

Research Article

The Effects of Cattle Rustling on Pupils' Access to Education: A case Study of Kabichibich Sub-Location, West Pokot County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT



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The current study explores the effects of cattle rustling on pupils' access to education: a case study of Kabichibich Sub-Location, West Pokot County, Kenya. Residents in Kabichibich Sub-location in West Pokot County, had observed how livestock rustling has affected education in the area. Though it has deep cultural roots, cattle rustling threatens people's ability to make a living and their children's future opportunities. The following research questions served as the basis for this investigation: What are the causes of cattle rustling in Kabichibich Sub- location, West Pokot County Kenya? In what way does cattle rustle influence pupil's access to quality education in Kabichibich Sub- location, West Pokot County Kenya? and What are the possible ways to control cattle rustling in Kabichibich Sub-location, West Pokot County Kenya? The study used Melville Herskovits' "Complex Theory" (1926), which states that pastoralists have an unquenchable, irrational, and compelling attachment to cattle which undermines education as transformative tool. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approach. For the quantitative approach, the study used a descriptive survey approach, however, for the qualitative approach, the study used purposive sampling. The total number of respondents were 67, which consists of 42 students, 8 teachers, 2 principles and 7 community members from 2 nearby schools. The sample size was derived at using Yamane's method. Members of the community, including religious leaders, city authorities, and educational officers, as well as students, instructors, and principals, were interviewed, and they were also asked to fill out a structured questionnaire. In order to ensure confidentiality, the respondents were asked not to reveal their identities. The reliability of the research instruments was assessed via the use of the test-retest method. The researcher wanted to make sure the instruments were accurate for the study. The SPSS program was used to analyse the information, while thematic description was used to analyse qualitative data. percentages and frequencies were used to study quantitative data. Bar charts was used to display the findings. The study concluded that, cattle rustling was a major challenge to education. Academic performance reflects the quality of education that was not provided due to high rates of student and teacher absenteeism and school dropouts, inadequate school facilities, and pervasive insecurity. Among the recommendations, included, building more boarding schools, to protect children to provide safety for the students.

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1.0 Introduction

The current study investigates the effects of cattle rustling on pupils' access to education: a case study of Kabichibich Sub-Location, West Pokot County, Kenya. The study expounds on the background information, problem statement, research questions, the significance of the study, the rationale for the study, the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, the literature review the methodology, conceptual framework, scope and delimitation of the study, the research findings and discussions and lastly, the recommendations.

2.0 Background of the Study

Education is a basic human right and serves as a crucial

catalyst for socio-economic advancement. Nonetheless, conflict-induced disturbances, such as livestock rustling, have persistently obstructed educational access in at-risk areas globally. UNESCO (2019) indicates that education systems in conflict-affected regions have significant obstacles, such as school closures, involuntary relocation, and heightened dropout rates. These disturbances obstructed the attainment of universal primary education objectives and undermined community development initiatives. This study was vital since education is a fundamental pillar for sustainable development. Comprehending this socio-economic obstacle has guided policy development, community interventions, and educational support initiatives designed to enhance school enrollment, retention, and completion rates in conflict-affected regions such

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as Kabichbich Sub-Location, West Pokot County. Worldwide, interruptions to education caused by war have been thoroughly examined. In conflict-affected nations including Syria, Afghanistan, and Yemen, violence and forced migration have resulted in considerable school closures (Jones, 2019). UNESCO (2019) observed that children in war zones are five times more likely to be out of school compared to their counterparts in tranquil regions. The interruption of schooling in these areas highlights the essential connection between security and access to education. Recent study in Africa, has shown that violent conflicts, including livestock rustling, insurgencies, and ethnic battles, persist in disrupting schooling. Boko Haram's assaults on educational institutions in Nigeria have resulted in widespread abductions, the closing of schools, and a notable deterioration in educational achievements (Adamu & Zenn, 2017). Cattle rustling in Uganda and South Sudan has resulted in relocation, decreased school attendance, and restricted access to excellent education (Okoth, 2016). Kenya has encountered a significant security concern, especially in dry and semi-arid areas such as West Pokot, Baringo, and Turkana counties. Chebet and Omondi (2018) discovered that insecurity resulting from cattle rustling has resulted in increased absenteeism, elevated dropout rates, and diminishing enrollment figures. Educational institutions in impacted locations often lack sufficient security protocols, compelling students and educators to evacuate during incursions, hence intensifying the educational crisis in these places. In recent years, there has been increasing concern over the detrimental effects of cattle rustling on students' access to basic education in Kabichbich Sub-Location, West Pokot County. Frequent attacks had led to repeated school closures, disrupting the academic calendar and had caused significant learning losses. A multitude of parents' exhibit hesitance in enrolling their children in school owing to safety apprehensions, leading to a decrease in enrollment and a rise in dropout rates. The instability has also deterred instructors, resulting in a significant staffing deficit in the impacted institutions. Additionally, the economic strain caused by the loss of livestock had left families unable to afford school supplies, uniforms, and other educational necessities. These problems underscore the pressing need for comprehensive initiatives to tackle the educational crisis in the region. In an ideal scenario, households should possess access to economic prospects via livestock farming, therefore guaranteeing food security, financial stability, and access to education and healthcare. Children must continuously attend school without the apprehension of violence or relocation, enabling them to realize their whole academic potential (UNESCO, 2019). At the community level, harmonious cohabitation among adjacent communities ought to be standard, bolstered by strong social connections and conflict-resolution strategies. Communities need to benefit from robust infrastructure, including educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and transportation networks, therefore promoting local development. Cooperative initiatives across communities may enhance economic and social resilience, hence reducing the probability of inter-ethnic conflicts (Okoth, 2016). Governments should provide sufficient security, uphold the rule of law, and enact policies that promote animal agriculture and rural development. Resources have to be allocated towards developing robust economies, enhancing education, and fortifying social services. This will facilitate the nation's attainment of sustainable development objectives by alleviating poverty, improving food security, and guaranteeing social stability (Jones, 2019). Establishing such an environment requires a multi-sectoral strategy that engages government entities, community leaders, and international organizations in a joint effort to mitigate instability and foster sustainable development.

3.0 Statement of the Problem

There has been an increasing concern about the effect of cattle rustling on education in Kabichbich Sub- location West Pokot County for a long period of time. This practice, which is frequently characterized by violence, displacement, and property destruction, interferes with learning and leads to poor educational results and fewer prospects for children in future. Kabichbich Sub-Location is located in a conflict-prone area where cattle rustling is common that is why this topic was essential to comprehending how it influences students' access to education and practical solutions to lessen its effects. However, this has resulted in high school dropout because some parents died in cattle rustling, making it impossible for them to purchase books and uniforms. Teachers and students being absent from school due to fear of being attacked by roving thugs or migrate from one location to another. Due to poor working conditions, some teachers quieted their jobs, while others were transferred to safer schools. This resulted to under-staffing and poor performance in Kenya Primary Education (KCPE). A mitigation strategy was needed to address this issue, including bolstering security through law enforcement and community policing, supporting peace-building projects, enlisting community members to help protect schools, offering affected students psycho-social support, and providing alternate sources of income to lessen dependency on livestock. If cattle rustling is not stopped, there will be more illiteracy, ongoing disruptions to schooling, and a vicious cycle of poverty and violence. Over time, this would impede economic growth, weaken social bonds, and prolong insecurity in Kabichbich Sub-location and the surrounding areas. This research elucidated the stakeholders of Kabichbich Sub-location (teachers, parents, and children) on the causes and consequences of cattle rustling, along with feasible measures for its mitigation. It enabled a cognitive shift for stakeholders from cattle rustling to the embrace of other economic resources. This aided the government in eradicating the black market for cattle to reduce occurrences of cattle rustling, a byproduct of animal commercialization. It also allowed policy-makers to understand the particular educational obstacles in the area, aiding the formulation of focused measures to tackle these issues. This research aimed to ascertain the causes of cattle rustling, the impact of cattle rustling on students' educational access in Kabichbich Sub-location, and possible remedies in reducing the effects of cattle rustling on education. Lack of previous research in this area about the effects of cattle rustling on children's access to fundamental education in Kabichbich Sub- location, West Pokot County, compelled the researcher to carry out this study.

4.0 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the causes of cattle rustling in Kabichbich Sub-location, West Pokot County Kenya?
- In what ways does cattle rustling influence pupil's access to quality education in Kabichbich Sub- location, West Pokot County Kenya?
- What are the possible ways of controlling cattle rustling in Kabichbich Sub-location, West Pokot County Kenya?

5.0 Significance of the Study

Firstly, the study will empower the stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education and school administrators, in formulating policies and intervention programs, to enhance learning settings and ensure continuous education. Secondly, the study will assist security agencies and local government officials in identifying security flaws that lead to community dislocation and school closures. The recommendations from the study, will enable the creation of successful security protocols and peace building projects for promoting regional stability. Thirdly, the research

findings will be used to develop and carry out assistance programs such as trauma, counseling, and infrastructure construction by local humanitarian groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to facilitate learning. These initiatives enhanced the learning settings for students and support long-term academic progress. Lastly, the study educated the local population about the long-term consequences of cattle rustling on the future of their children. Active community involvement in advancing peace, bolstering education, and protecting schools from disturbances caused by conflict was encouraged by this study.

6.0 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The research was confined to the Kabichbich Sub-Location in West Pokot County, with an estimated area of 250 to 300 square kilometers (County Government of West Pokot, 2023). This was due to the problem of cattle rustling in this region. The inhabitants of Kabichbich have been involved actively in livestock rustling with their neighbors, the Turkana and Karamojong. Consequently, disrupting peaceful learning process. The researcher sought to ascertain the causes of cattle rustling, the extent to which cattle rustling has influenced education in Kabichbich, and the mitigations in controlling cattle rustling in Kabichbich to promote learning process.

7.0 Theoretical Framework

Melville Herskovits' Cattle Complex Theory of 1926, informed the study. Melville developed this theory during his study of African pastoralist societies, especially in East Africa. The theory asserts that cattle possess not only economic importance but also social, cultural, and religious significance among pastoralists civilizations (Herskovits, 1926). Cattle are seen as a sign of affluence, social standing, and a means of sustenance, impacting practically all facets of life, including matrimony, dispute mediation, and communal ceremonies. This research elucidates how cattle rustling impedes educational access, since disputes over livestock ownership engender instability and relocation in the impacted regions. Cattle Complex Theory emerged from Herskovits' anthropological interest in understanding how economic systems intersect with cultural practices. He aimed to challenge the notion that African communities were purely subsistence-based by highlighting how deeply cattle are embedded in social and cultural life (Herskovits, 1926). Over time, the theory had evolved through critiques and adaptations by other anthropologists, expanding its application to explain conflicts related to cattle in various African contexts.

7.1 Strength of Melville Herskovits' Cattle Complex Theory

Among the strengths of Melville's theory, lies in its holistic approach to understanding the socio-economic and cultural significance of cattle in pastoral societies. It provided valuable insight into how cattle-related conflicts can disrupt community stability and essential services, including education. Pokot people, like other pastoralists in Africa, especially those in the Kabichbich Sub-location, would sacrifice their lives to defend

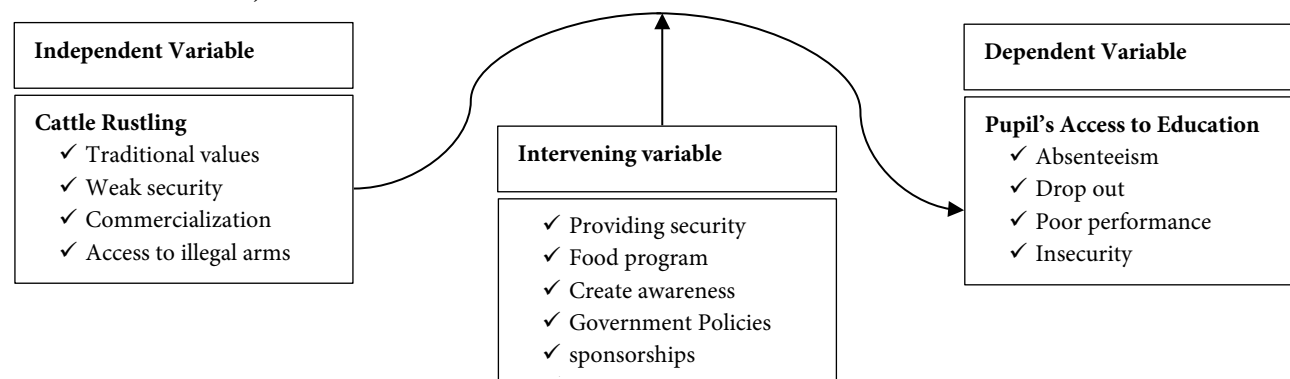
their herd. The importance of livestock is instilled in young males from an early age. Someone who works for a living and gets a paycheck is not given the same level of respect as someone who owns a large herd of cattle. This is because, in ways that money can't buy, cattle are fundamental to their economic, cultural, and spiritual survival. Their diet consists mostly on beef and dairy products. They are an integral part of every tribe ritual, including offerings to the gods and ancestors. This might explain why the locals do not care much about their children schooling. In Kabichbich Sub-location, children may face obstacles to their access to and participation in school as a result of cattle rustling, which is done to increase livestock. This idea aimed to assess the locals' view of cattle to see whether it adds to the lack of opportunities for young education.

7.2 Weaknesses of Melville Herskovits' Cattle Complex Theory

Critics argue that Melville Herskovits theory, overemphasized the symbolic value of cattle while downplaying other socio-economic factors such as land access, political dynamics, and environmental conditions (Smith, 1959). Additionally, the theory had been criticized for being ethnocentric, as it applies a singular cultural lens that may not be relevant in all pastoral societies (Schneider, 1974). Even though, Melville Herskovits theory, poses some drawbacks, its strong emphasis on the significance of livestock among the pastoralists communities as the backbone of civilization, makes it relevant in informing the current study on the effects of cattle rustling on education in Kabichbich county in west Pokot- County, Kenya.

8.0 Conceptual Framework

The research evaluated the effects of cattle rustling on students' access to education in Kabichbich Sub-location, West Pokot County, Kenya. The subsequent analysis pertained to the conceptual framework. In this study, the independent variable: cattle rustling, which entails observation of the traditional values, weak security, commercialization and access to illegal arms, while the dependent variable is pupils' access to education, which includes the: absenteeism, school dropout, poor performance in school, insecurity and transfer from school. On the other hand, the intervening variable includes: provision of security, having food programs, creating awareness and having government policies. Intervening factors, however, can lessen the impact of cattle rustling on education. Among the intervening variables is school food programs to promote student retention by addressing hunger-related cases, absenteeism, police deployment to bolster security guarantees and safer learning conditions. A cultural change toward learning can fostered by raising community awareness on the importance of education over cattle rustling. Important educational support was also suggested by sponsoring programs and enacting supportive government laws. By implementing these measures, the detrimental effects of cattle rustling on students' education can be reduced, hence, fostering a more secure and safe learning environment.



9.0 Literature Review

Globally, an investigation was carried out by Greenfield (2023), on unemployment, inflation, and economic instability, and cattle rustling as challenges for economic empowerment. These factors destabilize communities and indirectly affect education. Environmental causes like drought and land degradation, which are critical drivers in regions like Africa, has affected the continent's economy. As observed by Johnson (2021), in USA, climate change which led to scarcity of resources like grazing land and water, escalates competition and conflict in pastoral areas. Failure to examine social and cultural drivers, such as traditions and rites of passage, which are significant in African contexts, may lead to poor outputs in economy. Regionally, Moyo (2021), observed that, in Uganda, cultural practices, such as dowry payments and wealth accumulation, leads to cattle rustling. He noted that these practices increase the demand for cattle and perpetuate raiding. Lack of analysis of modern socio-economic pressures, such as urbanization and land reforms, contribute to rustling. In view of Mwenda (2024), in Tanzania, competition over grazing land and access to water as primary drivers of cattle rustling, worsened by population growth and shrinking resources. Ignores cultural factors like dowry demands and initiation rites, which are deeply rooted causes of rustling. Locally, in Marakwet, an investigation was carried out by Chebii (2020), on cultural practices, such as dowry demands and rites of passage, fuel cattle rustling. These practices create a constant demand for cattle and perpetuate raiding. But it did not address how economic hardships and climate change exacerbate cultural motivations for raiding. Kiptanui (2022), in Baringo, investigated on environmental degradation and cultural norms, such as initiation ceremonies, are primary causes of cattle rustling. The study shows that these factors destabilize communities and disrupt schooling. It did not examine how government policies or alternative livelihoods could address the environmental causes of cattle rustling. The researcher agrees with the researchers on the causes of cattle rustling. In Kabichbich Sub-location, cattle rustling was driven by combinations of Traditional values, inadequate security, commercialization, and the availability of illicit weaponry. Cattle raiding are closely associated with money, prestige, and cultural identity, traditional customs like initiation rites and dowry payments generate a steady market for them. However, due to lack of law enforcement presence and inadequate coordination among security organizations, the region's insufficient security allowed rustlers to launch attacks with little risk of being stopped. The issue had gotten worse due to commercialization, which had made cattle rustling a lucrative industry where stolen livestock was sold in local and regional marketplaces. Lee (2023), did research in the USA and suggested that in New York, safeguarding schools by military operations and community policing may alleviate disruptions to schooling caused by cattle rustling. The study advocates for rigorous security measures to protect both children and instructors. The study neglects to investigate local residents' perceptions of these security measures or to address the root causes of cattle rustling, such as economic hardship or inter-ethnic conflict, which the current research will explore. Nelson (2021) did research in Colorado, USA, examining global strategies to alleviate the effects of cattle rustling on education, such as mobile schools, community peace education, and trauma treatment. He underscores the need of peace-building activities and partnerships between communities and educational institutions. The study does not clearly investigate the cultural and economic impacts of cattle rustling on pastoral communities in Africa, which may affect the feasibility of such interventions. Kilonzo (2022), performed a study in Tanzania examining the effects of community engagement and peace education on mitigating the

consequences of cattle rustling on education. Proposed ideas include integrating peace-building projects into the curriculum and including local leaders in school safety protocols. The study neglects to consider the scalability of these initiatives beyond local communities and their incorporation into the formal education system. Akinyi (2021) advocates for fortified schools, teacher incentives, and community volunteer security organizations to protect students in Nigeria against cattle rustling. The study also investigates the participation of governmental and non-governmental groups in enabling these methods. The study insufficiently investigates the impact of these security measures on the daily life of pastoral communities and their views on formal education. Nyakundi (2021) evaluates the effectiveness of governmental initiatives in mitigating the effects of cattle rustling, including the establishment of mobile schools, incentives for educators, and financial support for affected families. The study underscores the need of cultivating local community resilience. The study does not include a comprehensive analysis of the extensive execution of these policies and the cultural barriers that might hinder their effectiveness. Chepkony (2023) observes that Marakwet explores alternative educational models, like as mobile schools, online learning, and conflict management training for instructors and students, to alleviate educational disruptions caused by cattle rustling. The study explores alternatives however neglects to investigate the incorporation of these models into the formal education system or their sustainability in conflict-affected regions. The government has endeavored to improve educational access for students in Kabichbich Sub-Location by allocating additional teachers from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and providing scarce schools with textbooks and other educational resources; however, these measures are insufficient to alter the community's situation. To ensure the protection of citizens and their pets, the government hired locals to serve as house guards. In order to keep children safe from the Turkana and Karamojong, two neighboring tribes known for their vicious livestock theft, the home guards would sometimes keep an eye on the schools. In Kabichbich Sub-location, religious groups have carried out admirable projects, most notably the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church of Kenya, and the Anglican Church of Kenya. Christian groups are mostly responsible for the prosperity of the educated population in the Kabichbich Sub-location. These Christian groups did more than only minister to people's spiritual needs; they also sponsored underprivileged youngsters and set up school food programs. They were mostly unsuccessful in their attempts to alter the long-established custom of cattle ownership. Everyone needs a backup plan for making money that they can implement quickly. They encountered strong opposition from the elders as they tried to get people to embrace Christianity and reject old ways of life. Children in Kabichbich Sub-location have benefited greatly from the efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Action Aid, World Vision Kenya, and others to expand their educational opportunities. In addition to supporting the education of disadvantaged children, they are actively working to improve infrastructure. The peacemaking efforts of the warring tribes who participate in intermittent livestock raiding are of great interest to these NGOs. The number of raids and counter-raids had grown to the point that it was impossible to tell who was attacking and who was being attacked at any one moment. Since the government and other educational sponsors are trying to increase children's access to and involvement in school, the researcher thought it would be wise to explore this site to see how cattle rustling affects their efforts.

10.0 Methodology

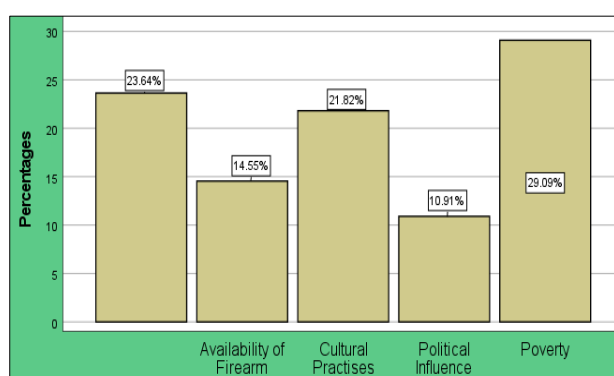
The research design is the blueprint followed to organize all the parts of the study in a way that makes sense and answers the

research questions. Everything needed to gather, measure, and analyze data is part of it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To examine how cattle rustling affects students' ability to attend school, this study used a mixed-method approach strategy that included quantitative and qualitative techniques. Through in-depth interviews and focused group discussions, the qualitative technique was able to elicit rich insights from participants and provide a holistic picture of their experiences and viewpoints. According to Lim (2021), qualitative research is a framework for scientific inquiry that places an emphasis on the complexity and depth of context and perspective in order to comprehend social processes. This method goes beyond simple occurrence counting to elucidate the underlying "what, why, when, where, who, and how of social behaviors and interactions. A large number of respondents were surveyed using a quantitative approach questionnaire. In quantitative research, numerical data is systematically collected to explain, forecast, or regulate processes of interest (Leedy and Ormrod, 2020). Willie (2024) defines the target population as the subset of a broader population that an intervention, strategy, or research aims to improve. This sub-group has certain characteristics or meets specific criteria for the investigation. Students in eighth grade, as well as their instructors, two elementary school principals, and community members like religious leaders, local administrators, and educational officers, were the focus of this study. There are around 2,000 students and 200 instructors in the Kabichbich Sub-location, spread across 20 schools.

11.0 Discussions and Findings

According to the study, 29.09% of students' report poverty as the primary reason for cattle rustling. This implies that people are forced to engage in cattle rustling as a means of generating revenue and surviving due to economic distress. Gun availability comes in second at 14.55%, suggesting that having access to firearms encourages and sustains rustling. Cultural practices are also important; according to 21.82% of students, cattle rustling is a part of traditional customs that may be connected to wealth accumulation or rites of passage. Despite being the least common cause (10.91%), political influence still plays a role in the issue, indicating that some leaders may unintentionally encourage rustling or fail to stop it because of political concerns.

Common Causes of Cattle Rustling as Reported by Pupils



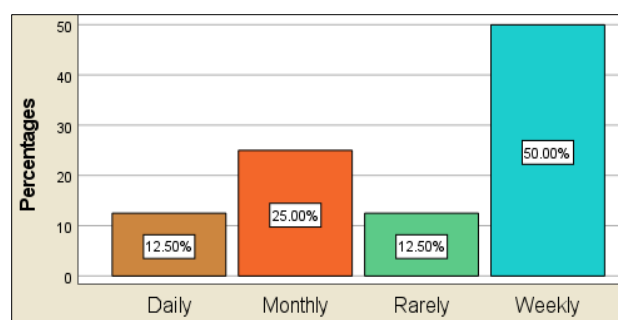
According to the research, 25.0% of the causes of cattle rustling are thought to be related to cultural customs. This implies that customs may contribute to the practice's continuation, either as a sign of bravery in some groups, a rite of passage, or a way to get money. Likewise, firearm availability, which is 25.0%, emphasizes how easy access to weapons facilitates and intensifies cattle rustling, making it more organized and aggressive. Political influence (25.0%), suggests that certain leaders or organizations may fail to stop rustling because of their own political or personal interests. Poverty (25.0%) indicates economic desperation as a motivating factor, when people rustle as a means of survival since they have no

other means of support. Because these causes are distributed rather evenly, it is likely that cattle rustling is a complex problem with political, economic, and cultural considerations all playing a role in its continued prevalence. A number of the principals we spoke with agreed with our students and instructors that cultural norms, poverty, and easy access to firearms are key factors in cattle rustling. As one of the principals put it:

"Some of these boys owned offensive weapons like AK 47 which were expensively bought and therefore had to be use to generate wealth (Head Teacher)".

Teachers' answers about how often students miss school because of cattle rustling are shown in the bar graph in Figure 4.6. A sizable percentage of educators (12.50%) stated that students miss class every day because of cattle rustling, while 25.00% said that absenteeism happens once a month. 50.00% of respondents, students miss school once a week. These results are consistent with earlier studies showing that insecurity brought on by conflicts severely impairs school attendance in impacted areas (Ngugi & Omondi, 2020). The significant absence rate indicates that cattle rustling is a recurring obstacle to education, which emphasizes the necessity of immediate measures to improve security and guarantee that students in susceptible locations can continue their education (Koech et al., 2021). Head teachers and community express similar worries about how cattle rustling affects students' attendance at school. Numerous community members point out that, livestock raiding foster an atmosphere of anxiety and unease that makes it challenging for pupils to go to school on a regular basis. As observed by the researcher, cattle raiding destabilizes learning and teaching processes in both primary and secondary schools, especially, in pastoralists community. Families migrate far away from schools for safety, this affects learning and education in general. They argue that, as cattle rustling gets worse, families are compelled to leave their homes, which causes students to miss school for extended periods of time. The administrative difficulties brought on by these disruptions, however, are highlighted by head teachers. They see that instructors' replies about weekly absence match their own observations of irregular patterns in school attendance. Due to the ongoing risk of cattle rustling, many head teachers say that schools in impacted areas frequently have low enrollment and retention rates.

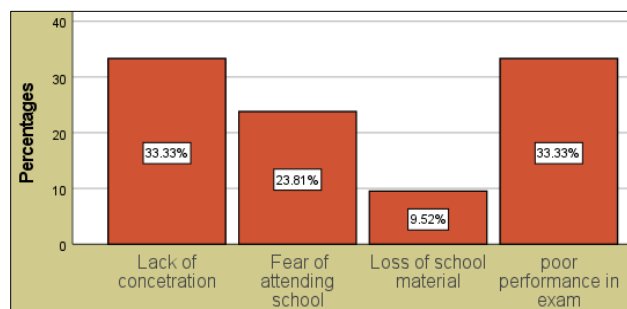
Figure 4.6: Teachers Response on Pupils Missing School Due to Cattle Rustling



According to the research findings, cattle rustling has brought impacts to students' educational opportunities. For instance, poor exam performance is one of the biggest effects, as indicated by 33.33% of students. Cattle rustling creates uncertainty that interferes with learning, resulting in stress, displacement, and poor exam preparation, all of which impair academic achievement. Furthermore, 23.81% of the students are afraid to go to school. Students are reluctant to go to school because they are constantly afraid of being attacked, which causes frequent absences and disrupts their study. The loss of school supplies is another significant problem, as stated by 9.52% of pupils. It can be challenging for students to successfully continue their education when school supplies including books,

uniforms, and writing instruments are lost or damaged during cattle rustling occurrences. Together, these elements create a demanding learning environment that makes it more difficult for pupils to focus, perform well, and maintain their motivation for learning.

Table 4.7: Influence of Cattle Rustling on Pupils Access to Education as Reported by Pupils



According to the findings, the most significant impact is low academic achievement, as indicated by 26.3% of respondents. A high dropout rate and increased absenteeism each accounted for 21.1% of the responses, underscoring how cattle rustling disrupts regular school attendance. The psychological toll on pupils, which impairs their capacity to concentrate and learn, was highlighted by the 15.8% of respondents who reported less concentration in class as well as fear and terror. Students' answers about how cattle rustling affects education were supported by a targeted group discussion with community residents and interviews with important stakeholders. Insecurity and dislocation brought on by regular raids were cited by community people, including parents and local leaders, as reasons for the rise in absenteeism. Many parents said they had to move with their children, which caused irregular attendance at school. They also noticed an increase in dropout rates because some children were forced to migrate to safer locations or take up jobs like herding, which further reduced their access to schooling. Elders in the community further underlined that irregular school attendance is as a result of certain families placing a higher priority on economic survival and security than on education. Head teachers interviewed verified that trauma and fear severely impair pupils' focus in class. Many students are worried and unable to concentrate on their schoolwork as a result of the psychological trauma caused by seeing violence or losing family members. Instructors observed that poor academic performance has been a result of both emotional disturbance and disturbed learning conditions. The findings indicate that various interventions have been implemented to mitigate the adverse effects of cattle rustling on education. Security measures were the most often indicated strategy (37.5%) among those teachers reported. This implies that the deployment of security forces, including the police and neighborhood security organizations, to safeguard schools and the surrounding communities has received a lot of attention. This is consistent with earlier research showing that in conflict-prone areas, insecurity significantly hinders school attendance and learning continuity (Ngugi & Ochieng, 2021). Another important factor in lessening the effects of cattle rustling is government interventions, which make up 25.0%. These may include policies such as increasing security personnel, resettlement programs, and education subsidies for affected pupils. Inadequate funding and delayed responses frequently make government interventions less successful, so proper implementation and ongoing support are essential to their effectiveness (Kiprop et al., 2020). According to 20.3% of respondents, boarding schools protect children by keeping them on school grounds and lowering their vulnerability to threats. Boarding schools may improve educational access and stability

in conflict areas, according to research, but issues with student psychological stress and cost must be addressed (Wanjala & Kurgat, 2019). The implementation of peace measures (17.2%) aims to promote long-term stability and reconciliation. The researcher is in agreement with the findings that, dialogue on peaceful co-existence between communities contributes to learning and meeting the learning objectives. Prior research has highlighted the importance of peace education initiatives, intercommunal discussions, and local leaders' participation in conflict resolution initiatives in lowering tensions and fostering harmony (Chebet & Kigen, 2018). Affirmative action on education should be prioritized in this area, according to the head teachers, administration officer, religious leader, and NGO official. This would help the people transition their mindset from relying on cattle for revenue to focusing on jobs, businesses, and other alternatives. However, during the focus group discussion, the parents were strongly against the concept of removing the offensive weapons from the neighborhood. "Disarming is a very delicate issue," said one concerned parent. In the face of our attackers, who will defend us? She shot back, "Whose government?" when the researcher informed her that the government would provide security. We have a government that does nothing while the Turkana and Karamojong herds chase our animals away! The voices of an assistant chief and an NGO representative were also heard in the call to reduce the threat of livestock rustling. "Due to the poor road network, security officers sometimes find it very difficult to intercept cattle rustlers," an assistant chief remarked. In order to elude further security forces, the livestock rustlers use the challenging terrain to their advantage. The onus is now entirely on the natives to drive out the invaders. Among the schools in North Pokot Sub-County, the religious and non-profit groups have shown to be the most proactive. In order to ensure that these education stakeholders are well-equipped to do their jobs, it is imperative that they get enough assistance before any substantial education process in this area is initiated. It is more difficult for those who want to contribute to school funding to do so due to the region's insufficient transportation network, according to respondents. Therefore, the county's administration and the federal government should work together to strengthen the road network in this region of the country so that security forces can readily monitor the danger of cattle rustling. This ensures that education is easily accessible to all those who have a stake in it.

12.0 Conclusion

Schools often shut during disturbances, according to the study, and children often dread assaults on their way to school, which greatly limits their access to education. Dropout rates are high, students struggle to adjust to new classes, and academic achievement is low. Both the demand for and supply of qualified educators are severely lacking. Government and non-governmental organization initiatives to combat cattle rustling have not eliminated the problem of this educational disruption. Rustling destroys school buildings and discourages stakeholders from becoming involved.

13.0 Recommendations

1. To have more boarding schools should be constructed by the government and other interested parties. By removing students from the potentially harmful influences of their own culture, boarding schools provide them with the quiet space they need to focus on their studies. Unlike schools spread out around the Sub-Location, these boarding schools may be easily granted utmost protection by security services.
2. To convene meetings in churches and "Barazas" in order to educate the populace about the negative effects of livestock rustling. All local schools will be part of a government-run

school meal program. This would guarantee that students consistently participate in educational institutions.

3. The government should invest in better school infrastructure in order to guarantee the delivery of high-quality education.
4. To have more affirmative action programs by the government in this sector. This will be beneficial for all the educated people in this area to make sure that everyone gets the advantages of education.
5. To protect educators and anyone involved in the field of education to ensure the students continue with their education.
6. To think about establishing a risk allowance for teachers who work in such hardship areas with insecurity.

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