Dynamic of Gross Enrolment Rates: Access and Equity of Subsidized Secondary Education in Kenya

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Abstract: The subsidized secondary education was introduced as a result of Kenya’s effort to attain Education for All (EFA) as indicated in the Sessional Paper no. 1 of 2012. The subsidized secondary education was implemented in February, 2008 by the Coalition Government. This was to reduce the cost of education for parents, increase access to education and to increase transition rates from primary to secondary transition rates in coping with the United Nations aim to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The objective of the study was to determine the effect of gross enrolment rates, on access and equity to subsidized secondary education in public secondary schools in Eldoret West. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of the Sub-County Education Officer, 16 Head Teachers and 227 class teachers was used. Purposive and stratified simple random samplings were employed. Questionnaires and Interview schedules were the main data collection instruments. The collected data was analyzed using both inferential and descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and measures of central tendency. The study results revealed that there was a significant relationship between gross enrolment rates and access and equity to subsidized secondary education (p=0.005). The study concluded that subsidized secondary education has enabled more students to access secondary education. The average number of students per class has been increasing over the years. However, measures should be put in place to ensure school resources are used well.

Key words: Dynamic, Access, Equity, Subsidized Secondary Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Rolleston (2009), made it explicit that not only indirect costs hinder access and equity of the poor but also, opportunity costs substantially affect the chances of poor students to enroll and complete basic education. A study of access and equity patterns in Malawi also concludes that access and equity to education continues to reflect the household wealth (Chimombo, 2009). Thus, despite direct fees being abolished, the abolition of fees has been enough to ensure access and equity to education for the poor. Although the introduction of a Nine Year Basic Education Programme in Rwanda led to the Gross Enrollment Ratios (GERs) and Gross Completion Ratios (GCRs) from 16.6% in 2012 to 18.3% in 2013, girls remain underrepresented in the overall enrollment, showing 47.5% in 2013, compared to 47.2% in 2012. Free secondary education in this instance did not narrow gender disparities in access and equity to secondary education greatly in Ghana. This study will establish the same for SFDSE in Kenya.

Lewin (2008) found that completion rates improved substantially in Bangladesh after the introduction of bursary scheme to secondary school students. Muthoki (2015) study in Mitto-Andei Division Kibwezi Sub-County Makueni County found that government bursaries helped poor students’ access secondary education leading to high retention rates, consequently leading to high students completion rates. The study used descriptive survey design. The target population was 2228 and the sample size was 228 respondents. It is on this basis this study sought to determine the extent to which government bursary influence completion rates in public day secondary schools in Kitui County.

While introducing Universal Secondary Education (USE) in Uganda there was a great concern that, only one in five students who completed primary school had access to secondary education, and the majority of them are those from wealthy households (UNESCO, 2007). A study done by Kinaro (2015) in secondary schools in Mvita Sub-County Mombasa County found that subsidized secondary education funds provided by the government has led to high completion rates in public day secondary schools. The study used descriptive survey design. The target population was 238 and the sample size was 88 respondents. It is on this basis this study sought to determine the extent to which FDSE influence completion rates in public day secondary schools in Kitui County.

Kenya government play very crucial role in financing of public secondary education especially through Free Day Secondary Education. In 2007, the Government formed a taskforce to look into ways and means of reducing the cost of secondary education on households (Ministry of Education, 2008). The taskforce on Affordable Secondary Education was led by Dr. Eddah Gachukia and it recommended a Government monetary subsidy of Kshs. 10 265 per child to meet the cost of instructional material and other support services (Gachukia, 2007). The disbursement of FDSE funds is in three batches; 50 per cent in first term, 30 per cent in second term and 20 per cent in third term. The FDSE funds were to be later revised through government circular No. MOE.DSEC/5/17 of 2015 to Ksh. 12 870 per child.

A Study done by Ngwili (2014) on factors influencing student’s completion rates in public day and boarding
secondary schools in Kibwezi Sub-County, Makueni County found that funds from FDSE are used to enhance educational facilities in day secondary schools, this has provided ideal environment for quality education, hence improved completion rates. The study design was descriptive survey, the target population was 632 and the sample size was 242 respondents. The study concentrated on the factors influencing students’ completion rates in public day and boarding secondary schools.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Equity consideration and retention necessitates public intervention which is necessary to safeguard against inequalities in access to this public good, given the relatively high household poverty incidences, estimated at 46 per cent (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Left to the market, social selectivity will set in to favor privileged households. 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. The Gross Enrolment Rate for secondary education in Kenya is 29.8% (Odebero et al., 2007; Wachiye & Nasongo, 2010). 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, no empirical studies had been undertaken to assess the effects of SSE Programme on access to the educational resources in public secondary schools in Kenya. 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 gross enrolment rates 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. What is the effect of gross enrolment rates on 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 were 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 investigate the effect of gross enrolment rates 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.

3.1 Effects of Gross Enrolment Rates on Access and Equity
The study results on the gross enrolment rates on access and equity to education revealed that 90.4% (mean = 4.52) were of the view that level of access and equity to education hit the target, 89.8% (mean = 4.49) were of the view that enrolment levels set by the ministry were realistic and achievable, 90.4% (mean = 4.52) were of the view that the university realized significant increase in enrolment levels whereas 85.6% (mean = 4.28) were of the view that there was an improved access and equity to education in the year.

Chimombo (2007) study agree that a significant access to secondary school enrollments in the country was observed among rural, poor and girls, in 2002, less than 46% of students from the poorest quintile households was enrolled in secondary school education against 82% from the richest quintile. By 2007, about 78% of students from the poorest quintile were enrolled compared with 89% of students from the richest quintile. The gaps in the percentage of enrollment in Uganda between the poorest and richest quintile had reduced by 25% between 2002 and 2007. A substantial increase in learners’ enrollments and completion of basic education was particularly identified among girls from the poorest quintile. However, increased access and equity of learners to complete the basic education cycle is likely to be at the expense of other basic needs of households.

Lewin (2008) found that completion rates improved substantially in Bangladesh after the introduction of a bursary scheme to secondary school students. Keith (2008) study in UK on Effect of Government Bursary on Transition and Completion rates found that it led to high transition and completion rates. Muthoki (2015) study in Makueni County found that government bursaries helped poor students access secondary education leading to high retention rates, consequently leading to high students completion rates. The study used descriptive survey design.

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 3.1: Gross Enrolment Rates on Access and Equity to Education

<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>Level of access and equity to education hit the target</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment levels set by the ministry were realistic and achievable</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university realized significant increase in enrolment levels</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was an improved access and equity to education in the year</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>100</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 = 0.000). 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).

### Table 3.2: ANOVA Model

<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>

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study as summarized above, it can be concluded that subsidized secondary school education is a worthy initiative as it enhances access to education despite the many challenges. The study established that more students were able to attend schools as a result of subsidized secondary education and this contributes to equity in secondary education. The study results on the gross enrolment rates on access and equity to education revealed that there was a substantial increase in learners’ enrollments and completion of basic education was particular identified among students from the poorest quintile. However, increased access and
equity of learners to complete the basic education cycle is likely to be at the expense of other basic needs of households.

V. POLICY IMPLICATION

The government should allocate enough funds in time and resources to schools to ensure that subsidized secondary school education runs smoothly without compromising quality of education.

REFERENCES


