



Cultural and Lifestyle Impacts: Analysing the Effects of Nomadic Pastoralism on Alternative Approaches to Basic Education in Samburu County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of nomadic pastoralists' lifestyle on the AABE programme in Samburu County. AABE was introduced by the Kenya Government, religious entities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with the aim of promoting access to basic education and enhancing Universal Primary Education for all (UPE). However, school enrolment and literacy levels in Samburu have been low, at (44%) and (12%) respectively, raising the need to examine the success of AABE in meeting the envisaged purpose. The study tested one hypothesis, namely, nomadic pastoralists' way of life in Samburu County. The study applied a survey research design and collected data from both primary and secondary sources. Three structured questionnaires were used for 400 learners' household heads, 56 teachers in charge of the 56 AABE Centers, and 10 AABE providers. Secondary data were obtained from the Ministry of Education offices, AABE Centers, libraries and the Internet. A stratified random sampling technique was used to sample the 400 respondents. Data was presented using frequency tabulations, chi-square, multiple regressions and correlation analyses. The findings had (80%) of the respondents who stated that mobility and herding affected success of AABE. The study recommended that there is a need to approach the development in nomadic pastoralists' areas from a multi-faceted approach, such as addressing the problems of inadequacy of water, medical facilities, infrastructure, livelihoods and the problem of conflicts. The study recommended that more studies be done on the viability of AABE in other nomadic pastoral areas and encompass other variables.

Key terms: AABE Programme, impact, lifestyle, nomadic pastoralists, Samburu County.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

With school enrolment and literacy rates in Samburu County still being very low at (44%) and (12%) respectively, in spite of the existence of AABE for over 21 years, there is great concern whether AABE programmes in Samburu County have been successful or not. The Alternative Approaches to Basic Education programmes were promoted in Kenya by the government in partnership with other international and national organisations as one of the initiatives believed to be capable of fostering access to basic education and boosting literacy, subsequently taking the country towards the realisation of Universal Primary Education (UPE.)

Little research has been done, especially so in the context of nomadic pastoralists. The study, therefore, will fill this gap by endeavouring to give an empirically established understanding of the factors influencing the viability of AABE in nomadic pastoralist areas. It will make a useful theoretical contribution to the hypothesised relationships between the factors affecting the viability of AABE in the nomadic pastoralist Samburu area in particular and in Kenya in general. The results will be useful to AABE providers such as NGOs, the government, and religious entities, as well as to target communities and academicians. They envisage helping these stakeholders redefine their strategies in order to make their efforts effective, efficient, and impactful. In the long term, it is hoped that the study will enhance access to basic education in the nomadic pastoralist communities and, thus, the realisation of UPE.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Lanyasunya (2002), the nomadic lifestyle of pastoralists affects their participation in basic formal education. All pastoralists living in the lowland areas or remote areas of northern Kenya move at least at one point in time within eight years in search of pasture and water for their livestock. Those in the highlands who are trying to adapt to crop farming move their livestock only. It is in this light that this study would want to investigate whether nomadic lifestyle or mobility is an influencing factor to the viability of AABE.

Owiny (2006) examined the pastoralist education situation in Uganda in the context of existing policy and non-formal education interventions among Bahima and Karimojong pastoralist communities with the aim of addressing the problem of illiteracy among pastoralist communities, positing that an understanding and effective integration of the pastoralist lifestyle and livelihood by providers in the non-formal education programmes would make them effective in promoting literacy for the pastoralist communities. The study viewed irrelevant curriculum, unsustainable implementation methods, lack of firm and all-encompassing government policy on non-formal education and political goodwill, lack of human resources, material resources and accreditation of non-formal education as factors that undermined the success of the non-formal education programmes in terms of participation of the pastoralist communities. The research was a qualitative study targeting the Bahima and Karimojong communities living in North-Eastern Uganda, with the sample area being five sub-counties within the two districts occupied by the two communities.

There were 245 respondents who were picked on a purposeful sampling basis from among the pastoralists in the two districts, as well as respondents from government education offices and NFE provider agencies. Data was collected through focus discussion groups and semi-structured interviews

by trained research assistants, analysed on clustered matrix sheets and presented as conclusive qualitative statements. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) note that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods is important for attaining a good balance between objective and subjective research findings.

The study found that the pastoral communities had a traditional system of education based on age-group as well as on participation and role-acting, which could be co-opted in the NFE programmes; there was need for building structures and resources and teachers from within the communities for effectiveness of the NFE programmes; the NFE curriculum disregarded particular skills and knowledge that were vital for the survival of the communities, thus rendering itself irrelevant to some extent, while its subject matter did not address the needs of the people; the communities had a positive attitude towards literacy, but were opposed to the way educational programmes were brought to bear on them, compelling them to participate rather being presented in a way it could help them harness their environment; there was no clear policy for NFE programmes, with different providers having overlapping activities which entailed unsustainable practices, mostly without government involvement. AABE programmes should offer curricula that are relevant to the community's needs, under-guarded by policies that enhance implementation for the effective promotion of literacy among marginalised communities (Dibaba, 2010).

Nomadic pastoralism is far from coming to an end in Samburu County for various reasons. One is the nature of the county, as it is (75%) arid and semi-arid. Livestock keeping, therefore, still remains the most viable socio-economic activity. Secondly, about (88%) of the population is illiterate, implying that adapting to any other form of livelihood apart from the traditional system is still remote. The nomadic pastoralists then have to be on the move frequently, following rainfall patterns in order to get pasture and water for their livestock. In the process, they miss out on opportunities to enrol their children in school.

Therefore, for basic education to be accessible to nomadic pastoralists, it has to become congruent with their traditional way of life. This has been the weakness of the formal school system because its designs suit sedentary communities. Krätli et al. (2009) mentioned that the standard curriculum delivery services, which are designed for the majority, are tailored for 'static' situations where children learn in classrooms in permanent locations. The Government of Kenya acknowledges and recognises these difficulties and is committed to overcoming them by ensuring that all out-of-school children of school-going age from nomadic populations access quality basic education. The strategies the government outlined are for nomadic education to be flexible and responsive to their way of life. This is by adopting models like mobile schools and the use of radios.

In North-eastern Kenya, a mobile school programme was initiated to remedy the problem of Kenya's structured and demand-driven education system where classrooms are fixed and timings and locations are inflexible. The mobile school initiative takes into consideration the mobile lifestyle of nomadic communities. Schools are provided with a camel to transport portable chalkboards, tin of books and materials as communities move. Teaching is multi-grade to ensure that all children in the community benefit. These teachers continue to live and move with the community and provide continuous

education for pastoralist children. As a result, children can attend secular lessons for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening.

In Nigeria, the delivery of educational services to nomadic communities tends to follow the lines of the formal school system. However, after the flop was realised, it adopted a mobile system where collapsible classrooms that can be assembled or disassembled within 30 minutes and carried by pack animals are used. Another flexible system is the use of radios. It was estimated that (47.8%) of Nigerians owned radios. In sum, the NFE programme is argued that it has not emerged as a credible alternative to the primary school system mainly because of insufficient funding, inappropriate organisational structures, inefficient operationalisation, inadequate involvement of the local community and unrealistic expectations of completion of primary schooling in two years by working children through part-time instruction imparted by under-equipped and low paid para-teachers.

The development of appropriate curricula, as well as suitable teaching-learning materials for the NFE clientele and recurring training of instructors/supervisors, have not received adequate attention. Earnest and effective implementation of NFE by almost all countries implementing AABE is also generally lacking (Thompson, 2001).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The target population for this study was drawn from the 56 AABE Centres in Samburu County. The AABE Centres were taken as the unit of analysis. There were 56 AABE Centres with an enrolment of 2012 learners. Nine Centres were in pastoralist area, nine in forest area, two in agricultural area, and one each in urban, slum and agro-pastoralists areas respectively. There were a total of 76 teachers in the 56 AABE Centres. The following table 1 shows the population and sample.

Table 1: Population and Sample

	Total	Sample
AABE Centres	56	56
AABE Learners	2012	400
AABE Teachers	76	56
AABE Sponsors	10	10

The primary data were collected using three sets of structured questionnaires. These were for learners' household heads, AABE teachers and the other for AABE Centres' sponsors. The research work used both primary and secondary data. The researcher visited all the AABE Centres, sponsors, and government offices between February and June 2011 to understand more about the study area and to collect secondary data. A second visit to all AABE Centres was made in October 2012 to map out the areas and identify logistic dynamics. The primary and additional secondary data were collected from December 2011 and completed in January 2012. Primary data was collected concurrently in all the AABE Centres. The data were collected using three structured questionnaires targeting household heads, teachers and

sponsors. Secondary data were obtained by perusing various literary documents from libraries, the internet, and Ministry of Education offices in Nairobi at the county level and at the AABE Centres. This was on policy issues, enrolment, curriculum, supervision, assessment, staffing, funding, providers and their involvement in running the Centres.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

One of the study variables was Nomadic Way of Life whose two aspects of it were considered in the study, namely, mobility and domestic work- more specifically, herding. The data is presented in the following sections.

(i) Mobility

Mobility was examined in terms of household change of residence and livestock movements and how both affected the enrollment and attendance of children in AABE.

(a) Household Change of Residence

When analysing the 400 respondents who represented their respective households, (52.0%) had changed residence over the previous eight years. The rest (48.0%) did not. This, among other factors, could probably explain the low participation of the learners in AABE. The highland-rural respondents were relatively settled. The table below gives this picture.

Table 2: Change of Residence

Changed Residence	Total	
	f	%
YES	208	52
NO	192	48
Total	400	100

The study probed further to ascertain livestock movements away from the areas of residence in search of pasture and water.

(b) Livestock movements

Table 3: Livestock Movements

Do Livestock Move	Total	
	f	%
YES	382	95.5
NO	8	4.5
Total	305	100

The findings indicated that 95.5 per cent of the respondents who were livestock keepers had their livestock moved out of their homes for long periods to seek pastures and water. Only 4.5 per cent of them reported that their livestock did not move. They gave the reason for their livestock non-movement

as having few of them, and, therefore, it was uneconomical to have them move. They also lived near the forest, where vegetation was relatively abundant. Further, the study went ahead to interrogate whether the livestock movements affected the enrollment and attendance of children in AABE.

On enrollment, the majority (74.1%) said that livestock movements negatively affected the enrollment of children in AABE since parents needed the children to help look after the animals. The rest (25.9%) said livestock movements did not affect children's enrollment in AABE. On whether livestock movements affected AABE attendance of already enrolled learners, the respondents reported that the movements did affect just like the way it affected enrollment. The results are shown in the following table.

Table 4: Whether Livestock Movement Affect AABE Learners Already Enrolled

	Total	
	f n=305	%
YES	226	74.1
NO	79	25.9
Total	305	100

The respondents reported that livestock movements affected attendance of AABE learners just the way it affects enrollment. This was because the AABE learners were the shepherds unlike the children enrolled in formal primary schools who became full time pupils/students. Some of the studies cited in the literature reviewed support the above mentioned scenario. Gorham (1978) argued that one of the socio-economic constraints to pastoralists' accessibility to formal education was their mobility in search of water and pasture for their livestock.

(c) Effect of Mobility on Enrolment and Attendance

The respondents were asked to state with Yes or No whether mobility generally affected children's enrollment and attendance in AABE and, by implication, the viability of AABE. The responses are captured in the table below:

Table 5: Whether Mobility Affect Learners Enrollment And Attendance of AABE?

	Total	
	f n=400	%
YES	288	72.0
NO	112	28.0
TOTAL	400	100

In summary, the majority (72%) of the respondents reported that the nomadic pastoralist lifestyle of mobility affected children's enrollment and attendance of AABE classes, and only (28%) mentioned that it did not affect them. This, by implication, affected the success of AABE.

(ii) Domestic Work

The study with respect to nomadic lifestyles/ways of life examined the effect of domestic work, specifically herding, on the enrolment and attendance of children in AABE. The following were the main domestic activities children engaged in. The prioritised activities were picked for each respondent, as reflected in the following table.

Table 6: Domestic Activities Done by Children

	Total	
	f	%
Herding	328	82
Farm work	16	4
Household	48	12
No activity	8	2
Total	400	100

The major activity children engaged in as per the respondents was herding at 82 per cent, followed by household work (12%), then farm work (4%) and finally 'no activity' (2%). The respondents were further asked whether the main domestic activity of herding affected their children's enrollment and participation in AABE.

Table 7: Whether Herding Affects AABE Learner's Enrollment and Attendance AABE?

Does Herding Affect Learner's Enrolment in AABE?	Total	
	f	%
YES	352	88
NO	48	12
Total	400	100

From the table above, a greater percentage (88%) reported that it inhibited children from being enrolled in and also attending AABE. They asserted that herding was the main reason why households moved and also necessitated livestock movements. Further, it was the AABE learners who were squarely responsible for the care of livestock, whether at home or away for long, in search of pasture and water. This was agreed with Bedanie et al. (2007) and Farag (2013), who found that domestic work affected learners' participation in AABE in the Amhara region of Ethiopia. In conclusion, the two factors of nomadic lifestyle are analysed below in order to determine their effect on AABE.

Table 8: Whether Nomadic Pastoralists Lifestyle's Affect AABE

Does the Nomadic way of life affect AABE?	Mobility		Herding		General	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
YES	288	72.0	352	88	320	80
NO	112	28.0	48	12	80	20
Total	400	100	400	100	400	100

The analysed data depict that, in general, nomadic pastoralists' lifestyles or way of life, as represented by mobility and herding, affected AABE in terms of enrolment and attendance to a high degree. The table shows that (80%) of the respondents reported that it affected and only (20%) said that it did not affect them. This implied that the viability of AABE was impaired by the nomadic pastoralists' lifestyles. Indeed, community lifestyle and the way AABE programmes respond to it had much to do with the level of success of the programmes (Mekonnen & Bizuayehu, 2010; Das et al., 2007). Further, the relationship between Nomadic pastoralists' lifestyle/way of life and the viability of AABE in Samburu County was tested using chi-square analysis. The relationship was hypothesised that

H₁ 4: There is a significant relationship between the perception and viability of AABE in Samburu County

The study asked the respondents their view on whether nomadic pastoralists' traditional lifestyles of mobility and herding had an effect on AABE in Samburu County. Table 9 below, therefore, revealed the association between variables. As alluded earlier, nomadic pastoralists lifestyle was the independent variable while viability of AABE was the dependent variable.

Table 9: Association between Nomadic Pastoralists' Lifestyle/Way of Life and Viability of AABE

VIABILITY	NOMADIC PASTORALISTS LIFESTYLE		
	AFFECTS	DOES NOT AFFECT	Row Totals
Viable	68 (21.3)	69 (86.2)	137 (34.2)
Not Viable	252 (78.7)	11 (13.8)	263 (66.8)
Column Total	320 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	400 (100.0)

Contingency coefficient 0.67

Significance 0.0000

$X^2 = 78.14522$

df = 1

Overall, only (34.2%) of the sample reported that AABE was viable in Samburu County, while the majority (66.8%) acknowledged that AABE was not viable. Further, Table 4.65 also showed that out of 320 respondents who reported a high effect of the Nomadic pastoralist's lifestyle on AABE viability, only (21.3%) revealed that AABE was viable. To put it differently, (78.7%) of those who alluded that AABE was highly affected by Nomadic pastoralists' way of life also reported that AABE was not viable. This was probably explained by the fact that their nomadic way of life necessitated that children and youth herd livestock and also moved with livestock away from the settlements in search of pasture and water. To be sure, even households moved from one region to another in search of pastures for their livestock. In so doing, they moved with their children who had enrolled in AABE Centers or who wanted to enroll, and hence, increased the distance to AABE Centers.

Indeed, the association between nomadic pastoralists' way of life and the viability of AABE was found to be very significant at a (100%) confidence level. Hence, it was concluded that nomadic pastoralists' way of life significantly determined the viability of AABE in Samburu County (Ngome, 2006). The contingency coefficient value (0.69), however, suggested that the relationship was somehow/moderately

strong. In fact, the small value of the contingency coefficient (0.67) indicated that other factors existed that could strongly explain the viability of AABE in Samburu County.

Regression analysis also showed that the fourth best predictor of the viability of AABE in Samburu County was nomadic pastoralists' traditional lifestyles or way of life. The partial regression coefficient showed that the viability of AABE is -0.42 units for each unit increase in the practice of nomadic pastoralists' way of life. This suggested that increasing the practice of the nomadic pastoralists' way of life would reduce the viability of AABE. This could be due to the fact that the majority of the Samburu people moved frequently in search of pasture, and this tended to increase their distance to the AABE Centers. As a result, the nearest AABE Centre was inaccessible to children in terms of the distance they had to cover each day.

Indeed, the results of the analysis in this study revealed that (52%) of the households changed residence frequently, and (95.5%) of their livestock moved at least once a year to far places in search of pasture. It needed to be clear that the out-of-school children had the sole responsibility of herding. This study revealed that (88%) of the AABE children under this study herded livestock. The AABE-enrolled learners were among these children. It meant, therefore, that any movement of livestock would interfere with their participation in AABE. This was also confirmed by the respondents. The majority (82%) reported that herding affected the attendance of children in AABE, as Ngome (2006) indicated.

Finally, the F test for the model depicted that the regression equation was significant at a (100%) confidence level. Hence, the study rejected the null hypothesis of no significant impact nomadic pastoralists' lifestyle had on the viability of AABE in Samburu County and adopted the alternative hypothesis that nomadic pastoralists' lifestyle had a significant relationship with the viability of AABE in Samburu County. The nomadic lifestyle was rated fourth among the variables in correlation analysis with a negative coefficient of -0.4468 . This meant that the higher the engagement of the people with a nomadic way of life, the lower the viability of AABE in Samburu County. Over (90%) of the inhabitants of Samburu County are nomadic pastoralists. Their traditional lifestyles dictate that they migrate frequently with livestock in search of pasture and water. This forces the children to miss getting educational opportunities like being enrolled in formal schools. This study too revealed that the nomadic way of life also affected participation in AABE. Further, the study also considered herding as one of the nomadic pastoralists' way of life. The main role of the out-of-school youth among these pastoralists was herding. The same activity seemed to interfere with their participation in AABE, which in turn affected the viability of AABE in Samburu County. The policy implication was for the government, in conjunction with other AABE providers, to make AABE more appropriate and accessible to these children (Krätli & Dyer, 2009), especially by making it mobile (Ngome, 2006).

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The fourth factor was the nomadic way of life. The study found that (80%) of the respondents held the view that it affected AABE. Specifically, mobility, which was found to have affected (52%) of the households, coupled with livestock movements, which affected (95.5%) of the households, were found to be key factors, as mentioned by (72%) of the respondents. Herding, too, was indicated as affecting the success of AABE, as mentioned by (88%) of the respondents. The chi-square analysis of the

relationship between Nomadic pastoralists' lifestyle/way of life and the viability of AABE in Samburu County was found to be significant and relatively strong. Overall, only (34.2%) of the sample reported that AABE was viable in Samburu County, while the majority (66.8%) acknowledged that AABE was not viable. Indeed, the association between nomadic pastoralists' way of life and the viability of AABE was found to be very significant at a 100 per cent confidence level. The contingency coefficient value (0.69), however, suggested that the relationship is somehow/moderately strong. In fact, the small value of the contingency coefficient (0.67) indicated that other factors existed that could strongly explain the viability of AABE in Samburu County. Hence, we concluded that nomadic pastoralists' way of life significantly determined the viability of AABE in Samburu County.

Recommendations: To strengthen the existing work, it is recommended that more studies be done on the viability of AABE, especially covering other factors not included in this study. More studies on the viability of AABE are needed to document experiences in a wide range of nomadic pastoral areas. Lastly, predictor variables to AABE success are subject to change from time to time; hence, there is a need to continuously update our understanding of the changing trends of viability and the factors influencing it, especially covering new developments.

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