Qualitative Research Of The Factors Affecting The Advancement Of Girls Education From Primary To Secondary Level In Rural Rwanda

Introduction

Girl-child education has been identified as the backbone of the advanced societies of the world. It is a critical issue that should not be treated with laxity. Its impact in the society is numerous and includes; improving the individual, causing her to be productive and not a burden to the society; it improves the economy of the society through various means such as environmental sustainability; lowering illiteracy rate which also leads to lower poverty rate Jennifer Tanko (2017).

Aim and objective of the study

Aims

1. To critically evaluate the factors affecting the advancement of girls' education from primary to secondary level in Rural Rwanda.
2. To determine the extent to which socio-cultural factors affect the progress of girls' education from primary to secondary education level.

Objective

1. The study will seek to evaluate the underlying factors responsible for the causes of low girl's child progress from primary to secondary education level in rural Rwanda
2. To establish whether the current physical learning environment are more accommodating to girls in rural Rwanda
3. To establish the extent to which socioeconomic factors affect girl children from progressing from primary education to secondary level in rural Rwanda.
4. To determine the extent to which parents' level of education affects girl child progress from primary to secondary education level.

Research Questions

1. What are the key underlying factors responsible for low girl child progress from primary to secondary level of education in rural Rwanda?
2. To what extent does the physical learning environment influence girl child progress from primary to secondary education level?
3. How do socioeconomic factors influence girl child progress from primary to secondary education level in rural Rwanda?
4. To what extent does the parents' level of education influence girl child progress from primary to secondary level of education in Rwanda?

Significance of the study

The result of the study can be used by the school administrators and teachers in understanding girl-child socio-economic, socio-cultural, parents' level of education and distance from school factors and give them necessary guidance and counseling to improve principals' influence on girl child progress from Primary level up to secondary education. The information may be used by the policymakers like the ministry of education to come up with a policy framework that would help to encourage girl child to advance with their education up to the secondary level of education. The findings may also be used by the government of Rwanda and other key development partners to enhance the provision of teaching-learning resources to enable girls to participate well in secondary education. The findings may sensitize parents to be aware of their roles in supporting the girl-child participation in education. Finally, the results of the study may add to the existing knowledge on factors affecting principals' influence on girl-child participation in secondary education.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study will be based on a qualitative design using a cross-sectional survey approach. The focus of the research will be to establish factors hindering the learning environment that prevents the majority of girls from progressing to secondary education in rural Rwanda.

A qualitative research approach is proposed for this study. The theoretical perspective most often associated with qualitative researchers is phenomenology (Bogdan & Biklen, 2004). Following the phenomenological approach, researchers seek to understand the meaning in events and in human interactions. Further, the context is important to the interpretation of data. The data collected in a qualitative study includes more than words; attitudes, feelings, vocal and facial expressions, and other behaviors are also involved. The data which may consist of interview transcripts, field notes from observations, a wide variety of records and historical documents, and memoranda, are treated to rigorous ongoing analysis. Three processes are blended throughout the study: collection, coding, and analysis of data. This approach encourages the kind of flexibility so important to the qualitative researcher who can change a line of inquiry and move in new directions, as more information and a better understanding of what are relevant data are acquired.

Study population and sample size

The study will use a population estimate of 290 respondents in four districts.The sample size for this study will be 165 as guided by Krejcie & Morgan (1970).

Sample Strategy

Purposive sampling will be used for selecting participants for this study. The choice for selecting purposive sampling is not only because its commonly used in qualitative research but it involves selecting research participants according to the needs of the study (Tongco, 2007) in that the researcher chooses participants who are knowledgeable about the subject matter that is suitable for detailed research.

Sampling Procedure

Five districts will be considered for the study and they are Butare, Nyakuzi, Bigaboro, Nyamagabe, and Nyarugenge. The study population will comprise key stakeholders involved in the education sector in Rwanda in the five poorest districts. The Respondents will be drawn from five categories; (1) the students in primary schools specifically girls in their last year of primary education, (2) teachers and headteachers (3)Parents-Teachers Associations members, (4) District Education leadership, and (5) secondary school headteachers. Out of the five categories, the study will collect data from at least 33 respondents from each category making it 165 from five districts.

Data Collection Methods

Types of data collected

Primary and secondary data shall be collected for the study

Primary data will be collected from the study respondents through semi-structured interviews. Meanwhile, secondary data on the number of girls in schools and those who dropped out of school will be collected from published research work, and articles report from education survey reports.

Qualitative Research Tool

To conduct the study, semi-structured interviews as the primary research approach. Interviews will be used for this study to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of individual participants (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). A semi-structured interview approach shall be adopted and this approach facilitates an understanding of the problem from the perspective of the participants under investigation.

Through choosing interviews as a method of data collection the researcher hope to gain a descriptive understanding of the participants on why so few girls in rural Rwanda continue their education into secondary level. The interview method allows the researcher to seek clarity and probe for deeper understanding on the topic. As a result, the reporting and analysis of data is reflective of the views of the participants. In this way the researcher will be able to build trust and rapport with the participants and the trust in the interaction or relationship make it somewhat easier for the participants to share their own experiences without fear of being judged (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2018).

Analysis of Data

Data analysis is the process whereby a phenomenon is broken down into its constituent parts in order for it to be understood better (Mouton &Marais, 1991). Therefore the following process shall be undertaken to analyze data.

Collected data from the field will be largely semi-structured and may not make any sense therefore, the researcher will try to make sense out of field data through transcription. Transcription simply means converting all data into textual form.

The data shall be organized in a form that reduced the large amounts of information all over the place. The researcher will go back to review research objectives or questions and then organize the collected data according to these objectives/questions.

The researcher will then continue to do data coding with the aim of compressing the data into easily understandable concepts for a more efficient data analysis process. This will involve categorizing the data into concepts, properties and patterns. Descriptive analysis will allow researcher to give meaning to data collected from the field.

The fourth step will therefore involve data validation which will reflect the success of research. Data being very essential and it is in the heart of any research, it becomes extremely important to ensure that it is not flawed. The data validation will have two sides. The validity which will be the accuracy of the research methods and the second is reliability which is the extent to which the procedures produced consistent and dependable results.

Conclusion of data analysis which will be stating the findings and research outcomes based on the research objectives. The link between the analyzed data and the research questions/objective shall be established and will be followed by presenting the data analysis as a final report.

Ethical considerations

The study will involve interacting with young girls of adolescent age and adult male researchers. To comply with ethical considerations in conducting this research, the researcher will with ethical research consideration (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007) Meanwhile, the researcher is also aware that whereas it is common practice to request written consent, but a highly formalized ways of securing consent should be avoided in favor of fostering relationships in which ongoing ethical regard for participants is sustained (Silverman, 2009).

How to overcome ethical issues in the research

1. The researcher will observe at all-time and prioritize the respect for the dignity of research participants especially the girls.
2. Their informed consent to participate in research will be sought without placing any pressure on them to do so
3. Verbal consent will be provided before being interviewed or to participate in the research.
4. Interview shall be conducted in an open and visible place

Limitation of the study

There will be methodological challenges of conducting interviews in a divided society, where history is highly contested and freedom of speech is limited and the difficulties of assembling a group of participants who are ethnically and socioeconomically representative of the country as a whole.

Rwanda has a very poor road network connecting to the deeper rural areas and this will pose a big challenge to the researcher

Another challenge will be the language barrier. Rwanda is one of the francophone countries and the main language spoken in Rwanda is French therefore the researcher might need to hire a translator.

How to overcome ethical issues in the research

- The researcher will hire the service of a translator to help in translating French into English.
- In order to overcome the transport challenges, the researcher will hire boda boda (motor taxi)

Bibliography

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