Utility of Educational Resources on Access and Equity of Subsidized Secondary Education in Kenya

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Abstract: The Kenya Government announced the release of 2.9 billion for subsidized secondary education and allocated Ksh. 10,265 to every child to cater for tuition and operational costs annually. The purpose of this study is to assess the determinants of access and equity to subsidized secondary education in Eldoret West, Uasin Gishu County. The objective of the study was to determine the effect of educational resources on access and equity to subsidized secondary education in public secondary schools in Eldoret West. The target population comprised of the Sub-County Education Officer, 16 Head Teachers and 227 class teachers was used. Purposeful and stratified simple random samplings were employed. Questionnaires and Interview schedules were the main data collection instruments. The Quantitative data was analyzed using both inferential and descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and measures of central tendency while qualitative data were reported thematically. The study results revealed that there was a significant relationship between educational resources and access and equity to subsidized secondary education (p=0.001). The study concluded that the government should allocate more funds to schools to enable them expand their educational facilities to accommodate the high number of students seeking secondary education

Key words: Utility, Access, Equity, Resources, Subsidized Secondary Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Lockhead (2000) said that the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without the necessary materials. The quality and adequacy of resources affect the quality of education and how effectively the curriculum is implemented. These materials provide information, organize the scope of coverage and the sequence of information presented and provide opportunities for students to use what they have learnt. Such materials include textbooks, teachers’ guides, computers, maps, chalk and exercise books among other teaching and learning aids. Mbiti (2007) alludes that teachers cannot teach well without such supporting materials, no matter how qualified they are. Both the quantity and quality of books should be improved. Having to depend on limited resources and donor funding, the government experienced difficulties maintaining educational standards. Subsequently, the quality of education deteriorated and there was an increase in the number of school-age students who were not receiving formal education. Figures for instance show that massive school dropouts was recorded and that out of about one million students who enrolled in standard one in 2011 and in 2008, less than half a million got to standard eight, a trend that has persisted to date (Oketch and Ngware, 2012; Orodho, Waweru, Ndichu & Nthinguri, 2013).

According to Mwiria (2009), Kenya’s secondary school population enrollment has risen from 30,120 students in 151 schools at the dawn of independence (1963) to 620,000 students in 3,000 schools in the year 2000. Mwiria reported that the target enrollment by the end of 2008 was estimated at 1.4 million students in currently reported 4,478 secondary schools. In 2008, the government introduced plans to offer free Secondary education to all Kenyans. Mwiria observed that with the introduction of Subsidized Secondary Education, enrollment is certain to climb higher. However, the Subsidized Secondary Education program has also created many problems. With increased enrollment year after year, the infrastructure is stretched to the limit and so is manpower. Overcrowded classrooms due to increased number of students are common issue in many secondary schools and the learning facilities available in many schools are inadequate. The pupils to teacher ratio has grown to such a high rate that it has resulted in a decline in the quality of education, mainly due to reduced interactivity between teachers and the pupils (Orodho, 2013).

In 2008 the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) made recommendations to restructure public institutions to streamline efficiency. One change the government made was to reduce gross enrollment rates including a freeze on hiring new teachers by the TSC and this resulted in a significant shortage of teachers. Since 2011, the TSC has been working to retain teachers, and the first full recruitment of about 40,000 was proposed for the 2007 fiscal year. However, the education system still has a shortage of about 60,000 primary school teachers (Oketch and Rolleston, 2007). Despite a sizable portion the budget being allocated to the education sector, the government still relies on donor funding.

To cope with the pressure arising from the increased primary school graduates, the MoE advised all public secondary schools to expand their capacities to a minimum of three streams. In addition, bursary funds targeted at needy secondary schools students was not explicitly expressed in this year’s budget. Despite the allocation of substantial funds earmarked for bursary to needy students, through many grassroots level funds such as Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF), Constituency Development Fund (CDF),
Constituency Bursary Fund (CBF), and these funds may not reach many students given the high per student cost in the delivery of secondary education. PER (2010) notes that the annual per student cost in secondary education estimated at Kshs. 21,800 is too high compared to that in other low-income countries. This is perhaps because majority of the students are enrolled in secondary schools, which offer boarding facilities that tend to push the average cost of secondary education upwards (Institute of Economic Affair; 2007).

1.1 Statement of the problem

Secondary level segment in the education cycle of a Kenyan plays a key role in the development of this workforce and is important since it de-links one from elementary (primary) learning, provides a chance for one to complete the cycle of basic education and anchors as a springboard to either tertiary or higher learning, however, lack of school fees is a perennial problem to students from low socio economic households. Success in retention of students from low socio economic groups require a strong policy commitment backed by practical action (Mantz and Liz, 2011). In Kenya, there have been concerns that government subsidies does not reach the needy students. Students from poor families are still unable to access secondary school education despite its availability. A study done by Kogo (2012) on Bursary Schemes in Financing Secondary Education in Kenya revealed that bursary schemes only enhanced secondary completion by 5.4%. From the above analysis, it is clear that a number of studies have investigated the effectiveness of Constituency bursary funds in relationship with access and equity in Kenya. Despite the Kenya Government’s effort to expand education opportunities for all, through the introduction of Subsidized Secondary Education and the high government expenditure to sustain the Programme It is against this backdrop that the study sought to assess the determinants of access and equity to subsidized secondary education in Eldoret West, Uasin Gishu County in Kenya.

1.2 Objective of the Study

i. To determine the effect of educational resources on access and equity of subsidized secondary education in public secondary schools in Eldoret West, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

1.3 Research Question of the Study

i. To what extent do educational resources affect access and equity of subsidized secondary education in public secondary schools in Eldoret West, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya?

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. The study applied the descriptive survey research design. Surveys are used to systematically gather factual quantifiable information necessary for decision making. Kothari (2008) a survey is preferred due to the following reasons: It enabled the researcher to examine various data, and the relationship between other unknown situations in the prevailing scenarios. The researcher adopted description survey design to investigate the effect of government subsidy on implementation of tuition subsidized policy in Eldoret West sub-county. A sample representing the entire population was chosen to generalize results for the whole population

2.1 Ethical considerations

To ensure that the study complies with the ethical issues pertaining research undertaking, a permission to conduct the research was sought from the respective authorities. A full disclosure of all the activities concerning the study was explained to the authorities and this involved the study intention which was only for learning purposes. A high level of confidentiality and privacy was observed and the findings of the study were only submitted to the university. The researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities before conducting research. The respondents participation was voluntary and free and no promises of benefits for participation. The respondents were assured of privacy and confidentiality of the information obtained from them. The identity of individuals from whom information was obtained in the course of the study was kept strictly confidential. At the conclusion of the study, any information that revealed the identity of individuals who was subjects of research was destroyed unless the individual concerned had consented in writing to its inclusion beforehand. No information revealing the identity of any individual was included in the final report or in any other communication prepared in the course of the study, unless the individual concerned had consented in writing to its inclusion beforehand. Additionally, honesty was observed. Data, results, methods and procedures was honestly reported. There were no fabrications, falsifications or misrepresentation of data. Similarly, objectivity was the researchers concern. The researcher strove to avoid bias in data analysis, data interpretation and other aspects of research where objectivity was required.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to determine the effect of educational resources on access and equity of subsidized secondary education in public secondary schools in Eldoret West, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The study findings were as shown in table 3.1.
The study findings revealed that 76.0% (mean=3.80) were of the view that there are inadequate facilities in the school to accommodate all students, 75.8% (mean=3.79) were of the view that The quality and adequacy of resources affect the quality of education hence student retention, 80.8% (mean=4.04) were of the view that the school experience difficulties maintaining educational standards due to limited educational resources, 78.6% (mean=3.93) were of the view that overcrowded classrooms due to increased number of students are common issue in many universities, 82.6% (mean=4.18) were of the view that the rapid expansion of school education has strained the existing facilities and adversely affected the quality of learning.

The study results revealed that majority of the respondents were of the view that the rapid expansion of school education has strained the existing facilities and adversely affected the quality of learning. This implies secondary schools do not have satisfactory number and quality of computers for effective teaching and learning and that lack of enough physical facilities such as lecture rooms, computers, laboratories and laboratory and workshop equipment negatively affected the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools. In the circumstances that secondary schools are experiencing shortage in learning and teaching physical facilities, what then is the interpretation of the expected higher student enrolment? Our view is that it will lead to further deterioration of quality teaching and learning services offered in these universities. Attempt to meet the objectives of school education will turn into a mirage and exercise in futility. It will be mass production of school graduates who have certificates without matching academic, technical and psychological competence.

These findings are in line with findings by World Bank (2010) and Cheboi (2011) noted that financial resources directed to school education were inadequate. Cheboi (2011) observed that shortage of facilities affected the quality of higher education. He further observed that poor recreation facilities affected quality of higher education. Report of the Secondary schools Inspection Board (Republic of Kenya, 2016) noted that quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials particularly information technologies impact in a very significant way on the quality of teaching and research. The Board further noted that accelerated growth in student numbers in the secondary schools had not been matched by expansion of physical facilities and academic infrastructure and that some of the existing infrastructure was inadequate, dilapidated and in bad state of despair. According to Okwakol (2014) most institutions in Africa do not have adequate physical facilities such as lecture rooms, office, and library and laboratory spaces to provide a suitable learning and teaching environment. She noted that 55% of laboratory equipment in most departments in universities was not in a state in which they could be used to carry out experiments. The net effect of this scenario was that only about half the experiments were done.

The interviewees observed that

Infrastructure is a key base for effective teaching and learning in schools. The goal infrastructure in secondary school education is to increase school attendance of students, enhance staff motivation and improve academic achievements of students. Infrastructure includes classrooms, laboratories, halls, open fields, games equipment, dormitories and sanitation facilities. It is in the classrooms that the day to day formal teaching and learning take place. In the libraries, learners get the opportunity to conduct their own personal studies and carry out research.

It is in the field that co-curriculum activities take place. Learners and teachers need to be housed in the school and at the same time need sanitation facilities like toilets, waste disposal services and clean water. School infrastructure is therefore a very important component in ensuring successful education. Education infrastructure includes suitable spaces to learn. This is one of the most basic elements necessary to ensure access to education. School classrooms are the most common place in which structured learning takes place with

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are inadequate facilities in the school to accommodate all students</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality and adequacy of resources affect the quality of education hence student retention</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school experience difficulties maintaining educational standards due to limited educational resources</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded classrooms due to increased number of students are common issue in many universities</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rapid expansion of school education has strained the existing facilities and adversely affected the quality of learning</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Effect of Educational Resources on Access and Equity
groups of children. While learning also takes place in a variety of different types of spaces - tents, temporary shelters, plastic sheeting, shade of trees, places of worship, people’s homes, and so on families and communities expect formal education to take place in classrooms that have been designed for safety and comfort.

3.2 Inferential Statistics

The study performed ANOVA and regression analysis to estimate the relationships between the study variables. The study results were as tabulated in table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.936</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>0.0868</td>
<td>99.676</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANOVA model indicated the simple correlation was 0.936 which indicates a degree of correlation. The total variation in level of access and equity to education was 87.7% explained by determinants (R Square = 0.877). The study results further revealed that the ANOVA model predicted level of access and equity to education significantly well (p=0.000³). This indicated the statistical significance of the regression model that was run and that overall the regression model statistically significantly predicted the level of access and equity to education (i.e., it was a good fit for the data).

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study as summarized above, it can be concluded that the effect of educational resources on access and equity to secondary education revealed that that majority of the respondents were of the view that the rapid expansion of school education has strained the existing facilities and adversely affected the quality of learning. This implies secondary schools do not have satisfactory number and quality of computers for effective teaching and learning and that lack of enough physical facilities such as lecture rooms, computers, laboratories and laboratory and workshop equipment negatively affected the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools. From the findings it was noted that subsidized secondary education stretched school resources too thin, in that, there was a deficiency in school resources and utilities. For example findings on classrooms required indicated a general deficit of classrooms in school and on latrines most of the schools had not met the ministry of education guidelines.

V. POLICY IMPLICATION

The researcher recommends that the government should build more schools and employ more teachers to accommodate all those qualifying for secondary education from the primary schools. Due to lack of enough teachers most teachers were teaching many lessons per week which was compromising their effectiveness.

REFERENCES