Relationship between Demographic Characteristics of Refugee Pupils and Academic Performance in Eldoret Municipality, Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: *Academic performance of refugee pupils has been found to be poor compared to the host pupils especially in the study area. Most studies for instances have related poor academic performance with problems that refugee pupils undergo. This paper however, sought to explain how demographic characteristics of refugee pupils influence academic performance in Eldoret Municipality in Uasin-Gishu County. The paper found a relationship between gender, class of study and orphan-hood statuses of refugee and their academic performance.*

Keywords: Academic Performance, Demographic Characteristics, Refugee, Relationship

1. Introduction

Kenya hosts approximately 250,000 refugees from over II war torn countries [1]. The majority are from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia the Great lakes region.Somalia and Sudan have had years of civil turmoil, Rwanda experienced genocide, Ethiopia has an unstable government and Uganda has had to contend with distortional regime. Kenya has refugees from Sudan who run away from civil war in their country. Ethnic violence coupled with the on-going civil war has caused nearly 15,000 of Sudanese to flee to Kenya, joining 50,000 refugees who were already in the country [2]. Sudanese refugees, who are the majority in refugee camps, cause tension in these camps leading to relocation. There are two official refugee camps in Kenya: Dadaab, close to the Somali border hosts about 150,000 refugees Kakuma, located in Northern Kenya near the Sudanese border, host about 83,000 refugees. Hostility and violence has broken out on many occasions within the "safe-haven" of Kakuma, due to conflict among refugees of varying ethnic backgrounds [3].

Kenya as for the rest of Africa, the significance of the refugee phenomenon lies beyond the issue of numbers. Related to the escalation of refugee numbers is the proliferation of distinct categories such as camp and urban refugees. The later categories have only recently attracted attention in the discourse on refugees and therefore require comprehensive problematization and analysis. Free primary education is a concept which has been popularized by the Kenyan government where all children of school going age are required to start schooling free of charge up to class eight. Refuges are also included [5]. In Uasin-Gishu for instance, the number of refugee pupils in various schools within the municipality have increased. This is has been exacerbated by the increasing instability in some African countries including Somali, Ethiopia, Sudan among other countries. Academic performance of refugee pupils is however poor compared to the host pupils especially in the study area. Most studies for instances have related poor academic performance with problems that refugee pupils

undergo. This paper however, sought to explain how demographic characteristics of refugee pupils influence academic performance in Eldoret Municipality in Uasin-Gishu County.

2. Methodology

The study was conducted within Eldoret Municipality in Uasin-Gishu County. The study adopted a survey research design to investigate the relationship between demographic characteristics of refugee pupils and their academic performance.

The paper targeted leaners (refugee pupils) guidance and counselling teachers, and head teachers. The municipality has 42 primary schools with a total of 27,950 pupils. Out of the forty-two primary schools ten schools were selected. A total of 201 refugee pupils were used as respondents who were identified from class four to eight. In addition, their academic performance was put into consideration and those pupils who had not done an examination for three terms of the year were dropped.

A questionnaire was administered to the refugee pupils while an interview schedule was administered to the key informants including school head teachers, as well as guiding and counselling teachers.

3. Presentation of Findings

3.1 Influence of Demographic Characteristics of Refugee Pupils on Academic Performance
To be able to achieve this, a cross-tabulation between demographic variables of refugee pupils (age, gender, home country, and religion, duration of stay in Kenya, orphans, and number of siblings) and academic performance was performed.

3.1.1 Age and Academic Performance of the Respondent
In relation to the age of the respondents, it was established that 46.3% were between 14 and 18 years, 44.8% were

between 10 and 14 years, 4.5% of the respondents were less than 10 years while 4.5% were more than 18 years. As a result, it was established that majority of the respondents were between the ages of 14 and 18 years. However, it was also established that 4.5% of the respondents were above 18 years. This implies that being refugees some pupils may have delayed in going to school following the political insecurity, civil war, and hunger among others in their countries.

In relation to Chi-square statistic in Table 1, it is clear that the p value (0.078) is more than 0.05 (p<0.05), so the null hypothesis is accepted. This therefore implies that there no significant relationship between academic performance and age of refugee pupils.

Table 1: A Cross-tabulation between Age and Academic Performance of the Respondent

Age		Academic Performance of the Refugee			Total
		Poor	*Average*	*Good*	
<= 10 Years		5	3	1	9
		2.5%	1.5%	0.5%	4.5%
10 – 14 Years		36	54	0	90
		17.9%	26.9%	.0%	44.8%
15 – 18 Years		6	64	23	93
		3.0%	31.8%	11.5%	46.3%
Above 18 Years		0	9	0	9
		.0%	4.5%	.0%	4.5%
Total		**47**	**130**	**24**	**201**
		23.4%	**64.7%**	**11.9%**	**100.0%**

X2=28.141; df=9 and p=0.078, sign=0.05

3.1.2 Gender and Academic Performance of the Respondent

Findings revealed that 61.7% of the respondents were male pupils while 38.3% were female pupils. This implies that there were more male pupils than female pupils because owing to the status of refugee of the pupils, it can be said that male are more persistent to the terrible conditions than female pupils thus recording high school turn up than their counterparts. The cross-tabulation findings indicate that boys perform fairly better than girls. Thirty nine point three of boys recorded an average and above performance compared to18.9% of girls. In relation to Chi-square statistic in Table 2, it is clear that the p value (0.000) is less than 0.05 (p<0.05), so the null hypothesis is rejected. This therefore implies that there is an association between academic performance and gender of refugee pupils. A close scrutiny of the findings indicates that boys perform slightly better than girls.

Table 2: Across-tabulation between Gender and Academic Performance

		Academic Performance of the Refugee			Total
		Poor	Average	Good	
Gender of the	Male	45	60	19	124
		22.4%	29.9%	9.4%	61.7%
	Female	39	22	16	77
		19.4%	10.9%	8.0%	38.3%
Total		84	82	35	201
		41.8%	40.8%	17.4%	100.0%

X2=14.703; df=3 and p=0.000, sign=0.05

3.1.3 Class of Study and Academic Performance of the Respondent

In relation to the class of study of the respondents it was established that 37.8% of the respondents were from class eight, 36.8% were from class seven, and 23.4% were from class six while only 2% of the respondents were from class five. As a result, it was established that majority of the respondents were refugee pupils from class eight and class seven. This was brought about due to sampling. The selection of pupils from upper classes was done purposively because pupils from upper classes are more knowledgeable and can tell the true situation of what refugee pupils feel and perceive vis-à-vis academic performance.

In relation to Chi-square statistic in Table 3, it is clear that the p value (0.000) is less than 0.05 (p<0.05), so the null hypothesis is rejected. This therefore implies that there is an association between academic performance and class of study of refugee pupils. A close scrutiny of the findings indicates that refugee pupils perform better as their class level increases.

Table 3: A Cross-tabulation between Class of Study and Academic Performance

		Academic Performance of the Refugee			Total
		Poor	Average	Good	
Class of Study of the Respondent	5	2	2	0	4
		1.0%	1.0%	.0%	2.0%
	6	11	13	23	47
		5.5%	6.5%	11.4%	23.4%
	7	24	30	20	74
		11.9%	14.9%	10.0%	36.8%
	8	13	29	34	76
		6.5%	14.4%	16.9%	37.8%
Total		50	74	77	201
		24.9%	36.8%	38.3%	100.0%

X2=27.516; df=9 and p=0.000, sign=0.05

3.1.4 Orphanage Status and Academic Performance of the Respondent

From revealed that 37.8% of the respondents were orphans while 62.2% were not. Parents form a crucial role in molding the psychological, physiological and social stability of their children. The chief psychological problems that bereavement poses for the adolescents have to do with; the extent of their capacity to accept the tragedy of such a significant loss, their capacity to tolerate the anguish that ordinarily accustoms mourning and their developmental need required to complete the goals of healthy maturation.

In relation to Chi-square statistic in Table 4, it is clear that the p value (0.000) is less than 0.05 (p<0.05), so the null hypothesis is rejected. This therefore implies that there is a relationship between academic performance and orphaned status of refugee pupils. A close scrutiny of the findings indicates that refugee pupils who are orphans perform poorly than those who are not orphans.

Table 4: A Cross-tabulation between Orphaned Status and Academic Performance

		Academic Performance of the Refugee			Total
		Poor	Average	Good	
Orphan Status	Yes	45	31	0	76
		22.4%	15.4%	.0%	37.8%
	No	20	29	76	125
		10.0%	14.4%	37.8%	62.2%
Total		65	60	96	201
		32.4%	29.9%	47.8%	100.0%

X2=37.280, df=3, p=0.000 and sign=0.05

3.2 Conclusion

This paper concludes that age of refugee pupils is not related to academic performance. However, gender, class of study and orphaned status of refugee pupils influence academic performance.

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