	6.742	.000	.798	1.113
X3	.302	.068	.276	4.430	.000	.915	1.446

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The coefficients reveal that all variables X1, X2 and X3 are significant predictors of transition of girls, with $p=.000$ for all of them; $p=$ less than .005. The results opine that although the four predictor variables are jointly statistically significant in the combined regression model in accounting for variation in girls' transition to secondary school. This is the case although, it is absenteeism which exerts more influence followed by academic performance and the least drop-out.

Conclusively, the findings confirmed the initial regression model that was proposed.

Where;

$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + e$, Where:

Y= Girls transition from primary to secondary schools

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = regression coefficient weights for x_1, x_2, x_3 as shown below:

X_1 = Girls academic performance

X_2 = Girls drop-out rate

X_3 = Girls absenteeism

ε = is the estimated error of the model

These results provided compelling evidence to enhance academic performance, alleviate absenteeism and school drop-out cases in order to achieve girls' transition in Narok-South Sub-County.

These findings also inform primary school on which factors of the model strongly influence girls' transition. Although all components of FGM influences are important, schools need to emphasize influences of academic performance and absenteeism challenges the most.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes, concludes and give recommendations based on reported results. The research also demonstrates how results in the previos chapter impact underpinning theories, practices and policies. The chapter concludes by suggesting issues and aspects that can be considered for further studies.

The study aimed to assess the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County in Kenya. This was realized by assessing influences FGM has on academic performance, drop-out cases, absenteeism, and their impact on girls' transition from primary to secondary school. The liberal feminism theory of 1970s underpinned the research variables. The research approach was mixed-methods while the design was descriptive survey research design.

Participants involved were 118 head-teachers, 291 teachers and 361 girls, making an overall sample size population of 770 respondents. Grade 6, 7 and 8 teachers were the main responders hence they filled the structured questionnaire. The learners' questionnaire also provided important quantitative data and predominant qualitative results that sufficed the main questionnaire answered by the teachers. The Head-teachers gave their information through 9 sets of focused group discussions. Descriptive and multiple linear regression analysis were employed on quantitative data while thematic analysis on qualitative data. The foud results created a firm ground for recomending both

short and long-term best practices aiming at improving girls transition rate to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

This research, obtained an overall response rate of 85.8%. For reliability, academic performance, drop-out, girls' absenteeism and the transition to secondary schools obtained 0.710, 0.731, 0.797 and 0.837 coefficients values which were greater than 0.7 indicating their satisfaction. The preceding sections provides summary of research findings according to the sub themes that were generated from the objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Different Respondents

Grade 6, 7 and 8 teachers had more female (120(52.9%)) than 107(47.1%) males. Also, these teachers had required education qualifications as given by 125(55.1%) as diploma holders and 42.3% of them having undergraduate qualifications. Working experience, junior secondary teachers were recently employed and posted hence were in their early years of career as indicated by majority of them having worked between 1-5 years (109) and 6-10 years by 43.2%.

For the grade 6, 7 and 8 girls, 281(98%) were aged between 10-20 years. On the specific grades of respondents; majority were grade 8 pupils, followed by grade 7 and the least were grade 6 (23.3%). 50(17.4%) of girls were victims of FGM and the most common reason for endurance of FGM practice was to ensure initiation to adulthood 143(49.8%) and to prevent immorality 86(29.9%). The results also noted that predominantly, initiation and girl's circumcision took place at the age between 11-15 years. On FGM predominance, the results reported it was at a moderate extend.

5.3.2 Summary of Results of Academic Performance

Objective one results revealed that FGM practices influences the academic achievement of girls in Narok South Sub-County presented by mean values between 4.91 and 3.291. FGM practices were found to attribute to poor performance of girls at 57.3%. This was due to: health hazards experienced during FGM practices (excessive bleeding, hormonal imbalances and reproductive organs infections); prolonged healing period; psychological trauma, depression and low self-esteem; early marriages that pull girls out of school; psychosocial effects of stigmatized, ridiculed, or feel alienated; girls missing key national exams like KCPEA; and teacher insensitivity due to poor training on handling affected girls.

FGM also impacted performance through poor participation and concentration in class. The promise for a future among girls who undergo FGM through marriage make them devalue performance in academics. Teachers confessed that they were not able to identify significant difference in general behaviour between girls who had undergone FGM and those not. Notable performance differences existed among girls who had undergone FGM and those who had not. The trend of frequencies showcases that girls who had participated in genital cutting ceremonies as initiates perform badly in comparison to the others. Localised solutions such as gender responsive pedagogy; community sensitization to change cultural attitudes through emphasizing importance of education, making schools safe spaces and rescue centers where girls escaping FGM or early marriage can be educated; psychosocial support in schools to help affected girls recover and reintegrate; and bursaries/scholarships support for at-risk girls were considered important.

5.2.3 Summary of Results on Girls Drop-Out of School

This was the second variable of the study. FGM was perceived by the teachers to have strong influence on girls drop out of school. This was attributed to girls focus on marriage life than education (mean = 4.87), early pregnancies (mean = 4.49), irregular school attendance due to menstrual and health complications (mean = 4.49) and that girls becoming undisciplined after undergoing the rite of passage.

Although guidance and counselling services existed in some schools, their extension to students who have undergone FGM so that they can feel accepted within the school environment was unclear. The results suggested that strict enforcement of anti-FGM laws, investing in girl's empowerment programs to help them know their rights, reintegration of come back to school programs after dropouts, home visits, involving all stakeholders in conversations to shift harmful gender norms and promotion of equality in the society was critical to address drop out.

5.2.4 Summary of Results on Girls Absenteeism

This was the third objective in the study. The results report that, there were high cases of absenteeism and FGM contributed to girls' absenteeism from schools as indicated by 123(58.6%) and mean value of 3.99. The aspects of FGM which were perceived by the teachers to have strong influence on girls absenteeism cases were: health complications that force girls to be out of school regularly (mean= 4.51), prolonged preparation for FGM and healing period after (mean = 4.45), tendency of feeling mature that conflicted with school rules and regulations keeping girls out of school (mean = 4.44) and psychological

disturbance (mean = 3.27). From the results, it was also established that girls' absenteeism from school contributes to poor performance in their academics 221(93%).

Absenteeism resulted from poor examination scoring, early marriages transition barriers, menstrual health challenges, psychosocial factors such as self-esteem and unfriendly school environment due to lack of sensitivity and accommodation.

The results also present that knowledge sharing, awareness fora and community engagements, menstrual health management, community sensitization and awareness, school feeding programs, safe transportation and boarding options, supportive school environment and strengthening school attendance policies and guidelines enable girls who have undergone FGM resume school hence addressing absenteeism challenges.

Other suggested solutions were child protection laws, working with NGOs and communities to promote safe, educational alternative rites of passage that honor tradition without harming girls, training female teachers to become role models or mentors and provide psychosocial support, prioritize primary schools boarding facilities for girls and building girl-friendly toilets with water, privacy and proper disposal units.

5.2.5 Summary of Results on Girls Transition to Secondary Schools

This was the dependent variable in the study. The study revealed a moderate overall level of transition among girls to secondary schools. FGM practices influenced girls' transition from primary to secondary schools (mean = 4.84) by: affecting girls' performance; teenage pregnancies; teenage marriages; high cases of absenteeism and drop-out rate.

Although the public schools had put in place the government's directive on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools, (124 54.6%, mean = 3.59), enactment of school regulations addressing 100% girls' transition from primary to secondary schools had hardly taken place. Moreover, the transition rate to secondary school among the girls was moderate. Moreover, transition amongst girls who had undergone FGM was below average. The qualitative results emphasized investment in rescue centers in form of boarding facilities, free sanitary towels, bursary awards, strengthening re-entering strategy to secondary school after drop out, home visits, early identification and tracking of girls at risk to improve transition rate. Others were; strengthen academic performance, involving parents and guardians on education of their children, strengthening confidential counselling services, addressing menstruation and health barriers and celebrating transition through the use of FGM affected alumnae role models. Dedicating guidance and counselling room with necessary resources and facilities and training the guidance and counselling teachers.

5.2.6 Summary of the Overall Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of FGM on girls' transition from primary to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County, Narok County in Kenya. The findings of multiple regression analysis noted that academic performance, drop-out rates and absenteeism formed a statistically significant model for influencing girls' transition ($P = .000$ for each study objective). However, the results of regression weights indicated that although the three predictor variables were jointly statistically significant in a

combined model, the most construct with much influence was absenteeism, followed by academic performance and lastly, drop-out.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusions of the study are presented starting with academic performance, girls drop-out, girls' absenteeism and finalize the dependents variable, which was girls' transition to secondary schools in Narok South Sub-County.

5.3.1 Conclusions on Girls Academic Performance

For objective one, FGM resulted to health hazards prolonged healing period; psychological trauma, depression, low self-esteem; early marriages; psychosocial effects like stigmatization, ridicule, feeling of alienation and missing key national exams like KCPEA that influenced their academic performance. FGM also impacted performance through poor participation in class activities and concentration. Teachers also require training on handling affected girls. Results inferred the need for solutions such as gender responsive pedagogy; community sensitization, safe school environment, psychosocial support and bursaries/scholarships support.

5.3.2 Conclusion on Girls Drop-out

FGM had strong influence on girls drop out of schools by shifting their focus to marriage early pregnancies, poor school attendance and girl's indiscipline due to feeling of maturity. However, lack of a comprehensive guidance and counselling to ensure girls affected by FGM do not drop out was weak. This situation points to the school management and head-teachers of JSS to improve guidance and counselling, reintegration of come back to school

programs after dropouts, home visits, early drop-out detection and mitigation and stakeholders involvement to promote equity of education by enforcing anti FGM laws.

5.3.3 Conclusions on Girls Absenteeism

On girls' absenteeism due to FGM, it resulted from poor examination scoring, early marriages, menstrual health challenges, psychosocial factors, such as self-esteem, teenage pregnancies and unfriendly school environment due to lack of sensitivity and accommodation. Suggested solutions include menstrual health management, working with NGOs and communities to promote safe, educational alternative rites of passage, training female teachers to mentor and provide psychosocial support, prioritize primary schools boarding facilities for girls, school feeding programs, safe transportation and boarding options and building girl-friendly toilets with water, privacy, proper disposal units, supportive school environment and strengthening school attendance policies.

5.3.4 Conclusions on Girls Transition to Secondary Schools

The results conclude that, FGM impact girl's transition as showcased by below average rate of transition among girls that are initiated. The results also concludes that FGM practices influenced girls' transition from primary to secondary schools (mean = 4.84) by: lowering their academic performance; high teenage pregnancies; teenage marriages; high cases of absenteeism and drop-out rate. Although the public schools had put in place the government's directive on 100% transition from primary to secondary schools, enactment of school regulations addressing 100% girls' transition from primary to secondary schools had hardly taken place. Investment in rescue centers in form of boarding facilities, addressing menstruation and health barriers, bursary awards, strengthening re-entering

strategy to secondary school after drop out, home visits, early identification and tracking of girls at risk earlier to improve transition rate, strengthening confidential counselling services, and celebrating transition through the use of FGM affected alumnae role models was emphasized. Dedicating guidance and counselling room with necessary resources and facilities and training the guidance and counselling teachers were suggested.

5.3.5 Overall Purpose of the study

The results of regression weights indicated that although the three predictor variables were jointly statistically significant in a combined model, it is absenteeism which exerts more influence on girls' transition as compared to academic performance and girls drop-out.

5.4 Recommendations

The research gave out recommendations based on the presented findings, adopted theories and the implications on policies and practices Narok South Sub-County. These are organized following the terrain of the summaries and conclusions.

5.4.1 Girls Academic Performance

FGM affected girls' academic performance which significantly deterred their transition. Thus, the research noted the need for teachers to adopt gender responsive pedagogies that will ensure affected girls recollect themselves and feel included among other learners. To overcome the challenges of poor girl's concentration and participation in class activities, teachers also require training and professional development to get skills on handling affected girls thus promoting a non-judgmental, sensitive and safe school environment. The results also recommend the strengthening of psychosocial support services in primary

schools to enable girls get mental, emotional support. The study noted that, poverty affected girls' education leading to poor performance hence the study recommends the ministry of education to provide bursaries/scholarships support. Well-wishers including NGOs and Churches to intervene to support the same.

5.4.2 Girls School Drop-Out

As evidenced in the given summaries and conclusions, girls drop-out rate was high due to issues like teenage marriage, early pregnancies and indiscipline stemming from feeling of maturity. This situation points to the school management and government representatives like the director of education to reintegrate come back to school programs and guidelines after dropouts. Class teachers should strengthen early drop-out detection mechanisms and strengthen mitigation strategies.

However, lack of a comprehensive guidance and counselling to ensure girls affected by FGM do not drop out points to the ministry of education and school heads to diversify school guidance and counselling that apart from having the guidance and counselling teacher, they should be qualified, there should be a dedicated guidance and counselling room that is equipped. Also, head-teachers in collaboration with the education directors, the sub-chiefs and chiefs should create awareness to win community interest for equity, education access and children rights and eliminate their ignorance through trainings and one-on-one basis.

5.4.3 Girls' Absenteeism

Girls suffered from menstrual health challenges henceforth, there is a need to strengthen it through implementing guidelines and procedures addressing menstrual

health management. This needs to focus on provision of sanitary kits every month, school feeding programs, building girl-friendly toilets with water, privacy, and proper disposal units. Female teacher -girl relationships also need to be cultivated through training them as mentors to aid in the provision of psychosocial support. Concerted efforts of the school management, local authorities, NGOs and teachers are also needed to conduct awareness to community, campaigning for girl's needs, to promote safe, educational alternative rites of passage. To prevent girls from being prey to absenteeism primary schools boarding options and facilities for girls and safe transportation should be prioritized. The ministry of education should collaborate with school heads to strengthening school attendance policies.

5.4.4 Girls Transition to Secondary Schools

The state of girls' transition indicates the need to enforce good policies and practices in primary schools which will guide the achievement of 100% transition directive. The issue of absenteeism and drop outs due to FGM featured predominantly, pointing a need for strengthening re-entering strategy to secondary school after drop out such as home visits, early identification and tracking of girls at risk earlier to improve transition rate. For lack of secure school environments, the ministry of education should take responsibility to fund schools by planning, budgeting, allocating and disbursing funds to schools for development in form of boarding facilities and addressing menstruation and health barriers. The study also noted limitations in counselling services and therefore, it recommends the government through the ministry of education to intervene by recruiting qualified counsellors, strengthening confidential counselling services. Dedicating

guidance and counselling rooms with necessary resources and facilities and training the guidance and counselling teachers is recommended. Lastly, primary schools should adopt motivation strategies such as celebrating transition through the use of FGM affected alumnae role models to urge regular school attendance.

5.4.5 Implications of the Findings on Theories, Practices and Policies

This research concluded that girl's performance, drop-out and absenteeism due to FGM, made a statistically significant model for explaining the influence on their transition in Narok-South Sub-County. These findings support the argument drawn from the liberal feminism theory that emphasizes women rights, freedom, and equality by ending domestic violence, sexual violence and obstacles which hinder women from exploring opportunities that men have access to. It study has given results that support MacKinnon's theory through demonstrating how the cultural practices such as FGM in Narok County denies girls chances to education by exposing them to early marriages, early pregnancies and womanhood.

The results from the literature reviewed in chapter two for the three objectives also aligned with the presented results that FGM aftermath on (girls' performance, drop-out and absenteeism) influence girls transition from primary to secondary schools.

The obtained findings also implicate on ministry of education policies for running primary schools. Moreover, it also underscores government directives and individual school best-practices, guidelines, measures and practices to include important facets namely guidance and counseling teacher qualifications, psychosocial support service providers retooling, creating a conducive or welcoming school environment for girls, investing in female

teacher role modelling, back to school after drop-out, early absenteeism detection, performance management. The results further implicate the school management, the government through ministry of education, to allocate funds and dedicated budget to schools which will confidently to cater for boarding infrastructure, ladies' facilities, bursaries and sanitary kits.

Moreover, the study implicates the head-teachers and area chiefs to facilitate and approve community education, awareness and training sessions to make the public and girls proficient in understanding why girls need to get education, focusing on human rights equity and alternative safe rite of passages. These proposed recommendations require advocacy and publicity of the anti FGM-laws and guidelines by the school-heads to diversify and maximally achieve community awareness on the effects of FGM.

5.4 Recommendations for further Studies

Factoring that the obtained results have uncovered significant influences of FGM and girls transition in Narok-South Sub-County, the following recommendations for further studies are given:

- i. Research to investigating other pertinent factors that influence girls transition to secondary schools such as girls discipline and socio-economic characteristics.
- ii. Establish the influence of school environment characteristics on girls' transition to secondary schools.

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