



**GENDER-RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY AND GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IN WAJIR  
EAST SUB COUNTY KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study examined the impact of gender-responsive pedagogy on girls' participation in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-County, Kenya. The study was grounded on Social Learning Theory. Employing a quantitative research design, the study collected numerical data that were statistically analyzed. The target respondents were school management staff, including principals, teachers, and administrators, from 14 mixed secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-County, totaling 210 respondents. The sample size was 137 respondents, selected through a stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Interview guide comprising of closed-ended questions was administered face-to-face. The analysis involved descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages, and mean scores, as well as inferential statistics like regression analysis, to establish the relationship between gender-responsive pedagogy and girls' participation in public secondary schools. Findings revealed strong support for gender-responsive pedagogy with respondents acknowledging their positive effects on enrollment, retention, and academic performance of female students.*

**Key Words:** Gender-Responsiveness Pedagogy, Education, Wajir East

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## INTRODUCTION

School management strategies encompass the set of policies, plans, and practices enacted by school authorities to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the school (Huisman & Smits, 2019). These strategies play a crucial role in influencing girls' participation in public secondary schools. A key determinant affecting girls' attendance is the school's safety and security measures. When girls feel secure and protected within their school environment, they are more likely to attend regularly.

According to Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021), schools can foster a more supportive environment for girls' participation in public secondary education by implementing gender-responsive pedagogy, offering guidance and counseling services, providing sex education, and encouraging parental engagement. These efforts promote academic success and contribute to reducing gender disparities in education.

Amponsah (2018) Explored Gender Differences in Participation and Achievement in Mathematics in Ghanaian Basic Schools. The study explored gender differences in participation and achievement in mathematics. It indicated that school management strategies that create equitable learning environments can contribute to narrowing gender gaps in subject-specific participation and performance. Yet, the study, investigating gender differences in a subject context, may not have thoroughly investigated the broader spectrum of school management strategies and their comprehensive influence on girls' overall participation.

The Constitution of Kenya (2010), which affirms the rights of all individuals to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, includes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as fundamental principles. The Constitution also provides for affirmative action to address the past discrimination against women and marginalized groups. Furthermore, the Vision 2030

is a national development blueprint that recognizes the importance of education in achieving sustainable development and calls for gender equity in access to education at all levels (Government of Kenya. 2008).

Omulando and Bwisa (2016) studied Factors Affecting Girls' Participation in Education in Rural Schools in Kenya. The study examined factors influencing girls' participation in education. It identified school management strategies, such as gender-sensitive policies and facilities, as vital in enhancing girls' enrollment and retention in rural Kenyan schools. Nevertheless, while the study explored factors affecting girls' education, it might not have deeply delved into the nuanced role and impact of different school management strategies on girls' participation.

### Statement of the Problem

Despite efforts to promote gender equality in education, girls in many parts of Kenya, including Wajir East Sub County, continue to face significant barriers to accessing and participating in public secondary schools. These barriers may include cultural norms that prioritize boys' education over girls', poverty, early marriage, and inadequate school facilities and resources. The enrollment rate of girls in form one in Wajir East Sub-County is low, and the completion rate of form four among girls is also low. According to the Wajir East Sub-County Education Office, only 34% of the girls who enroll in form one complete their secondary education in the sub-county (Wajir East Sub-County Education Office. 2022). This problem has persisted over the years.

Numerous studies have examined the correlation between school management strategies and girls' participation in public secondary schools. For instance, Sharma, Gupta, and Verma (2022) delved into the effects of Community Engagement on Students' Academic Achievement in Rural Primary Schools in India. However, this study lacked specificity regarding the types of community engagement activities and their varying impacts.

Chen, Wang, and Li (2023) evaluated the efficacy of Teacher Professional Development Programs on Student Learning Outcomes in Urban Secondary Schools. Regrettably, the study fell short by not incorporating a comparison or control group to accurately assess the genuine influence of the professional development initiatives. Johnson, Anderson, and Smith (2023) explored parental involvement in students' transition to higher education through a longitudinal study. Yet, their focus primarily centered on parental perceptions and attitudes, neglecting the valuable experiences and viewpoints of the students themselves. Despite these research endeavors, empirical investigations on the subject remain scarce within the context of Kenya. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the impact of gender-responsive pedagogy on girls' participation in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub County, Kenya.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of gender-responsive pedagogy on girls' participation in public secondary school in Wajir East Sub County Kenya. The study was based on the following research question:-

- How does gender-responsive pedagogy affect the enrollment of girls in public secondary schools in Kenya's Wajir East Sub County?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Empirical Literature Review**

Gender-responsive pedagogy is an approach to teaching and learning that recognizes and responds to the different needs, experiences, and challenges those boys and girls may face in education (Dorji, 2020). It involves creating a classroom environment that promotes gender equality, challenges gender stereotypes, and ensures that both girls and boys have equal opportunities to learn and succeed (UNESCO, 2017). The aim of gender-responsive pedagogy is to create an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students, regardless of their gender, and to address gender-based discrimination and violence in schools (Chapin, & Warne, 2020).

In the context of public secondary schools, gender-responsive pedagogy can have a significant impact on girls' participation and achievement. Girls may face a range of barriers to education, including gender-based violence, social and cultural norms that prioritize boys' education, and lack of access to resources such as textbooks and safe transportation. By addressing these barriers and creating a supportive learning environment, gender-responsive pedagogy can help to increase girls' participation and improve their educational outcomes. Research has shown that gender-responsive pedagogy can be effective in improving girls' educational outcomes in a range of settings (Ananga, 2021). Here are five studies that provide support for this approach:

The World Bank (2018) conducted a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in West Africa and found that the approach led to improved academic performance, higher retention rates, and increased confidence and leadership skills among girls. In a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in Uganda, Nakabugo et al. (2020) found that the approach was effective in promoting gender equality, reducing gender-based violence, and improving academic performance among both girls and boys.

In a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in Pakistan, Rahman et al. (2019) found that the approach helped to reduce gender-based violence and promote girls' education by creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. A study by United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) (2018) found that gender-responsive pedagogy can help to address the gender gap in STEM education by challenging gender stereotypes and promoting girls' interest and participation in these subjects (Ananga, 2021).

Aikins et al. (2017) discovered that gender-responsive pedagogy increased girls' involvement in school, improved their academic performance, and promoted their leadership skills in a research of gender-responsive pedagogy in Ghana. Gender-responsive pedagogy can include incorporating gender-sensitive curriculum and teaching materials,

addressing gender-based violence and harassment, creating a safe and supportive learning environment, and encouraging girls' leadership and participation in classroom and extracurricular activities (UNESCO, 2017). Gender-responsive pedagogy is an important way to promote gender equality in education that can improve girls' involvement and achievement in public secondary schools. The research described above demonstrate the efficacy of this technique in boosting females' educational outcomes in a variety of circumstances.

In a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in Ethiopia, Tadesse and Seta (2019) found that the approach was effective in promoting girls' participation and retention in school. The study also found that the program helped to reduce gender-based violence and promote gender equality in the school.

A study by Asadullah et al. (2019) in Bangladesh found that gender-responsive pedagogy led to improvements in girls' academic performance and attendance. The study also found that the program helped to reduce gender-based violence in schools.

In a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in Tanzania, Maliti and Kisanga (2019) found that the approach was effective in promoting girls' participation and retention in school. The study also found that the program helped to reduce gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality in the school.

A study by UNESCO (2017) found that gender-responsive pedagogy can help to improve girls' access to education in conflict-affected areas. The study found that the approach helped to address gender-based violence and promote girls' participation and retention in school.

In a study of gender-responsive pedagogy in Jordan, Salem (2018) found that the approach was effective in improving girls' academic performance and attendance. The study also found that the program helped to reduce gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality in the school.

A study by Shrestha et al. (2020) in Nepal found that gender-responsive pedagogy led to improvements in girls' academic performance and attendance. The study also found that the program helped to reduce gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality in the school.

Gender-Responsive pedagogy ensures that the curriculum reflects gender equality and addresses the specific needs and interests of girls. It promotes the inclusion of gender-sensitive content, materials, and examples in teaching and learning materials. By providing relevant and relatable educational content, girls are more likely to engage actively in the learning process, leading to increased participation and retention. Gender-Responsive pedagogy focuses on creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that nurtures girls' confidence, self-esteem, and sense of belonging. It encourages teachers to adopt teaching methods that promote collaboration, active participation, and cooperative learning, ensuring that girls feel valued and empowered in the classroom. Providing a safe and respectful environment helps girls overcome barriers and encourages their active participation in academic activities. Gender-Responsive pedagogy emphasizes empowering teaching practices that challenge gender stereotypes and promote girls' agency and leadership. It encourages teachers to provide opportunities for girls to express their opinions, engage in critical thinking, and take on leadership roles within the classroom. By fostering an environment that encourages girls to voice their thoughts and ideas, Gender-Responsive pedagogy promotes their active participation, boosts their self-confidence, and encourages them to pursue their educational goals.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Administrative Theory**

Henri Fayol, a French management thinker, introduced the Administrative Theory, often known as the Classical Management Theory, in the early twentieth century. Fayol's work established modern management philosophies and techniques. He

published his theories in his book "General and Industrial Management" in 1916. Fayol's Administrative Theory focuses on management ideas that may be generally applied to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Fayol's Administrative Theory provides a framework that can be critically and deeply analyzed to understand how it supports the influence of school management strategies on girls' participation in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub County, Kenya. This theory is particularly relevant due to its emphasis on principles that can guide effective management practices, which are crucial for addressing gender disparities and promoting inclusive education.

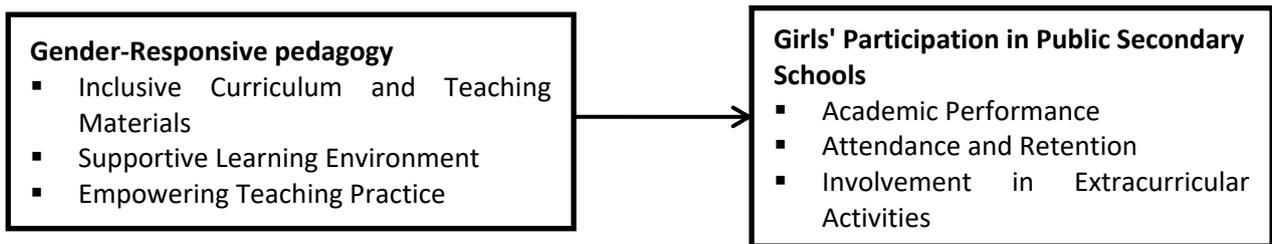
One of Fayol's key principles is "Unity of Command," which states that each employee should receive orders from only one superior to avoid confusion and conflict. In the context of girls' participation in schools, a clear chain of command ensures that school management strategies aimed at improving girls' education are effectively communicated and implemented. Principals and administrators, as the superiors, can ensure that teachers and staff are aligned with strategies that promote girls' participation. This prevents any

conflicting instructions that could hinder the successful implementation of gender-focused initiatives (Fayol, 1949)

Another principle, "Scalar Chain," emphasizes the importance of a clear hierarchical structure in organizations. In schools, a well-defined scalar chain ensures that school management strategies for promoting girls' participation are implemented consistently across different levels of the school administration. Principals, vice principals, heads of departments, and teachers need to work in a coordinated manner, following the scalar chain, to implement strategies effectively. This supports the seamless execution of initiatives that can positively influence girls' involvement in secondary education (Fayol, 1916)

Furthermore, the principle of "Esprit de Corps" stresses the significance of teamwork and unity among employees. In the context of schools, this principle encourages a collaborative environment where teachers, staff, and administrators work together to implement management strategies that support girls' participation. Team cohesion and a sense of belonging are vital for creating an inclusive atmosphere that encourages female students to actively engage in their education (Fayol, 1984)

**Conceptual Framework**



**Independent Variable**

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Dependent Variable**

**METHODOLOGY**

To better understand the research issue, the study used a mix of methods, both quantitative and qualitative. This was considered a good choice because the study gathered and analyzed both numbers and words in one research. The research design encompassed the entire plan and structure

guiding a research study. A quantitative research design was used, enabling the collection of numerical data for statistical analysis. The research took place in Wajir East Sub-County, situated in the northeastern region of Kenya. Within this sub-county, there were a total of 14 public secondary schools. The target respondents consisted of school management staff, including principals, teachers,

and administrators, from 14 mixed secondary schools in Wajir County. In total, there were 210 respondents, comprising 14 principals, 168 teachers, and 28 school administrators. To determine the sample size for this study, the researcher employed Yamane's Formula. The sample size were 137 respondents. In this study, the chosen sampling technique approach was stratified random sampling. Data collection methods included questionnaires for teachers and administrators, while interviews were conducted with principals to collect the necessary information.

The gathered data underwent analysis employing descriptive statistics like frequency distribution and percentages. Additionally, inferential statistics such as regression analysis were used to determine the correlation between school management strategies and girls' involvement in public secondary schools.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Response Rate

The study used questionnaires as a tool for data collection. The response rate of 79.6% indicates a relatively high level of engagement from participants in the study on the influence of school

management strategies on girls' participation in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub County, Kenya. The majority of distributed questionnaires (137 out of 100) were returned, with 109 being completed. This suggests a robust level of interest and willingness to participate in the research, enhancing the credibility and reliability of the findings gathered from the study.

### Descriptive Analysis

The study sought to determine the influence of school management strategies on girls' participation in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub County, Kenya. The study used a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was strongly disagree "SD", 2 was disagree "D", 3 was neutral, "N" "4 was agree "A" and lastly 5 was strongly agree, "SA". To achieve this objective teacher's opinion was established.

### Gender-Responsive Pedagogy on the Enrollment of Females

The study sought to ascertain the impact of gender-responsive pedagogy on the enrollment of females in public secondary schools in Kenya's Wajir East Sub County. The results are as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Gender-Responsive Pedagogy on the Enrollment of Females**

Opinion	SD	D	N	A	SA
I feel that integrating gender-sensitive content in the curriculum encourages more girls to enroll in public secondary schools.	9(8.3%)	8(7.3%)	20(18.3%)	20(18.3%)	52(47.7%)
Gender-responsive pedagogy helps create a supportive environment for female students in public secondary schools.	1(0.9%)	8(7.3%)	18(16.6%)	34(31.2%)	48(44.0%)
Implementing gender-responsive teaching approaches can improve girls' academic performance and retention in public secondary schools.	2(1.8%)	5(4.6%)	10(9.2%)	31(28.4%)	61(56.0%)
Gender-sensitive teaching methods increase the confidence and participation of girls in classroom activities.	2(1.8%)	6(5.5%)	5(4.6%)	27(24.8%)	69(63.3%)
Public secondary schools that prioritize gender-responsive pedagogy are more likely to attract and retain female students.		7(6.4%)	19(17.4%)	36(33.0%)	4(43.1%)
I think gender-responsive teaching approaches contribute to breaking gender stereotypes and encouraging girls to pursue education in public secondary schools.	4(3.7%)		11(10.1%)	64(58.7%)	30(27.5%)

**Source: Researcher (2024)**

As per the findings as shown in Table 1, most of the respondents 66.0% agreed generally that integrating gender-sensitive content in the curriculum encourages more girls to enroll in public secondary schools, 18.3% were neutral while only 15.6% disagreed with the statement. The study also found that, most of the respondents 75.2% were in agreement that gender-responsive pedagogy helps create a supportive environment for female students in public secondary schools, 16.2% were neutral while only 18.2% disagree with the statement. In addition, most of the respondents 84.4% agreed that implementing gender-responsive teaching approaches can improve girls' academic performance and retention in public secondary schools, 9.2% were neutral while only 6.4% were neutral to the opinion. It was further revealed that most of the respondents 88.1% agreed that gender-sensitive teaching methods increase the confidence and participation of girls in classroom activities, 4.6% were neutral while only 7.3% of the respondents were neutral to the opinion. Most of the respondents, 76.1% of the agreed that public secondary schools that prioritize gender-responsive pedagogy are more likely to attract and retain female students, 17.4% of the respondents were neutral while only 6.4% of the respondents disagreed with the opinion. Lastly, the most of the respondents 86.2% agreed with the opinion that gender-responsive teaching approaches contribute to breaking gender stereotypes and encouraging girls to pursue education in public secondary schools, 10.1% of the respondents were neutral to the statement while 3.7% disagreed with the statement. The findings concur with Chapin and Warne, (2020) that, Gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP) improved female school enrollment by addressing gender biases in teaching methods and curriculum. It also lined with UNESCO (2019) report revealed that integrating GRP increased girls' participation, engagement, and academic

performance. Tailoring education to gender-specific needs fostered a supportive environment, promoting equitable access to education for females.

Consistently, during the interview, one of the principals said, *"In our school, we prioritize incorporating gender-responsive pedagogy in our teaching practices to ensure equal participation of girls in the classroom. We do this by designing our curriculum and teaching materials to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse needs and experiences of both boys and girls. Additionally, we actively encourage classroom discussions that promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes."*

Regarding specific teaching strategies or approaches that have positively impacted girls' participation and engagement in our school, *I believe that creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment is crucial. We employ interactive teaching methods that encourage participation from all students, regardless of gender. For example, group discussions, cooperative learning activities, and project-based learning have been particularly effective in promoting girls' involvement and boosting their confidence.*

However, implementing gender-responsive pedagogy does come with its challenges. *One notable barrier we have encountered is resistance from some teachers who may not fully understand the importance of gender equality in education. To address this, we provide continuous training and professional development opportunities to help teachers recognize and address gender biases in their teaching practices.*

#### **Girls' Participation in Public Secondary Schools in Wajir County, Kenya (GPPSC)**

The study sought to investigate into the role that parental involvement plays in encouraging girls to enroll in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub County, Kenya. The results are as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Schools in Wajir County, Kenya**

Opinion	SD	D	N	A	SA
Girls who actively participate in school leadership roles demonstrate higher levels of engagement and commitment to their education.		5(4.6%)	11(10.1%)	62(56.9%)	31(28.4%)
Public secondary schools that offer tailored programs to address the needs of girls attract more female students.		5(4.6%)	14(12.8%)	50(45.9%)	40(36.7%)
I believe creating a supportive peer network encourages girls to actively participate in school activities and programs.		8(7.3%)	12(11.0%)	49(45.0%)	40(36.7%)
Girls who receive mentorship and guidance from older students or alumni are more likely to participate in public secondary school events.	6(5.5%)	6(5.5%)	30(27.5%)	29(26.6%)	38(34.9%)
Implementing initiatives to promote girls' voices and perspectives in school decision-making processes enhances their participation in public secondary schools.	6(5.5%)	8(7.3%)	10(9.2%)	32(29.4%)	53(48.6%)

**Source: Researcher (2024)**

According to the study findings as shown in table 4, most of the respondents 85.3% agreed with the opinion statement that girls who actively participate in school leadership roles demonstrate higher levels of engagement and commitment to their education, the 10.1% of the respondents were neutral while only 4.6% strongly disagreed with the opinion. Most of the respondents 82.6% also agreed that public secondary schools that offer tailored programs to address the needs of girls attract more female students, 12.8% were neutral while only 4.6% of the respondents disagreed with the opinion. Most respondents 81.7% as well agreed that creating a supportive peer network encourages girls to actively participate in school activities and programs, 11.0% were neutral to the opinion while 7.3% strongly disagreed with the opinion. In addition, most respondents 61.5% agreed that girls who receive mentorship and guidance from older students or alumni are more likely to participate in public secondary school events, 27.5% of them were neutral while only 11.0% strongly disagreed with the opinion. Lastly, most of respondents 78.0% agreed that implementing initiatives to promote girls' voices and perspectives in school decision-making processes enhances their participation in public secondary schools, 9.2% were neutral while

only 12.8% strongly disagreed with the opinion. Girls' participation in public secondary schools is influenced by various factors including societal norms, access to education, quality of infrastructure, and support systems. Efforts such as gender-responsive pedagogy and guidance and counseling services have been shown to enhance girls' enrollment and participation in secondary education, as revealed by various studies (Aziz *et al.*, 2018).

#### SUMMARY

The study examined the impact of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) on female enrollment in public secondary schools in Kenya's Wajir East Sub County. Findings revealed that integrating gender-sensitive content in the curriculum significantly encouraged more girls to enroll. Additionally, GRP was found to create a supportive environment for female students, improve academic performance, boost confidence, challenge gender stereotypes, and attract and retain female students. These results align with previous research, indicating that GRP enhances female school enrollment by addressing gender biases and fostering equitable access to education.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) significantly impacts the enrollment of females in public secondary schools, as evidenced by the majority agreement among respondents on various aspects of GRP's effectiveness. Notably, integrating gender-sensitive content in the curriculum, implementing gender-responsive teaching approaches, and prioritizing GRP in schools were associated with increased enrollment, academic performance, confidence, and participation of girls.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools should prioritize integrating gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP) into their teaching practices by incorporating gender-sensitive content

in the curriculum. This can be achieved by designing inclusive teaching materials and fostering classroom discussions that promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes. Additionally, continuous training and professional development opportunities should be provided to teachers to help them recognize and address gender biases in their teaching practices.

## Recommendation for Further Studies

The reportage in this study determined the influence of school management strategies on girls' participation in public secondary school in Wajir East Sub County Kenya. The study recommended the need to conduct further studies in the other parts of the Country. This will contribute to the body of knowledge since that knowledge is missing.

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