What should be done?

Since circumcision is a private good, policy makers of the county government of Bungoma can mainly be advisors and should consider:

- 1. Sensitizing Bungoma residents to harmoniously participate in circumcision rites and schooling for amelioration of the benefits and;
- Provide advisory and platforms for parents and other stakeholders who wish to harmonize circumcision rites and schooling. Parents and other stakeholders should consider
- 3. Setting aside one week christened cultural week outside school time during which circumcision ceremonies should take place and;
- Centralizing circumcision ceremonies at village or community level for all initiates to ensure harmony and reducing on expenses. Schools should consider:
- Coordination of timing of circumcision ceremonies to avoid overlap into schooling time and regulate the initiates teachings to be in harmony with schooling in order to realize the full benefit of culture and the teachings thereof.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge University of Eldoret for organizing and implementing structures that enabled the allocation and disbursement of the funds for this research.

References

Achoka, J. S. K, Nafula, R. C. & Oyoo, M. O. (2013). Negative cultural influence on secondary school Girl-students' academic achievement in Bungoma County, Kenya. Journal of Education and Curriculum Development Research (JECDR)1(2), pp.-25 35.

The Republic of Kenya (2010). The Constitution of Kenya Nairobi: National Council for Law Reporting.

Onyango, B. (2013). Some Kenyan Childrenare not in School despite Free Primary Education. [USAID through the IDEA project.]. 2012-2013. Policy Communication Fellows Program.

World Bank (2012). World Development Indicators. Retrieved 7/20/2014, from www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya

Contacts: Prof. Ruth N. Otunga Office of the DVC Academic and Student Affairs E-mail: rotunga@uoeld.ac.ke

Introduction

4

Research Team Prof. Ruth N. Otunga Dr.Joseph M. Mubichakani Dr. Jaluo Murunga Mr. Leornard Kibebe

Published by: Directorate of Research and Innovation University of Eldoret P.O Box 1125-30100 Website: www.uoeld.ac.ke Email:ridirector@uoeld.ac.ke



Current Views of Bungoma Residents

Benefits of Schooling

Modern schooling ensures that young boys and girls learn among other things how to be:

innovative and creative; responsible; inquisitive; disciplined; morally upright; time-conscious, respectful for self and others; adaptive; and

flexible.

Benefits from circumcision rites

Circumcision rites:

University of Eldoret is ISO 9001: 2015 Certified

University of

POLICY BRIEF

KEY MESSAGES

1. Education is a key human development tool, which

provides learners with the capabilities required to

become economically productive. Investment in

education has great potential in contributing to poverty

2. The Constitution of Kenya recognizes culture as the foundation of the nation and as the cumulative civilization of the Kenyan people and nation (Kenya

3. Young boys' circumcision which usually takes place

every even year and between the school terms is one of

the main cultural ceremonies in Bungoma. The practice

tends to disrupt schooling and places heavy economic

burden on families and community in terms of funding

4. Devising a way of celebrating culture as well as

promoting education will harness benefits from both.

reduction (World Bank, 2012).

the celebrations (Achoka et al., 2013).

2013).

PURSUIT OF HARMONY BETWEEN

BUNGOMA COUNTY

CIRCUMCISION RITES AND SCHOOLING IN

harden boys and trains them to be

teach pertinent values, norms, virtues and morals of the society;

bring the community together which strengthens bonding; prepare initiates for marriage; and parenthood responsibilities.

Conflicting areas between circumcision rites and schooling

Majority of respondents (69.6%) agreed that traditional circumcision is expensive, it therefore competes for limited financial resources available to Bungoma residents with schooling.

Both compete for limited time of the young boys involved in schooling and circumcision rites. Respondents noted that participating in the traditional circumcision practice, the boys spend almost one month dancing with the bells while inviting relatives to the event. Practicing on how to use the bells starts as early as June, wasting precious time that would otherwise be usefully channeled to their education.

Both compete in shaping the focus of the boys involved, schooling focuses on education while circumcision rites focus on community living and family life.

Traditional circumcision teachings and experiences were noted to encourage drugs use and abuse and increase in sexual activities among boys and girls which in turn reduce their focus on schooling and education.

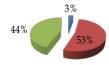
There is a need for evidence-based research towards derivation of education policies. Such studies inform Bungoma County residents how to harmonize quality education with socio-cultural activities. UNESCO (2005) recognized that schools needed to have regular access to evidencebased practical knowledge about what works best in the learning environments. Moreover, research enables teachers as well as schools to reflect on their practices and their performance. This enables them and policy makers to inform their understanding of the strategies needed to improve teaching and learning and provide for their knowledge needs.

Bungoma County has 61% of residents with only primary-level education and 18% with no formal education (Achoka et al., 2013). The primary school age population (6-13 years) has school enrolment of 97%, however, the dropout rate for boys is 57.5% and 53% for girls by Standard Eight (Onyango, 2013).

The County is considered conservative in socio-cultural activities and specifically circumcision. These preserve culture as outlined in the constitution of Kenya 2010 (The Republic of Kenya, 2010). However, circumcision rites tend to be disruptive to the education of both boys and girls as they take place in between the school terms. The rites also place a heavy economic burden on the families and community through diversion of available limited resources to the accompanying ceremonies.

- Never joined school
- Dropped out of school
- Finished basic schooling

Schooling Status in Bungoma



What is the Problem?

There is a conflict between schooling and circumcision rites. This conflict has been there since the introduction of formal schooling.

There is need to resolve the conflict since interference with schooling denies individuals, family and the country future educated workforce. On the other hand interfering with traditional circumcision denies the community of the benefits of their culture.

There is no clear consensus among residents on how to resolve the conflict so as to take advantage of benefits from both.

3

March 2021



