SAFETY, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SANITARY FACILITIES, AND HOUSEHOLD CHORES AS THREATS TO GIRL CHILD IN MIXED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Winnie Muthoni Ngila, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
winngila@yahoo.com
Elizabeth Role, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
bethrole@gmail.com
Lazarus Ndiku Makewa, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
ndikul@gmail.com

Challenges faced by girls in mixed secondary schools have been addressed by many researchers. However, disparities continue to prevail in secondary education with girls being more disadvantaged. This study, therefore, aimed at identifying the challenges girls faced as they went through education, especially in mixed secondary schools in Mbooni West District, Kenya. The study was based on Ruth Pearson's gender relations theory and the human capital theory. Descriptive-comparative, correlation and cross section survey approach were employed. Cluster sampling was done to obtain the sample comprising 468 respondents. Data was collected using two questionnaires for girls and teachers. Girls in mixed secondary schools were found to face challenges such as lack of safety, lack of sanitary facilities, sexual harassment and household chores. It is suggested that guidance and counseling facilities be provided, parents consider taking their daughters to single sex schools, parents and governments provide sanitary towels and keep washrooms clean.

INTRODUCTION

Gender parity in formal schooling is not only a major concern for parents, educators, and policy makers, but also a basic human right, a key indicator of achievement of education for all, and a source of economic growth (Bank, Delmont, & Marshall, 2007; UNESCO ,2009 ; UNESCO, 2012). However, UNESCO (2011) exposes that out of the 61 million out-of-school children, 53 per cent are girls, and almost two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults are women. Further, UNESCO (2011) reveals that Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for half of all out of school children worldwide. This demonstrates existence of a wide gap between Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the world. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for boys exceeded that of girls by 9 per cent, because as disclosed by UIS (2011), the GER for boys is 41 per cent and that of girls is 32 per cent. As per the 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report, Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest total secondary enrolment (UNESCO, 2012). In addition, the same report states that among the 68 countries lacking gender parity in education, girls are more disadvantaged in 60 of them. Only in a few countries, such as Rwanda, in Sub-Saharan Africa are boys more disadvantaged than girls (UNESCO, 2012).

In East Africa, where Kenya is part of, the proportion of girls in secondary schools is relatively low, with a gender parity index (GPI) of 0.84 (United Nations, 2010). Nevertheless, compared to middle and Western Africa, whose GPIs are 0.67 and 0.77 respectively, East Africa holds the highest position, showing a positive move towards equality in secondary education. World Bank (cited by Glennerster, Kremer, Mbiti, & Takavarasha, 2011) contends that secondary school access in Kenya remains low for both boys and girls with only 50 per cent of secondary school age population getting enrolled. Republic of Kenya (2012) maintains that enrolment for girls in the year 2001, which was 359,835, followed by 483,128 in 2004, then 541,577 in 2007, and 786,530 in 2010, proves an upward trend in participation for

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girls in secondary education. When these enrolments are compared to those of boys in the same years, the GPIs obtained were 0.89, 0.99, 0.86 and 0.83 respectively –a designation of gender disparity which demonstrates inequitable access (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

On the word of Ngesu, Wachira, Mwelu, and Nyambisi (2012), low performance and under representation in education of girls seem to spring from a combination of factors. Such factors include preference for boy education, lack of self-esteem, gender stereotypes, sexual harassment, lack of safety at school, early marriage and pregnancy, lack of female teacher role models and lack of job aspirations and the type of school attended (UNESCO, 2009; Omwoga, 2010; Oigara, 2011).

Most girls in Mbooni West District (71.44 per cent) attend mixed secondary schools (Mbooni West DEO's Office, 2012). Mixed schools are schools in which boys and girls receive same education, in common rooms by the same teachers. Most mixed secondary schools in Kenya are district schools (county schools) which are predominantly under resourced, and those who attend such schools do so due to lack of funds to pay in the costly single sex schools (Ndunda-Kiluva, 2001; Wasonga & Mwita, 2012; Odhiambo & Yambo, 2012). In general terms, girls in mixed schools in Kenya perform poorer than those in single-sex schools for various reasons (Oigara, 2011). In a study to investigate how school environment affects achievement, Oigara (2011) found out that girls in mixed schools feel intimidated and threatened by male teachers and boys, their ability is undermined and they are treated as feminine even when choosing career subjects.

Many studies focusing on girl child education in secondary schools and the challenges they face have been done at national and county levels. Such studies include that done by Kasomo (2009), Achoka (2009), Ohba (2009), and Kisilu, Kimani, and Kombo. (2012). Nevertheless, none has been done particularly in Mbooni West District. Therefore this research finds it vital to investigate challenges facing girl-child education in mixed secondary schools in Mbooni West District.

GIRLS' SAFETY
Lack of safety is created by unsafe conditions, behavior, disasters or emergencies, which a school should otherwise be prepared for in order to maintain girls' safety in schools (Kipngeno & Kyalo, 2009). It is the responsibility of school administrators to ensure that the school environment is conducive for learning, and this can be achieved by establishing clear rules and policies (Kipngeno & Kyalo, 2009). Although institutions of learning are viewed as havens of peace world wide, they have been reported to experience serious cases of insecurity (Omolo & Simatwa, 2010).

Examples of incidents in Kenya that can cause parents concern about their girls safety in schools (especially boarding schools) are; the St. Kizito incident where 19 girls died as they tried to escape and 71 others raped (Rape and murder, 1991), the 1998 Bombolulu incident that resulted to loss of 25 lives from suspected arsons, and the Kyanguli 2001 incident that resulted to death of 68 boys from suspected arsons. These incidents cause concern about preparedness of schools in Kenya for safety. After the 1998 incident, Kenya Rape and sexual harassment (1998) declared Kenyan schools dangerous places for girls (and boys) because no more security was guaranteed.

Republic of Kenya (2008) clearly stipulates that schools should have be safety on the grounds, in the school environment, against sexual violence, and in health and hygiene. These are important factors that if enhanced can promote girl safety in secondary schools, hence improve girl academic participation and achievement. Apart from general safety measures, there are some that are specific to girls. Herz,

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Subbarao, Habib, and Raney (1991) argue that girls have special needs for physical protection and tradition often demands special concern for girls' safety. Distance from school is one such a concern that contributes to girls' safety, especially those who are day scholars (Herz, 1991; Bhargava, 2006; Wainaina, 2009). All these authors proposed that schools be brought near to girls homes so as to ensure safety hence increase access. The reason, as given by Herz et al. (1991), is that the closer the school is to home, the less parents tend to worry about the girls safety since the girls are kept under closer watch. Wainaina (2009) concurs, and explains that building schools near homes and making them girl-friendly increases the feeling of safety in school girls. This agrees with World Bank (2005) which in addition contends that building secondary schools near homes reduces walking distances and brings about relief concerning girls' safety on the way to and from school. This factor is closely related to sexual harassment for the reason as exposed by Ruto (2009) in her study that considerable amount of sexual harassment occurs on the way from school.

Apart from distance to school, lack of safety is portrayed to be caused by school practices. Ruto (2009) argues that conducting very early morning tuition sessions or late evening preparations, highly predisposes girls to insecurity. This calls for measures to be taken to prevent such preps and let girls go home in good time.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT
Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (2010) defines sexual harassment as any contact, gesture or act of sexual nature that is unwanted, or carried out without the consent of a person, which is imposed by physical force, threats, intimidation, or duress. Ruto (2009) defines child sexual harassment as involving a child in sexual activity that she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared for, or that violates social taboos of society. This means that besides lack of consent, an activity which is sexual in nature is sexual harassment if the party does not understand it fully to give the consent, or is not mature for it.

Sexual harassment includes touching, verbal abuse, forced sex (rape), assault, and intimidation (Ruto, 2009). Kimani, Mugenda, Maina and Wainaina (2010), in a study done on challenges facing female learners at all levels of education in Kenya, stress that the most common forms of sexual harassment in Kenyan schools are verbal, touch of body parts, and irritating body language. Sexual harassment does not necessarily involve the opposite sexes, because as Fogarty (2012) argues, it may be female to male, male to female, female to female or even male to male. Lunenburg (2010) echoes that and adds that it is wrong and illegal. Further, the harasser can be a fellow student, teacher or any other person within the school (Lunenburg, 2010).

Studies done locally and internationally reveal that in all schools, sexual harassment is evident. Such studies include those of Prekel (n. d.), Rettner (2011), Ruto (2009), and Koskey (2011). As noted by Koskey (2011), sexual harassment is evident to both boys and girls but is more disadvantageous to girls. Further, Koskey (2011) holds that sexual harassment pose a great threat to girls' participation in education as it may discourage the victim from continuing with schooling and parents from sending girls to schools.

Although sexual offences act number 7 of 2007 of the law of Kenya and teachers code of regulation indicate clearly that sexual harassment is illegal and punishable in line with laws of Kenya, it continues to prevail in secondary schools as well as other levels of education (Ruto, 2009; Kimani et al., 2010). The study done by Kimani et al. (2010) involving first graders at university level reveals that of the 980

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female students respondents involved, 30.5 per cent said that sexual harassment exist in secondary schools. 58 of the 980 translating to 5.8% of the respondents indicated that they were sexually harassed at secondary level by fellow students. A further 10% reported to have been harassed by male teachers, and only 1.1% by male workers. The same study maintains that only a few respondents from Kenyatta and University of Eastern Africa, Baraton reported to have been raped by teachers at secondary levels.

The study above has findings concurring with those by Ruto (2009) who used a sample size of 1279 respondents out of which 853 were girls. The study cut across primary and secondary schools in 10 districts of Kenya. This study found out that 512 of the 853 girls, making 60 percent of the girl respondents, had experienced sexual harassment, while boys gave a response of 55 per cent. Comparatively, although girls and boys are victims of sexual harassment, girls experience the harassment slightly more than boys.

Intimidation is defined by oxford learner's dictionary as the act of frightening or threatening somebody so that he or she can do what other person wants. In a study done by Abrahams, Mathew, and Ramela (2006), girls reported that boys used to take advantage of the girls during congestion to grab their breasts and buttocks so as to make girls release their valuables hence considering girls as an easy source of money and other valuables. This activity was so rampant that the researcher observed it when visiting some schools. Sometimes the intimidation results to sexual harassment because girls responded that such bullying was meant to communicate the boy's interest in the girl (Abrahams, Mathew, & Ramela, 2006).

As stated by Lunenburg (2010) and Abrahams, Mathew and Ramela (2006), the teacher misuses his power over the girl child. This implies that the teacher intimidates the girl then sexually harasses her. This is in line with definition of sexual harassment given by Fogarty (2012), as any act likely to or resulting in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats or acts that may lead to sexual activity.

The victims of peer sexual harassment and intimidation are mainly soft, quiet girls who cannot hit back (Abrahams, Mathew & Ramela, 2006). The reason is that girls, who have self-confidence, self-esteem and are aware of their rights, stand for them (Rani, 2010). Other common victims are girls who ask for it, and even make others who are not interested to be victims (Abrahams et al., 2006). In the same study, laboratory, computer rooms and staffrooms are mentioned to be places where teachers meet girls, while outings from the school is mentioned to be one of the most vulnerable time along with games time.

Causes of sexual harassment as outlined by Prekel (n. d.) and Lunenburg (2010) include;
- Discrimination against gender. When girls are less valued than boys, chances for misuse are high so that they become subjects of harassment.
- Unbecoming cultural beliefs. Sometimes these beliefs are expressed in proverbs which show less regard of girls. Such proverbs include "*real men pinch bottoms*", "*girls were born to hug*", and "*girls are vegetables*" (Ruto, 2009).
- Believe that women's greatest role is to please men.
- Girls' self-perception that they are lesser than men.
- Misuse of power and authority.

Ruto (2009) also suggests that distance from school, school practices (morning and night tuitions), poverty and boarding in mixed schools are causes/predisposing factors to sexual harassment. She further

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includes parents' ignorance of their duties, girls' conspiracy of silence, fear, shifting of blame and seductive dressing as more causes of sexual harassment.

There are many effects of sexual harassment. Rettner (2011) gives six health effects of sexual harassment as;

i. Depression which is a feeling of self-doubt and eventually turns to self-blame.
ii. Post-traumatic stress disorder which involves re-experiencing the trauma and avoiding people who might remind of the harassment.
iii. Blood pressure boosted by too much thinking about the harassment.
iv. Sleep disturbances bringing about health problems.
v. Suicide- sexual harassment leads to suicidal behavior.
vi. Neck pain- sexually harassed people suffer from serious neck pains even in later days.

Ruto (2009) adds that sexual harassment results to psychological disturbances such as stress and painful emotions among others. The researcher further adds that it leads to disruption of normal psychological and physical development. Someone may also develop chronic self-perception of helplessness, hopelessness, and impaired trust along with anxiety and anger. As maintained by Mabala (cited in Ruto, 2009) sexual harassment exposes girls to contracting HIV/AIDS since the main way of contracting the virus is through sexual intercourse.

Sexual harassment at school leads to dropping out of school which may be as a result of guilt or other effects (Prekel, n. d.). In a manner to explain this, Larkin (1994) contends that after sexual harassment at school, girls find the school unwelcoming. Usually they avoid the areas identified as sexual harassment zones and may end up dropping out of school. Ruto (2009) includes pregnancy and early motherhood as other results of sexual harassment either by peer or male teachers.

To avoid sexual harassment, some girls fight back because they are not as passive as they may be thought to be. According to Larkin (1994), some reduce, limit or completely avoid association with male students; others avoid participation in school activities such as sports in fear of being sexually harassed. Worse still, some girls report to avoid participation in class discussion and even drop or fail to enroll in subjects dominated by boys in fear of being sexually harassed (Larkin, 1994). This is harmful because it can greatly affect achievement in academic areas and lead to underperformance in sports and school subjects.

For the issue of sexual harassment to be adequately addressed, there should be involvement of the judiciary, parents, administrators and teachers (Kenya: Rape and sexual, 1998). The article further adds that programs to sensitize students should be introduced and girls allowed to form organizations to protect themselves. Larkin (1994) points out that the solution to sexual harassment involves implementation of sexual harassment policies which girls should be educated about. Further, Larkin (1994) advocates for use of separate places in education to allow girls to be alone. This gives the girls a common world in which they share views, attractions and energies that are similar. Such places include all-girls schools, single-sex classes in mixed schools, young women clubs and designated rooms for female students in co-educational secondary schools (Larkin, 1994).

SANITARY FACILITIES
The commonest sanitary facility in rural areas is pit latrine while in urban areas the commonest is flush toilet (Tumwine, Thompson, Katua, Mujwahuzi, Johnstone, & Porras, 2003). When the sanitation facility

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is clean and brightly colored, girls feel comfortable and not threatened to contract any diseases, but when they are dirty, girls either avoid them or feel uncomfortable when using them (Tumwine et al., 2003).

Abrahams, Mathew and Ramela (2006) carried a study on sanitation, sexual coercion and girls' safety in school using a sample of 81 sixteen-year old girls in three schools among which only one had clean flush toilets. The study informs that girls prefer clean, bright colored toilets. In the schools where there are no water or toilet paper, menstruating girls reported to be absent, especially for the first two days of their menstruation, so as to avoid the toilets (Birch & Wachter, 2011). Further, the same study reveals that girls feel their privacy compromised when using toilets with broken doors, because they have to use them in company of friends. The study also considers location of toilets far from the main buildings scaring hence causing insecurity and can be used by intruders for selling drugs.

The main issues of school toilets are inadequate or poor hygiene, undermining toilets as a sanitary facility and faecal and blood pollution which is dangerous in this HIV/AIDS era (Abrahams et al., 2006). In Kenya, only 56 percent of schools in the country have access to adequate water and sanitation facilities, which have proved to be essential for attraction of female enrolment in secondary schools (Birch & Wachter, 2011). Birch and Wachter (2011) further contend that lack of sanitary facilities affect girls more than boys, adding that poor sanitation conditions hinder education of girls. Girls may drop out of school due to lack of safe and clean private sanitation facilities. Dawo and Simatwa (2010) maintain that the unique need for sanitary towels for use during their menstruation should be addressed by government's provision of the same, so as to improve participation of girls in education.

HOUSEHOLD CHORES
Engagement in household work as a reason for limiting participation in education is mentioned often for girls than boys (Muema & Mutegi, 2011). In an attempt to explain this, Narayan (2005) holds that perception of gender roles in Africa makes girls to work on average two times as much as boys of the same age and this has a negative influence on girls' school participation. It is common for girls to take on a great deal of house hold chores such as care giving, cooking, cleaning, laundry, fetching water and gathering firewood (Muema & Mutegi, 2011). A research done by International Labor Organization maintains that although boys participate in household chores, they spend fewer hours on them than girls (ILO, 2009). The research further reveals that household chores increase with age and time spent increases from 14 to 28 hours per week from ages below 12 to teenage. Also, absenteeism in school for girls increases with increase in number of hours spent on domestic chores. This leads to the conclusion that household duties cause girls' school attendance to decrease faster than boys'. This can be explained on the basis that educational outcomes suffer when girls are overworked and the likelihood of dropping out of school is very high (Moyi, 2011).

The main reasons for overworking girls as stated by Moyi (2011) are; poor income that makes the mother to go for casual labor hence call for girls to do mothers' duties, assistance with household chores and parents suggestion for the girl to work. Some parents believe that girls should be trained as future wives and mothers by letting them perform household chores (Narayan, 2005). The girls also believe that they are future wives and accept to take femininity so as to be prepared as future wives and mothers.

METHODS
The study adopted a descriptive-comparative and correlational research design. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) explain that descriptive data describes what exists in a given population at a particular time. The

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design involves asking questions to many people about a particular issue (Musungu & Nasongo, 2008). Descriptive research design was used to identify challenges faced by the girl child in mixed secondary schools in Mbooni West District. The design was correlational since predictions were made on effects of challenges that girls face in mixed secondary schools on their academic achievement. A correlational research design identifies variables that relate to each other (Jackson, 2010). A comparative approach enabled to examine differences in challenges faced by girls who are day scholars against those who are boarders. Desk research was incorporated which, according to Westwood (2005), involves collecting data from existing resources and ready-made reports. Cross-section survey was used where data was collected at a single point in time (Fink, 2006).

The population of this study was 3,183 girls in the 31 mixed schools in Mbooni West District. Form three girls were targeted as the most experienced class since the form fours were busy doing their KCSE examinations. From the population, a sample was obtained from mixed day and boarding schools. This is cluster sampling which involves selection of groups which already exist (Babbie, 2010).

Population subjects were grouped into strata and sample elements selected from each stratum. The researcher stratified the mixed day and boarding schools population according to the five educational zones; Tulimani and Kithungo zones, each with one mixed day and boarding school, Mbooni with three, Kitundu zone with two, and Kalawani zone with four. The sample constituted of all the form three girls in 10 of the 11 mixed day and boarding schools who are 374 in number. One school which harbored 58 form three girls was left out because the boarding section had girls only. 94 teachers were included in the sample. In total the sample size was made up of 468 respondents.

The main tool for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed from the research questions and the review of related literature and studies. Two questionnaires were used; for the girls and for the. Girls' questionnaire had six parts while teachers 'questionnaire had five, each addressing one variable. Closed-ended questions were used so as to limit variations in willingness and ability to respond to questions.

To test reliability, a pilot study was conducted in two mixed day and boarding secondary schools in Machakos District with similar environs as those in Mbooni West District. Developed instruments were served to 40 randomly selected identical subjects (form three girls), 11female teachers, 22 male teachers who were not included in the study. The questionnaires and content analysis guide were collected. Data from the questionnaires were analyzed and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was computed. The reliability coefficients obtained were 0.78 for sexual harassment, 0.551 for self-esteem but after deleting the eighth item, the reliability was 0.608, and 0.657 for all the school factors.

The National Council for Science and Technology issued the research permit to carry out the study. The researchers obtained permission from the D.E.O's office in Mbooni West District and made official arrangements with the school principals on the appropriate dates to conduct the research. On arrival the researchers reported to the principal's office for official permission to gather data in the school. Girls were gathered in a room to give their responses in presence of the researchers. The questionnaires were administered to girls who were advised to respond without consulting each other. To reach the teachers, the principal or deputy principal guided the researchers. Teachers responded to their questionnaires either in the staffroom or in their respective offices.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This paper investigated challenges faced by the girl child in mixed secondary schools in terms of the following factors.

    a) Girl safety
    b) Sexual harassment
    c) Sanitary facilities
    d) Household chores

Respondents were asked to designate their levels of agreement with the statements using the following scale.

    3.50 - 4.00 -- agree/high rating
    2.50 – 3.49 -- tend to agree/average rating
    1.50 – 2.49 – tend to disagree /low rating
    1.00 – 1.49 – disagree/very low rating
    For each statement, mean ratings were obtained.

Girls' Safety

When girls and teachers were asked to state their perception on the girls' safety in mixed secondary schools, they responded as shown in table 2.

Table 1
Girls' and Teachers' Perception on Girls' Safety in Mixed Secondary Schools

Statement	Girls		Teachers	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
Girls feel safe in this school	3.2834	1.03809	3.3298	0.8358
My school is well fenced and no stranger can get into the school compound	2.4866	1.15016	2.5108	1.15232
Classroom floors doors and windows are intact and clean	2.4920	1.17100	2.6809	1.09949
The school compound is well fenced and there are no bushes in the school compound	3.1823	1.09692	3.1489	0.98327
Girls are safe from contracting diseases such as HIV/AIDS within the school compound	2.7898	1.30860	2.6277	1.06745
Some girls come from far and risk sexual harassment on their way to/ from school	2.2514	1.31659	3.2128	1.0465
There are fire extinguishers in the school and girls know how to use them	1.7059	1.10282	1.7553	1.06444
I know of a girl who was sexually harassed on her to/ from school	2.2273	1.34192	1.4468	0.85028
Theft of personal items is common in our school	3.2359	1.12072	2.8511	1.04683
This school has watchmen guarding day and night	3.1126	1.14214	2.9468	1.15811
Overall mean	2.6327	0.47291	2.6489	0.50858

Generally, there were low standard deviations from means, as evidenced by the overall mean of standard deviations of 0.50858, suggesting that most of the responses were spread close to the means and are

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therefore comparable. Both girl and teacher respondents agreed that girls felt safe in mixed schools producing ratings of 3.2824 and 3.298 respectively. All the 374 girls and 94 teacher respondents reacted to this item. Among the respondents, 61.2 per cent of the girls and 52.1 per cent of the teachers agreed to the statement that girls feel safe in their schools. A good number of girls, nevertheless, felt unsafe in mixed schools as evidenced by the 22.2 per cent of girl respondents who disagreed with the statement. Girls feel safe in schools where there is no discrimination, intimidation, and gender harassment, and with good physical conditions and adequate materials among other things (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007). These findings concur with those of a national survey conducted in Canada using a sample size of 17,798 students in coeducational schools in which 88 per cent of respondents felt that coeducational schools are safe environments for girls (Selecting an independent school, 2006). However, the findings contradict those of Lange (2012) whose study identified mixed schools as unsafe spaces for girls.

The 7th, 9th, and 10th statements address school factors that can contribute to girls' safety. On 7th statement, both girls and teachers respondents tended to disagree that, there are fire extinguishers in schools and girls know how to use them. Girls gave a rating of 1.7059 with 66.6 per cent of girl respondents disagreeing with the statement. The rating for teachers was 1.7553. Most of the mixed schools lacked fire extinguishers posing insecurity for the students, especially from school arsons. The Kenyan ministry of education has a document that clearly stipulates that schools should have functional fire extinguishers fitted in all dormitory exits and in each block (Ministry of Education, 2008). Girls feeling safe in absence of fire extinguishers reveal lack of awareness and ignorance on the side of both the girls and teachers in these schools.

With the 9th item, girls tended to agree that theft of personal items is common in their schools, achieving a mean rating of 3.2359 with 61.4 per cent of respondents agreeing that theft is common. Although the rating for teacher respondents, which was 2.8511, indicated a tendency to agree, it is lower than that of girls. This explains that theft is common but either varies with levels of indiscipline in schools or some theft cases go unreported. Evidence of theft in a school indicates existing indiscipline (Ajowi & Simatwa, 2010) which elevates sense of insecurity.

On the statement that the school has a watchman guarding day and night, girls tended to agree with a rating of 3.1126, while teachers tended to agree with a rating of 2.9464. Percentages of 54 for girls and 46.8 for teachers agree that there are watchmen in these mixed schools guarding day and night. The fact that these responses gave average ratings, suggests that quite a number of schools lack enough security, although it is a requirement from the ministry of education that every school should provide security personnel (watchmen) day and night (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Items numbers 5 and 8 addressed girls' safety on their way to/from school. While teachers tended to agree that some girls come from far and risk sexual harassment on their way to/ from school, registering a rating of 3.2128, girls tended to disagree holding a rating of 2.2514. For teacher respondents, 51.1 per cent perceived that girls come from far and risk sexual harassment on their way to school. However, the same respondents tended to disagree having known girls who have had sexual harassment on their way to/ from school. On the side of girls who are the actual victims of insecurity, 73.4 per cent of the respondents disagreed to come from far and risk sexual harassment, yet 31.6 per cent of them confessed to have known girls sexually harassed on their way to/ from schools.

These findings reveal that there is sexual harassment that occurs as girls walk to/ from schools though the incidents are not reported for necessary measures to be taken, hence teachers are not aware of them and this may be one of the causes of inadequate safety. The results concur with findings of Ruto (2009) who

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exposed that considerable amount of sexual harassment occurs on the way from school, asserting evidence of insecurity of girls who are day scholars as they walk to/from school.

The difference in girls' perception of distance from school and that of teachers is as a result of cultural backgrounds because culture affects perception (Peoples & Bailey, 2011). Most girls are day scholars who come from the local *Kamba* community, which underestimates walking distances. The remaining items (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th) are foundational statements that support the other items of the variable. Girls tended to disagree with the statements that their schools are well fenced and strangers cannot get into their compounds ($\mu= 2.4866$), and that the floor, doors, and windows are intact and clean ($\mu= 2.4920$). However, teacher respondents tended to agree with these two statements with respective means for the items as 2.5106 and 2.6809.

The Kenyan government, through ministry of education, spells that for schools to be considered safe, they should be properly fenced, have neat beautiful grounds should have well maintained classes, and environments that nurture, promote and improve health (Ministry of education, 2010). The schools effort to improve on these areas can explain the students' tendency to feel safe. On the overall, as shown by the means of 2.6327 for girls, and 2.6489 for teachers, the respondents tended to agree with most of the statements. Since 7 of the 10 items were positive about safety in these schools, it applies to the fact that girls experience an average level of safety in mixed schools. This does not mean that in all schools safety is high as some respondents indicated to suffer safety issues. A study by Steinberge, Allensworth, and Johnstone (2011) identified school safety as an urgent issue at high schools, but exposed that while some schools suffer serious safety issues, others enjoy high levels of safety.

Sexual Harassment
When respondents were asked to give their perception on sexual harassment in mixed secondary schools, they responded as shown in table 3.

Table 2

Girls' and Teachers' Perception on Sexual harassment in Mixed Secondary Schools

Statement	Girls		Teachers	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
Girls are sexually harassed by male students(boys)	2.5294	1.38662	2.2021	1.2494
Girls are sexually harassed by male teachers	1.5081	1.00266	1.6489	1.05451
Some girls convince other girls to get into boy-girl relationships	2.6390	1.33249	2.8830	1.02502
There are girl-girl sexual relationships in our school	1.4531	0.97057	1.6277	0.93882
Boys insult girls in presence of other students	2.1016	1.28941	2.0957	1.14600
Boys take items belonging to girls by force	1.8717	1.16683	1.6170	0.96282
Male teachers insult girls in presence of other people	1.5749	1.05022	1.4681	0.94701
Female teachers insult girls in presence of other people	1.8209	1.18864	1.4787	.86421
Girls are sexually harassed by non-teaching male staff members	1.5722	1.08308	1.3191	0.75081
There are girls who have had sex within the school compound	1.2038	0.69660	1.7447	1.14475
Overall mean	1.8278	0.56225	1.8085	0.56657

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Whereas girls tended to agree that they are sexually harassed by boys, with a mean rating of 2.5294, teachers tended to disagree with a mean average rating of 2.2021. Out of the 394 girls who responded to this item, 158, revealed to have been sexually harassed by boys. A higher percentage of 44.7 from teachers' responses disagreed that girls are sexually harassed by boys. Since girls are the victims, the findings show existence of peer sexual harassment. This is in agreement with findings of Ruto (2009) and Kimani et al (2010) whose studies revealed existence of peer sexual harassment in all levels of learning institutions. According to Lange (2012), some girls bear sexual harassment in silence without reporting in fear of stigmatization. However, the two groups of respondents disagreed that girls are sexually harassed by male teachers, where, approximately 76.6 per cent of girl respondents and 68.1 per cent of respondent teachers disagreed. Most male teachers seem to be aware of the legal measures against teachers who sexually harass girls hence abstain from it.

The 10.6 per cent for teachers' responses and 10.2 per cent from girls' responses indicating existence of sexual harassment by male teachers implies that some girls suffer sexual harassment from male teachers. Similar results were obtained by Kimani et al (2010) in whose study 10 per cent of girls reported to have been sexually harassed by male teachers. Lee, Croninger, and Chen (1996) exposed sexual harassment from peers as more common than sexual harassment from male teachers. Shockingly, as supported by Ngakane, Muthukrisha, and Ngcobo (2012), girls get sexually harassed by people (male teachers and boys) who are supposed to protect them from it.

Low ratings of 1.4531 from girls and 1.6277, from teachers who disagreed and tended to disagree respectively, that, girl-girl sexual relationships exist in mixed schools; imply that though existing, such relationships are minimal. Teachers rate higher than girls because in some schools the relationships are more pronounced than in others.

Girls, as well as teachers, tended to agree that some girls convince other girls to get into boy-girl relationships as indicated by ratings of 2.6390 from girls and 2.8880 from teachers. There were 157 of 374 girls in the sampled mixed schools who had been convinced by other girls to have boyfriends. There was a 33 per cent of teachers who agreed and a 33 percent who tended to disagree indicating that the practice exists in some schools more than in others. This signifies that peer pressure plays a role in sexual harassment. In agreement, Dank and Reffineti (1998) and Abrahams et al (2006) explain that peer pressure plays a major role in sexual behavior since peer influence affects decision making of individuals.

Approximately 79.8 per cent of teacher respondents disagreed that girls are sexually harassed by non-teaching male staff members giving a mean rating of 1.3191. On the other end, a close 75.9 per cent of girls disagreed. The mean rating for girls was 1.5722, which was slightly higher than that of teachers. Another 13.1 per cent of girls agreed to have been sexually harassed by non - teaching male staff members. The meaning is that sexual harassment by non-teaching male staff members exists at very low levels and challenges some girls in mixed secondary schools. The findings in this item parallel those of a study by Kimani et al (2010) who found out sexual harassment by male workers to be minimal in learning institutions. However minimal, no levels of sexual harassment should be allowed in learning institutions.

In all the remaining items, the mean ratings range between 1.2038 and 2.1016 implying that the respondents either tended to disagree or disagreed with the 5th, 6th, 7th , 8th, and 10th statements which address the element of intimidation to girls. From the descriptive statistics 52.9 per cent of girls disagreed having been insulted by boy in presence of other people. A slightly higher percentage of 58.6 of the same respondents disagreed to have lost items to boys who took them by force. Nevertheless, about 30 per cent

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of the girls confessed to have been insulted by boys in presence of other people, and another 28 per cent to have lost items to boys who took them by force. These findings reveal existence of good amount of intimidation of girls in mixed secondary schools. This is further exposed by higher ratings of girls to statement; I have been insulted by a male teacher in presence of other people ($\mu=1.5749$), and I have been insulted by a female teacher in presence of other people ($\mu=1.8209$) compared to those of related items for teacher which registered means of 1.4681 and 1.4787, girls have more evidence of the intimidation they experience.

Although the overall means, 1.8278 for girls and 1.8085 for teachers, show that the respondents tended to disagree that sexual harassment is a challenge to girls in mixed secondary, girls have a better view of existence of the sexual harassment than teachers. Studies by Meyer (n.d) and Imenikhe, Aluede, and Idogho (2010) exposed that sexual harassment is perceived by educators and students as a way of life, a factor that leads to ignorance of its prevalence among girls.

Sanitary Facilities
The student and teacher respondents tended to disagree on four items, tended to agree on three items, and disagreed on one item used to address this variable. Girls tended to agree though with a relatively low rating of 2.5511 that their toilets were clean: without feces and blood pollution, as indicated in Table 3. Teachers also tended to agree, but with a higher rating of 2.9355

Table 3
Girls' and Teachers' Perception on Sanitary Facilities in Mixed Secondary Schools

Statement	Girls		Teachers	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
Girls toilets are clean without feces and blood pollution	2.5511	1.23519	2.9355	1.01945
Girls toilets are far from those of boys and girls find privacy in using them	3.0916	1.26372	3.2581	1.08250
There is clean water near or in girls toilets	1.9650	1.28877	2.3871	1.29407
The school provides toilet paper to girls who do not have	1.3495	0.83806	1.3978	0.86149
The school provides sanitary towels to girls who do not have	1.6183	1.10840	1.5484	1.02699
During menstruation girls absent themselves in fear of using their toilets	1.7823	1.16943	2.0645	1.05095
Girls toilets are far from the main school buildings and girls fear going there alone	1.7312	1.16221	1.5161	0.87988
Girls like their toilets	2.7070	1.25793	2.9140	1.02846
Overall mean	2.4708	0.55854	2.6075	0.53403

The percentage of girls who disagreed with this statement was higher than that which agreed. This implies that a good number of girls viewed their toilets as dirty, that is 32.0 per cent, while others viewed them as clean with a percentage of 31.7. The reason behind this difference could be that some schools have clean toilets while others have dirty ones and the cleanliness varies from time to time and from place to another. In dry seasons when water is scarce in Ukambani region, toilets may be cleaned by sweeping rather than washing, especially if the school is far from a water source. These findings reveal that there are potential health dangers with pollutions in girls' toilets, especially in this era of HIV/AIDS as Abrahams et al. (2003) assert. A report by the children for Wales indicated that school toilets have been identified as areas from which certain diseases may be picked up (Lifting the lid, 2004). A study done in Tanzania by

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Sommer (2011) on opportunities for promoting girl health indicated that there is lack of sufficient water and sanitary facilities as a common phenomenon in most of Sub-Saharan Africa.

With a mean rating of 1.9650 from girls and 2.3871 from teachers, the respondents tended to disagree with the statement that there is clean water in or near girls' toilets. The schools in which the study was conducted are in the generally dry Ukambani region where the commodity (water) is not readily available. In spite of this, some schools provide water in or near the toilets while others do not. The two groups of respondents also disagreed with low ratings of 1.3495 for girls and 1.3978 for teachers that the schools provide toilet papers to girls who did not have. Approximately 82 per cent of girls disagreed with the statement and 78.5 per cent of teachers did the same. The mixed secondary schools did not provide toilet papers to girls who did not have, posing a hygienic challenge to such girls.

Although both groups tended to disagree that schools provided sanitary towels to girls who did not have, the higher 1.6183 mean rating for girls indicate that some schools provide and others do not. The teachers gave a lower rating of 1.1584 to the same statement. This could be for the reason that only a few schools provided sanitary towels to girls, especially on emergency grounds, otherwise parents provide. Such results reveal that girls face the challenge of lack of sanitary towels in case the school does not provide. The findings are in line with those of Dawo and Simatwa (2010) who disclosed inadequacy of the sanitary towels among school girls hence, recommended that the government should provide the sanitary towels to them.

Teachers, as well as girls, tended to disagree that girls absent themselves from classes during menses in fear of using the toilets. The rating of girls and teachers were 1.7823 and 2.0645 correspondingly. A considerable percentage of 32.3 of teachers and a small percentage of 16.4 for girls agreed that girls absent themselves from school in fear of using the unclean toilets. Although Dawo and Simatwa (2010) and Birch and Wachter (2011) show preference of girls to clean toilets, girls tended to agree with a rating 2.7070 that they liked their toilets which was supported by response from teachers who also tended to agree that girls liked their toilets by a rating of 2.9140. A good number of girls expressed a dislike to their toilets.

Girls tended to agree that their toilets were far from those of boys and they experienced privacy when using them ($\mu=3.0916$) as well as teachers with an equally average rating ($\mu=3.2581$). Similarly, girls and teachers tended to disagree with the statement that, girls toilets were far from the main buildings and girls feared going there alone. These responses combined indicate that girls found privacy in their toilets which were within considerable distances. This could be one reason as to why they liked their toilets

Considering the overall means ($\mu=2.4708$ for girls and 2.6075 for teachers), girls had a stronger perception than teachers that sanitary facilities stand to be a challenge to their education in mixed secondary schools. That's why they register lower ratings to most statements, which, if agreed upon, would imply that sanitary facilities do no qualify to be challenges for girls in mixed secondary schools.

Household Chores
 Concerning the statement whether girls help their mothers in household duties after school, information in Table 4 shows that teachers tended to agree with a rating of 3.3936 while the girls agreed that they help their mothers with household chores after school giving a rating of 3.6597.

Table 4

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Girls' and Teachers' Perception on Household Chores as a Challenge to Girl Child Education in Mixed Secondary Schools

Statement	Girls		Teachers	
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev
After school, girls help mothers in household duties	3.6597	0.89403	3.3936	0.91837
Girls parents do not overwork them with household chores after school	3.1857	1.1531	2.4894	1.07508
Girls do household duties up to late hours of the night	1.8025	1.14685	2.7979	0.95692
Girls dose off and are unable to read after doing household duties	2.5168	1.30793	2.8617	0.97937
During weekends girls get enough time to read after doing household duties	3.0380	1.21198	2.3617	0.97110
Girls complete their assignments even after helping the parents in household chores	3.2017	1.6257	2.4468	1.01194
During weekend girls come to schools to study because at home there is a lot of work	2.4118	1.35268	2.6596	1.09302
Overall mean	2.4917	0.55228	2.4818	0.57219

Girls in the mixed schools therefore, have regular experience with household duties. The teachers tended to disagree that girls are not overworked after school recording a rating of 2.4894 and that they complete their assignment after performing household chores with a rating of 2.4468.

On the contrary, girls agreed that they are not overworked, meaning that they have positive attitude towards the household chores. Out of the 237 girls who responded to these items, 152, making 59.9 per cent, disagreed of being overworked by their parents/guardians. Another 17.3 per cent of the girl respondents disagreed with the statement while about 7 per cent tended to disagree making a total of about 24 per cent who confessed of being overworked by their parents/guardians. This is evidence enough to show that household chores affect girl education to some extent, especially girls who are day scholars in mixed secondary schools. The girl respondents recorded a tendency to agree of 2.5168 that they dose off and are unable to read after doing household chores, yet claim to complete assignments after doing household chores (μ=3.2017). The teachers are the ones who assess students' assignments and, giving a rating of 2.4468, they tend to disagree with the later statement. The same teachers rating (μ=3.7979) for the statement about dosing off also contradicts that of girls. From the responses, teachers seem to be relating failure to complete assignments to overwork at home, but girls' responses suggest that there could be other reasons for that.

Another contradictory mean rating is about getting enough time to read during weekends, where girls assumed a rating of 3.0380 while teachers had a rating of 2.3617. The above factors are closely related to academic achievement which is relatively poor for girls in mixed secondary schools. Out of the seven items for this variable, four were positive. Going by the mean rating of 2.4917 for girls and 2.4818 for teachers, the groups of respondents tended to disagree that household chores are a challenge to girls in mixed schools, with the teachers having a better understanding of too much work, given to the already tired girls after school, can do to their academic lives. This echoes findings of Makewa, Role, and Amadi (2013) that household duties to day schooling girls can significantly discourage girls in education even lead to drop out.

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper has discussed issues that touch the girl child as she goes through mixed schools. Issues discussed as challenges were girl safety, sexual harassment, sanitary concerns and household chores. It was found that these issues affect the girl child directly or indirectly. It was seen that the girl child should be protected from challenges that may attack her as she goes to and back from school. Schools should fence their compounds. On sanitary, it was realized that girls appreciate clean toilets, which suggests that school latrines and toilets must be kept clean for the girls to use them freely. Sexual harassment is another challenge that girls have faced for a long time. This can be handled by the parents, teachers, the community, the media and the government at large. Laws that advocate for girl child safety should be reinforced. Although this study did not indicate that girls agreed that they were involved in the household chores, experience has shown that as soon as they get back from school, they are assigned kitchen roles including fetching water and firewood, which contribute to time wastage, suggesting that time that would have been used in doing assignments is used in doing other home chores. This study recommends that for the effective realization and actualization of successful girl child education programs, it is important that parents, community leaders, society, government and non-governmental organizations as well as the media are alive to their roles and responsibility to the society. The stakeholders should therefore get involved in tackling challenges facing the girl-child education by mapping out appropriate strategies to address them in a more comprehensive manner.

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