Impact of climate change and variability on pastoral children school attendance in Simanjiro district, Tanzania

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This study was conducted specifically in pastoral community centering on secondary school students' attendance and performance with respect to present and the anticipated threats resulting from climate change impacts given their vulnerability as the community totally depend on climate sensitive resources (pastures and water). The study involved two pastoral villages of Orkasumet and Msitu wa Tembo in Simanjiro District. In these villages two secondary schools were sampled in which teachers, students, parents and educational officials were sampled for this study. Interview was conducted to teachers and District Education Officer while focus and interactive discussions were conducted to parents and students, Questionnaires were also administered to students. Thematic analysis and the use of SPSS software were used for data analysis, data sorting and filtering. The findings of this study indicated that climate extremes have been one of the parameters, which have continually affected students' attendance and ultimately impacting their performance in the sampled schools. Climate extremes were reported by the elders to have increased since the past two to three decades and this is also supported by data from the Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA). It implies that with time climate extremes is now a threat to many sectors including education as per the study focus. The findings also indicated that overtime climate extremes have exacerbated resource conflicts in the pastoralist and farming communities. From the findings, it is concluded that there is a notable relationship between climate variability and change with the education pursuant in secondary schools and this relationship can be noticed seasonally through the year. Therefore it is recommended that infrastructural adjustment is of considerable importance especially the school roads and other learning amenities which seem to be vulnerable to extreme weather parameters especially floods and heavy rains.