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## **Implications of Boys' Behaviors on Girl Child's Psychosocial Adjustment and Academic Achievement in Mixed Secondary Schools; A Case of Vihiga County, Kenya**

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### **Abstract:**

*This study set to establish the Implications of Boys' behaviors on Girl Child's Psychosocial Adjustment and Academic Achievement in mixed secondary schools in Vihiga County. Social Learning Theory (SLT) by Albert Bandurain formed the study. Descriptive and correlational research designs were employed. A total of 92 Director of Studies (DOS), 11604 form four students and 92 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) in all the 92 mixed public secondary schools were targeted. Using stratified, simple random and saturated sampling techniques 37 DOS, 374 students and 37 FGD each consisting 5-7 form four girls from Students' leaders council were selected. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that boys exhibit several behaviors during and out of class sessions which inhibit a girl-child psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement. The study thus recommended that Individual school administration in collaboration with DOS, teacher counselors and subject teachers should come up with school tailored policies and programs to ensure boys and girls coexist as brothers and sisters and are able to benefit from each other's strength academically and socially.*

**Keywords:** *boys', behaviors', psychosocial adjustment, academic achievement, a girl child*

### **1. Introduction**

Numerous studies show that the presence of boys in mixed schools inhibits a girl-child academic psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement. The studies note that boys' sexist behaviors deny the girls an enabling environment to be empowered, develop positive self-concept and achieve academically (Gurian, Henley & Trueman, 2001; Warrington & Younger, 2002; Sax, 2005; Patchen, 2006; James, 2009). According to Inzlicht and Ben-Zeev (2000) academic performance of girls diminished as the number of males in the classroom increased and that girls participated more actively when boys were fewer in class but less when boys were the majority. The implication is that there are some boys' behaviors that impact negatively on the girl-student making her to be maladjusted psychologically and socially and consequently, her academic achievement. Hence, there was need to specify these behaviors and their effects on the girl-child. In this case, academic achievement refers to the scores that a learner receives in examinations while psychosocial adjustment on self-concept, attitude, motivation and feelings like fear among others.

Mixed schools have been perceived to be sites for boys to develop and exercise their masculinity and girls their femininity (Mendick, 2005). As observed by Chege & Sifuna (2006) boys and girls in secondary schools are compelled to adhere to societal stereotype expectations of masculinity and femininity failure to which one is deemed a misfit. While being feminine requires one to be polite, well-mannered and nurturing, masculinity is exhibited by being aggressive and disruptive. Thus it's normal for boys to misbehave but girls the opposite. These expectations may make boys to get away with quiet a number of misbehavior that negatively impact on the girl child.

During class lessons, boys often disrupt learning by calling out answers making girls to lose concentration (Kachero 2014). For instance in USA, boys were allowed to speak out of turns while girls were prohibited (Garrah, 2001). In Nigeria, teachers expected boys to be indisciplined but girls to be well behaved during class sessions (Allard, 2004). Disruption was also evident during class participation. Boys asked many non-academic questions to draw the teacher's attention or just to distract,

made jokes and even teased the teachers. Consequently, the teachers tended to attract and sustain the boys' attentions to avoid their becoming restless (Wenhua Hu, 2012). Disruptive behaviors distract the girl child who learns best in a quiet environment.

Boys often intimidate girls in various ways. Milembe & Davies (2001) observed that girls are driven to conformity by boys who intimidate them by calling them names, shout at them or write upsetting messages about them. At times boys would not only intimidate but also threaten girls especially in the absence of the teacher in and out of class (Oigara (2011). Such a behavior tends to make girls to be gripped with fear and withdraw from class participation to avoid being ridiculed by boys. Consequently, a girl child is rendered invisible and misses an opportunity to develop a positive self-concept making her to be marginalized and be viewed as timid by both the teachers and boys.

According to Schmuck (2005) and Symth (2010), mixed schools are considered natural environment which provides a platform for both boys and girls to learn, respect and value each other's ideas. It would therefore be expected that during class lessons, both male and female students are seen consulting and freely interacting with each other. However, a number of studies have revealed the opposite happens. Levitt, Bloch, & Soumaré (1998) found that in Ghanaian schools, girls were dispersed in small clusters around the classroom making it difficult to inquire or ask for help from the boys. Chimombo et al. (2000) observed that despite mixed sitting arrangements, boys were comfortable and preferred to work and consult fellow boys while girls did so with fellow girls. The foregoing observation underscores the importance of mixed classes in that girls miss an opportunity to tap from a boy-child academic and social strength. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to establish the intensity of gender biased consultation in mixed schools.

Mael (1998) noted that in mixed schools, girls were not free to participate during class sessions as they feared to be bullied by boys whenever they give wrong answers. According to Warrington and Younger (2002) adolescent girls most often feel intimidated by the presence of boys. Hence, once in mixed classes, they prefer to keep quiet instead of giving wrong answers and risk humiliation. The implication is that the situation becomes worse when it happens that boys make fun of them or laugh. Kachero (2014) indicated that boys tend to call others names whenever they give wrong answers in class. While to the boys, the action may be easily brushed off, a girl child is most likely to get embarrassed and shy off from answering questions in the class. Considering that learning takes place not only by observation but also participation through interaction during question and answer session, such a student ends up receiving minimal interactions and consequently feedback from the teachers. Hence, the student may lose the opportunity to develop a positive self-esteem, communication skills and confidence needed not only for classroom but also school interactions.

According to Sullivan, Joshi, & Leonard (2010) there are many social distractions for girls in mixed schools among them sexual harassment. The harassment can be verbal where boys release upsetting words to girls or physical through; touching parts of the girl's body, gestures and whistle or written notes containing sexual information. Bosire (2008) noted that sexual and verbal harassment hinders a girl-child academic achievement in mixed schools. Much of the sexual harassment as indicated by Ruto (2009) occurs on the way back home from school. Such kind of behavior demeans a girl's self-esteem as many may not report such cases for fear of being victimized. Eventually, most girls are pushed into conformity as a survival tactic. The present study sought to establish the intensity of this behavior in Vihiga County.

The presence of boys provides a very easy avenue for the girl child to engage into romantic affections. According to Mburu (2013), the major distraction in mixed schools is from the opposite gender and the girl child is the most disadvantaged. Mbuta (2015) is in support of the foregoing observation and asserted that parents in Tanzania were opposed to mixed schooling because girls often waste time bidding for love affections from the boys. Once in the relationship, a girl student tends to spend a lot of study time reflecting and trying to please the boyfriend, becomes more conscious of her physical beauty and worst of all may fall victim of teenage pregnancy. This may make her to experience problems not only with teachers and parents but can temporally keep her out of school during confinement period.

It is therefore against the foregoing observations that many scholars view mixed schools to have many distracters that lead to underachievement for both genders though the girl child is considered to be the most affected. To mitigate the situation, UNESCO (2007) and Riordan (2008) indicated that some schools were being converted into single gender while others had opted to create separate classes for boys and girls. In Kenya, Githua (2002) advocated for the same trend on grounds that the presence of boys in the classroom inhibited the girl-child from grasping and understanding harder subjects especially Maths and Sciences while Mburu (2013) has declared mixed schools unfit for girl child education.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Learning environment plays a key role in ensuring psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement of a girl-child. Debate on whether girls achieve better in mixed schools or single gender schools has elicited a lot of research with a number of scholars pushing for single sex schooling. Kenya has not been left behind with some scholars declaring mixed schooling unfit for the girl-child education and advocating for creation of girls' only classes. In the recent past, Vihiga County has been caught up in the wave. While some mixed schools are being converted into single gender, others have opted for creation of single gender classes within the same school to allow boys' and girls' to learn separately (Vihiga County Director of Education, Ministry-2015). According to the Director, the move is to enable the girl child who is said to be lagging behind in academic performance due to distractions to compete favorably with the boys. To the best of my knowledge however, no study has been

conducted to inform the current trend in the County. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to examine the implications of boys' behaviors on girl child psycho social adjustment and academic achievement.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives for the study were to;

- i. Establish the influence of boys' behaviors during class sessions on girl child's psychosocial adjustment and academic performance.
- ii. Examine specific boys' behaviors outside class sessions that negatively impact on girl child's psychosocial adjustment and academic performance.

### 4. Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the social learning theory (SLT) by Albert Bandura (1977). The theory states that people learn mainly through observation, mental processing and modeling what they observe. What is learned however should be in accordance with societal values, norms and an observer's beliefs and ability to imitate the behavior. The models for learners are parents, teachers, care givers and peers. For observational learning to take place, one has to go through four main mental (meditational) processes namely; attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. Hence, the behavior must first of all strike the learner as unique and therefore capture his/her attention. The behavior is then rehearsed for retention before it is reproduced. The individual then reproduces the behavior in anticipation of motivation which can be either intrinsic or extrinsic reinforcement or both.

The theory is best suited for the study in that it stresses the importance of models in the social environment in learning. In this case, the learning environment is mixed school, the learner is the girl-child and the models for observational learning are teachers and peers (fellow students). The girl child through interaction with teachers and peers observes the models attitudes, actions and emotional reactions and weighs them against the societal norms and beliefs before allowing the actions to be cognitively processed and reproduced. On reproduction the girl-child will expect a motivation to continue a repetition of the behavior. For example, a girl child observes that teachers expect students to behave and fit within gender stereotype behaviors failure to which one is considered a misfit. Thus when the learner realizes that boys disrupting class by calling out answers, calling others names or being biased in their class consultation is considered to be 'normal' by the teachers, she is most likely to treat such acts as 'normal' too. Hence to avoid getting into trouble with boys or being dismissed by the teacher when she gets offended by any of the 'boy labelled' behavior, she would rather remain passive and suffer in silence. In case of which gender is superior in physical strength and intelligence, a girl- observes the teachers actions and hears the teachers talk in favor of the boy child and she comes to believe it. She then observes the reward that a fellow girl gets when she gets into a confrontation with the boys. From the observation, she gets to understand that it is futile to put up a fight with the boys. Hence, when confronted with boys' behaviors outside class like ridicule, intimidation, sexual harassment and approach for love affairs, a girl-child tends to keep quite or give in as a survival strategy. In the process her academic achievement is compromised.

### 5. Research Methodology

#### 5.1. Research Area

The study was conducted in Vihiga County, Kenya. The County is located on the Western region of Kenya, in the Lake Victoria Basin with altitude ranges from 1300m and 1800m above the sea level. It borders Kakamega County to the north and west, Nandi County to the East, Kisumu County to the south and Siaya County to the south west. The County is made up of four sub-counties namely; Emuhaya, Hamisi, Sabatia and Vihiga. It has one of the highest population densities in Kenya with population of male to female ratio of 0.9: 1, a fact that is reflected in both primary and secondary school enrolment.

#### 5.2. Research Design

The study adopted descriptive and correlational research designs. Descriptive study design does not only determine relationships of variables at the time of study but also allows the researcher to report the current status of the subject under study (Mugenda. & Mugenda, 2013).). The design enabled the researchers to collect information on respondents' experiences on specific boys' behaviors in the sampled schools and their effects on the girl-child psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement with an aim of reporting the situation as on the ground. On the contrary, Correlational research design is used to quantitatively determine the degree to which variables are related and to predict the criterion variable based on the predictor variable's score (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003). The design allowed the researchers to statistically establish the degree and direction of the relationship between boys' behaviors during class sessions and a girl child's academic performance in order to establish the influence of the behaviors on the psychosocial adjustment and academic performance of the female students.

#### 5.3. Study Population

The target populations was all the 92 DOS, 539 form four female students in the students council and 11604 form four students in the 92 mixed secondary schools in Vihiga County. Form four students were targeted due to their wealth of experience emanating from their long stay in the school.

#### 5.4. Sampling Techniques

Stratified random sampling technique was used to divide the schools into strata based on type of school; county schools and sub county schools and on sub counties: Hamisi, Emuhaya, Vihiga and Sabatia. The technique was suitable as it allowed representation of each category of school and each sub county. Thereafter, simple random sampling technique was used to select individual schools for the study from each stratum proportionately to the required sample size (37 schools). Saturated sampling technique was then used to sample all the 37 DOS and all the 217 girls from the students' council for FGD. This was 40% of the target population. The sample size was appropriate because 40% of a target population is considered large enough to serve as a fair representation from which generalizations can be drawn (Best and Kahn 2003). Given that the form four students formed a large population (11604 students), simple random sampling technique was employed to select 374 respondents from the 37 sampled schools based on sampling Table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Simple random sampling technique allowed each student an equal chance of being sampled. The sample size therefore comprised of 37 DOS, 374 students (184-girls and 190-boys) and 217 female form four students' council leaders as shown in the sample frame in table 1.

Respondents	Target population	Sample size
DOS	92	37
Form four Female students in the Council	539	217
Form four students	11604	374
Total	12,235	628

Table 1: Sample Frame

#### 5.5. Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires, document analysis and FGD in data collection. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions were administered to DOS and the form four students. Closed-ended questions were useful in obtaining both personal and specific information from the respondents while open-ended were used where personal opinions, beliefs and attitudes were sought. The use of questionnaires allowed the researchers to get responses that some participants would perhaps not have felt free to give in face- to- face interviews (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009). School records on especially the KCSE performance of girls for the last three years (2013-2015) were analyzed and their average scores tabulated. The scores were then used to establish the relationship between academic performance of girls' and boys' behaviors during class sessions by computing a regression analysis. This was aimed at establishing the correlation between the two variables. FGD were used to gather in-depth information from students and especially captured the 'voice' of the girl child with regard to boys' behaviors towards girls in the absence of the teachers. Through the discussion also, the girls articulated some of the remedies to their proper psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement.

#### 5.6. Piloting of the Research Instruments

A pilot study was conducted in 4 mixed secondary schools in Vihiga County: one school from each sub county. The schools were exempted from the final sample for the study. This number of schools was 11% of the sample size, which is sufficient as per Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommendation. The piloting exercise helped the researcher to identify deficiencies in the data collection instruments, such as repeated, vague or ambiguous items. Such items were then rephrased, modified or discarded all together. Piloting ensured both the validity and reliability of the instruments.

#### 5.7. Validity of the Research Instruments

According to Creswell (2014), Validity is the ability of the instrument to measure what it is intended to measure. The data collection tools were prepared and given to the experts from the department of Educational Psychology for advice on the face and construct validity. Besides, the researcher's supervisors assessed the instruments to ascertain whether the items in the instruments were an accurate measure of the problem under study. According to Mutahi (2000), content validity is usually established by several experts' analysis of the items to determine whether it's a true representative of the concept being studied.

#### 5.8. Reliability of the Research Instruments

Reliability is the degree to which a measure is consistent in yielding the same results when it measures the same thing at different times (Kothari, 2004) Reliability for the current study was established through a test-retest technique. This entailed administering the questionnaires on the same group of respondents in 4 mixed secondary schools in Vihiga County twice with an intervening period of two weeks between the administrations. Each item of the questionnaire was then scored so that each respondent had two scores for correlation. Thereafter, correlation coefficient of the two tests was calculated using Spearman's rank order (rho) given as:

$$\text{Rho} = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

Where:  $Rho$  = Pearson correlation coefficient

$d$  = Difference between the ranked pairs of scores obtained from the test- retest exercise

$N$  = Number of pairs of scores from the test-retest exercise.

The  $\rho$  was found to be 0.806. Since this score was closer to 1, it was deemed significant. Consequently the instruments were deemed reliable leading to their adoption for the study. According to Smith (2003), a reliability index of 0.8 is normally considered adequate.

### 5.9. Data Collection Procedures

To collect data, the researcher sought permission from National Council of Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) through the School of Graduate Studies, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. The researcher then sent a notification letter to the Vihiga County Directors of Education i.e. both ministry and Teachers Service Commission (TSC). This was followed by a personal visit to the sampled schools to meet the principals and the respective respondents to agree on dates and time of data collection. Thereafter, the researcher together with two research assistants visited the schools according to the agreed time and date to administer the questionnaires, conduct FGD and carry out document analysis

### 5.10. Ethical Considerations

While carrying out the study, the researcher ensured that the data presented is original and as collected from the field. Besides, the researcher conformed to the principle of voluntary and informed consent of all the respondents in that none of the respondents was tricked nor coerced to participate in the study. The researcher also ensured confidentiality of the responses given by the respondents. Furthermore, the researcher saw to it that the information collected is solely for the purpose of the study and not any other. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), ethical considerations are important for any research.

## 6. Presentation of Findings, Interpretation and Analysis

### 6.1. Boys' Behaviors during Class Sessions

Both the 37 DOS and 374 sampled students were asked to state the extent to which specified behaviors were manifested by boys during class sessions. An Independent samples Chi square test for association was run to establish whether the two groups of respondents were in agreement in their responses. This was necessary because DOS being in charge of academics, they have firsthand information on what happens during classroom interactions. Their input therefore was to compliment student respondents' observation. The set  $p$  value was 0.05 and the hypotheses to guide the association were;

- $H_0$ : There is no association/ agreement between teachers and students views.
- $H_a$ : There is an association/ agreement between the teachers' and students' views.

According to the findings of the study, a total of 9 DOS (1-Very Much and 8- Very) and 162 students (55- Very Much and 107-Very) affirmed that at times boys 'laugh at' or make fun of girls when they give wrong answers. None of the teachers (0) and only 1 student disputed the observation while the rest of the respondents consented to 'Not Very' and 'Rarely'. A Pearson chi square test was significant at  $p$  value of 0.014 (See table 2).

		Never	Rarely	Not Very	Very	Very Much	
Respondent	Teachers	0	6	22	8	1	37
	Students	1	34	177	55	107	374
Total		1	40	199	63	108	411

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.529 <sup>a</sup>	4	.014
Likelihood Ratio	17.231	4	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.096	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	411		

Table 2: Crosstab Count and Independent Chi-Square on Wrong Answers  
a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

Table 2

Given that  $p$  value of 0.014 as shown in table 2 is less than the set value of 0.05 at 95% significance level, the association was deemed significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative that there is a between the teachers and students' views was accepted. This meant that both the teachers and students are in tandem that at times boys 'laugh at girls' when they give wrong answers making them to get embarrassed and shy off from class participation. Manifestation of such a behavior may cause a girl-child to feel demeaned while those who observe it happen tread the same

happening to them and consequently keep off from by not answering or asking questions during class interactions. In the process, she is not able to tap on the lengthy interactions accorded to a student in order to arrive to the correct answers and consequently receives minimal feedback from the teachers. As such, a girl child loses an opportunity to develop communication skills, to reflect deeper on the concept in question and much more to develop a positive self-concept necessary for academic achievement and school interactions. The findings are in tandem with Malcove, (2007) and Kachero (2014) observation that girls in mixed schools are not free to share their views during class oral discussions nor ask or answer questions for fear of being ridiculed by boys.

Most boys were said to disrupt class lessons during class lessons. A combined total of 9 DOS (1-Very Much and 8-Very) and 164 students; 89-Very Much and 75-Very affirmed the behavior. On the contrary, none of the teachers and only 7 students refuted that boys' exhibit the behavior and thus responded to 'Never'. Results of an Independent samples chi-square test on the foregoing behavior showed that the association was significant (see table 3).

		Never	Rarely	Not Very	Very	Very Much	Total
Respondent	Teachers	0	3	25	8	1	37
	Students	7	22	181	75	89	374
Total		7	25	206	83	90	411

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.197 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.199	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.539	1	.463
N of Valid Cases	411		

Table 3: Crosstab Count and Independent Chi-Square on Class Disruption

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .99.

As indicated in data from table 3, the p value was 0.000, implying that it was too small and therefore normally written as 0.001. The value is statistically significant since it's smaller than the set value of 0.05 ( $p, 0.01 < 0.05$ ). Consequently the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative that there is an association between the teachers and students' views was adopted. The implication is that both the teachers and students were in agreement that boys disrupt class lessons by giving chorus answers or at times in search of attention from the teachers. Disruption is bound to make the concerned teacher to engage the boys more so as to keep them under control or even keeps on reprimanding them while the girls are ignored. Assuch, boys end up being the focus of the teachers receiving more interactions and feedback while girls become passive learners. With time, girls are conditioned to become onlookers during class sessions and this may negatively impact on their self-worth. Besides, while disruption is considered favorable for boys' learning, to a girl child, it makes her to lose concentration and thus miss on the subject content. Altermatt, Jovanovic & Perry (1998) observed that boys would disrupt class by calling out answers or talk in class even when the teacher was not addressing them. While boys excel in a noisy environment characterized by movement and flexibility, girls prefer where lessons are articulated in a noise free manner and minimum distractions (Thompson and Ungerleider 2004; Froscholand Sprung 2005).

It was also observed that boys at times make funny remarks about girls during class discussions. A total of 7 DOS responded to Very while 142 and 117 students responded 'Very much' and 'Very' respectively (see details in table 4).

		Never	Rarely	Not Very	Very	Very Much	Total
Respondent	Teachers	4	6	20	7	0	37
	Students	8	19	88	117	142	374
Total		12	25	108	124	142	411

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.529 <sup>a</sup>	4	.014
Likelihood Ratio	17.231	4	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.096	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	411		

Table 4: Crosstab Count and Independent Chi-Square on Funny Remarks

a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

According to the independent samples chi-square findings, both teachers and students agree that at times boys make funny remarks about girls during class discussions. This was evidenced by a p value of  $0.014 < 0.05$  (refer to table 4). Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no association in both views with regard to funny remarks was discarded and the alternative accepted. Considering that girls are known to be very sensitive to what others think and say about them, the behavior may

make them to feel demeaned and shy off from free interaction with concerned boys and by extension with other boys and in general the girls may fear airing their opinions. Remaining silent makes the girl child to access less interactions with the teachers and fellow peers denying her the opportunity to be visible and worthy of attention leading to low self-esteem and efficacy (Brenner, 1998). Furthermore, the girls may become uncomfortable in class making them to be distracted and miss to grasp whatever subject matter is being taught. In the process a girl-child may be labeled negatively and even end up having poor relationship with the teachers and in the long run, low academic achievement. The finding is in line with Milembe & Davies (2001) observation that girls are driven to conformity by boys who intimidate them by calling them names, shout at them or write upsetting messages about and or to them.

In regard to academic matters, boys were found to prefer to consult fellow boys than girls during class discussions. A majority of the teachers (5-Very Much and 18-Very) and students (139-Very Much and 63-Very totaling to 202) affirmed the behavior. An independent samples chi-square test was computed and the results were significant at  $p, 0.001 < 0.05$  (refer to table 5.)

		Never	Rarely	Not Very	Very	Very Much	Total
Respondent	Teachers	1	2	11	18	5	37
	Students	10	27	135	63	139	374
Total		11	29	146	81	144	411

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.197 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.199	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.539	1	.463
N of Valid Cases	411		

Table 5: Crosstab Count and Independent Chi-Square on Class Consultation

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .99.

Significant tests meant that there was an association between the teachers' views and those of students. As such, the alternative hypothesis was adopted meaning that there was an association meaning that indeed boys prefer to consult fellow boys during class consultations. This behavior deny girls the much needed opportunity to learn from the boys and hold meaningful discussions by assisting each other in areas of weakness in academics. Further still, forging rapport in academics is most likely to foster social interactions with the girls. Thus biased consultation may hinder this from happening. The finding contradicts Rector (2015) observation that working together during classroom assignments allowed boys and girls to benefit from each other intellectually and socially.

In order to establish the influence of boys' behaviors in class on girl-child academic achievement, a regression analysis was run in relation to academic performance of girls in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education (KCSE) for three consecutive years (2013-2015). The p value was set at 0.05 at 95% confidence level. The hypotheses to guide the direction of the correlation were;

- $H_0$ : There is no relationship between boys' behavior in class and the academic performance of the girl child.
- $H_a$ : There is a relationship between boys' behavior in class and the academic performance of the girl child. The findings are shown in table 6.

		BOYS_behaviours	Girls Performance
BOYS_behaviours	Pearson Correlation	1	.378*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021
	N	37	37
Girls Performance	Pearson Correlation	.378*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	
	N	37	37

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.378 <sup>a</sup>	.143	.118	.70852
a. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)				
b. Predictors: (Constant), Boys' behaviors				

Table 6: Regression Analysis on Boys Behaviors in Class

As indicated in table 2, a Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of 0.378 was found. This was a weak positive relationship but statistically significant with p value of 0.021 which was less than the set value of 0.05 i.e.  $p, 0.021 < 0.05$ . This meant that boys' behavior in class was statistically significant in determining a girl-child academic performance. Consequently, a change

in boys' behavior would yield a change in girl-child academic performance in a similar direction. The implication is that when boys behave positively towards girls by not 'laughing at them' when they give wrong answers, stop making funny remarks, consult girls and don't disrupt class lessons, a free and conducive environment will be created where girls will actively and freely participate in class interactions with the teachers and will tap from boy-child's strength both academically and socially. Consequently, this will yield an improvement in academic performance by 14.3% as indicated by R Square in table 2. As such, boys behavior in class without consideration of other factors account for 14.3% of the girl child academic performance negatively or positively. Inferredly therefore, boys behaviors in class negatively or positively impact on girl child self-concept which may lead to psychosocial adjustment or maladjustment. According to Nelly, (2007) and Kessels & Hannover, (2008) a positive self-concept is directly linked to better academic achievement while negative self-concept with under achievement.

### 6.2. Boys Behaviors outside Class Sessions

The section confines itself to boys' behaviors in and out of class in the absence of the teacher or when the students are on their own. The 37 groups each consisting of 6 form four girls in the students' council participated in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This was necessary considering that they are the ambassadors of the issues affecting the girl-child and are seen as role models and that is why they may have been elected in the council. The data from these respondents was meant to bring out the voice of the girl-child on exactly what happens on the ground. The respondents were asked to highlight the specific ways in which the presence of boys inhibited a girl-child's psychosocial and academic achievement. The groups highlighted 5 major behaviors supported by over 50% of the FGD as illustrated in table 6.

Behavior	Number of groups for the Response	Examples of Cited repercussions on girls' Psychologically, Socially and Academically
Boy-girl love relationships	37 (100%)	- Fights among girls - Spreads of negative reports about the girl - unwanted pregnancy/Abortions - Waste of time - Fear to participate in class. - poor relationship with parents and teachers
Sexual harassment/ bullying	28(76%)	- Touching them without their consent - Use of verbal sexual words - Writing notes to the girls/ distractive signals - Spreading negative allegations about girls
View girls as inferior and low achievers	25 (68%)	- Claim some subjects are for boys - Dismiss girls opinions - Boast about their performance in class - steal their items - threaten girls
Disruptive behavior	24 (65%)	- Snatch their items - Noise making in class - Closing their books when they find them reading - Making funny sound while walking
Funny remarks	20 (54%)	- Words like, Cartoon, Brookside, Shosh etc. - When in menses, and don't have pads they keep off for fear of what the boys will say - Cannot be free to do anything for Fear embarrassment before boys

Table 7: Influence of the Presence of Boys' on the Girl Child

All the 37 (100%) groups unanimously reported that the presence of boys make girls to engage in love affairs. Although girls indirectly lured boys into these affairs, boys in most cases took the lead. As a result, most girls would spend a lot of their time thinking about the boys and reflecting on romantic messages and letters written by their boy-friends instead of concentrating on academics. At times, these girls would engage in unprotected sex with the boys leading to unwanted pregnancies forcing the affected girls to be out of school for some time during confinement period. Other girls may opt for unsafe abortions which at times culminate to health problems or even death. Besides, the concerned girls are to use all means to get money so as they could buy gifts for the boy friends in order to sustain the relationship. Love relationships were said to affect the girls even more if it happens that both the concerned boy and girl were in the same class. While the boy uses every opportunity to prove he is worth of the love by actively participating in class, the girl is more conscious of any action that may cause embarrassment and thus shies off from class participation. According to the girls, the worst distractions would be when two girls happen to be in love with one boy causing them to fight. Above all, when such relationships go sour, the girls were said to bear the greatest effects psychologically as the boy goes about spreading defaming reports about the concerned girl.



The observation echoes Mburu (2013) findings that students in mixed schools experienced a number of distractions from the opposite gender and that girls were the most distracted.

Of the 37 FGD's, 28 (76%) confessed to boys sexually harassing girls. Verbally, boys used words like, 'I feel like touching you', 'let's make love' or even spreading false allegations. The situation would be worse especially if the boy had approached the girl for love affair and the girl had declined the request. Worst of all is whenever the boys notice that particular girls frequently consult male teachers. They would interpret that the girls are in-love with such a teacher and begin spreading the allegations. Physical harassment entailed writing of notes with annoying or sexual messages and use of funny signals. This would keep the concerned girl not to be psychosocially well adjusted and distracted from the school core business; academics. Koskey (2011), observed that girls were the greatest victims of sexual harassment and that it curtails a girl-child's participation in Education. According to Ruto (2009) much of the sexual harassment occurs on the way back home from school.

A majority 25 (68%) of the FGD groups said that boys viewed girls as inferior. They gave examples of boys discouraging girls from subjects like Physics and Maths and labeling such subjects as belonging to the boys. Boys were said to brag in class especially when they performed better, dismissed girls opinions and even threatened girls whenever they got involved in a conflict with them. As such, girls may feel and believe they are less intelligent, inferior, and may end up setting limiting academic objectives and consequently, academic underachievement. The finding reflects Kachero (2014) observation that the presences of girls make boys to see themselves as superior as per the societal expectations and would thus work hard to ensure girls don't outperform them. Anderson et.al (1998) reported that boys viewed themselves to be more intelligent than girls because they scored better grades comparatively.

A total of 24 (65%) FGD revealed that boys disruptive behavior like noise making, snatching items from girls or closing their books when they find them reading deny the girls ample environment for studies. At times when boys find girls busy reading, they would walk in a distractive way such as dragging or 'brushing' their feet on the floor just to attract the attention of the girls. Such behaviors deny a girl-child an ample environment to study and make her to feel inferior. According to Warrington & Younger (2002), boys' disruptive behavior hinders the girls from concentrating on their academics. The reporting groups said that such behaviors would go unreported because of threats from the boys echoing Kombo (2005) observation that boys in mixed schools were a times too aggressive to the extent of threatening girls so as to silence them.

Finally, 20 (54%) groups noted that boys were fond of making funny remarks about girls' physical appearance and thus hampered their school adjustment and academic achievement. Names like 'Cartoon', 'Shosh' and 'Mosquito' to refer to short and small bodied girls while words like 'Brookside' referring to girls with large breasts and 'kanono/buffalo' for the big bodied demeaned girls and made them to fear participating fully in school activities such as sports. This habit makes girls to be so conscious of their bodies in that when they are in menses and don't have pads, they would prefer to stay at home rather than expose themselves to ridicule by boys. The finding contradicts ACCES (2011) observation that mixed schools bring together boys and girls allowing them to communicate, work, collaborate and form healthy relationships.

## 7. Conclusions

Based on the foregoing findings and discussions, the study concludes that during class sessions, boys at times 'laugh at' girls whenever they gave wrong answers, prefer to consult fellow boys, make funny remarks about girls and disrupt class by giving chorus answers. As such, a girl-child shies off from active participation in class causing her to have minimal class interactions not only with the teachers but also male peers. Consequently she ends up missing on opportunities to be visible and to be recognized leading to poor self-esteem, poor communication skills, lack of confidence and above all academic underachievement. Outside class, boys approach girls for romantic relationships, consider themselves to be superior, sexually harass girls and threaten them whenever they are involved in a conflict together, disrupt and make negative remarks about girls. These behaviors demean a girl-child, make her fearful and to conform to the status quo to avoid repercussions. Consequently, a girl child misses an opportunity to socialize as brothers and sisters and is generally denied an ample environment to develop inter personal social skills especially with the opposite gender and also to concentrate on her academics. As such a girl child is curtailed from exploring her potential academically and socially leading to psychological maladjustment.

## 8. Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions made, the study recommends that;

1. Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in collaboration with ministry of Education should organize for forums to sensitize teachers on the effects of the boys' behaviors on girl child psychosocial adjustment and academic achievement.
2. Individual school administration in collaboration with counselors should come up with school tailored policies and programs to ensure boys and girls coexist as brothers and sisters and are able to benefit from each other's strength academically and socially should.
3. The individual schools through the deputy principals and DOS in liaison with the teacher counselors should sensitize the boys on the effect of their behaviors on the girl child and come up with strategies on curbing the same.

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