

Socio-Economic Factors and Internal Efficiency of Education: A Critical Analysis of Public Day Secondary Schools in Chepalungu Sub County, Bomet – Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Education plays a critical role in promoting economic, social, cultural and political development of individuals, communities, nations and humanities. The purpose of this study was to establish effects of parental income levels and students' engagement in household duties on internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu Sub County, Bomet County, Kenya. The study was underpinned by the educational production theory which asserts that an education process is looked at as where inputs are converted into outputs. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and targeted a population of 327 Class Teachers, 3277 students and 62 principals. A sample of 14 schools, 66 class teachers and 346 students were used as study respondents. Field survey method was adopted to collect data using questionnaires and document analysis. Data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) and presented using tables, frequencies and percentages. The study findings revealed that the two factors of parental income levels and students' engagement in household duties influenced internal efficiency in the provision of secondary education in Chepalungu Sub-County. The study found out that rates of student retention were very low due to low levels of parental income and students' engagement in household duties. Also, most parents in Chepalungu sub-county were depicted to be poor or very poor as most parents were subsistence farmers, small scale business persons or casual workers. From the findings of the study, the researchers recommend that the impoverished status of the sub-county should be addressed as a matter of urgency by the community with the assistance of the government for the parents to have reliable sources of income to economically support their children in school. There should be a departure from the reliance on formal or salaried employment which at the moment accounts for less than 30% of the total employment. There should also be sensitization against negative attitudes and values that tend to undermine the progress of students' education such as child labour and other household duties.

Keywords:

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1. INTRODUCTION

The effects of socio-economic factors on internal efficiency in the offer of education in public day secondary school has been the focus because there will be elimination of the possible threats that can be faced. The World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990 declared basic education a human right. This was deemed achievable if access to basic education was fair to all.

According to Gitonga (2012), measures of internal efficiency reflect effectively a part of the educational system that uses available resources to achieve specified educational outcomes. Education systems in many countries exhibit high levels of inefficiencies which affects how students perform, Day and Hong (2016). Internal efficiency of an education system is defined as the ability to educate the greatest number of students in the shortest time and with the least use of financial and

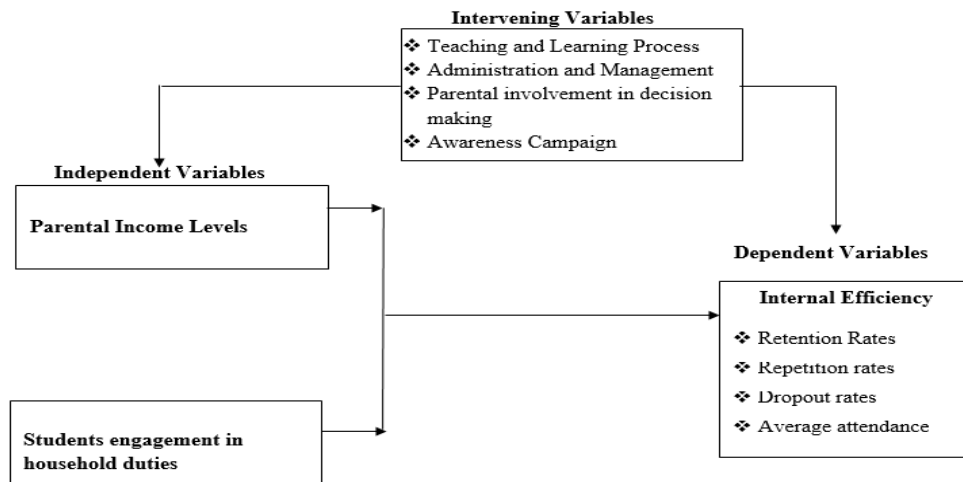
human resources. A system is said to be internally efficient if the inputs and efforts channeled to it give the expected output. According to Gitonga (2012), secondary education has internal efficiency problems such as high wastage because of low completion, high repetition and dropouts especially in upper classes.

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efficiency problems such as high wastage because of low completion, high repetition and dropouts especially in upper classes.

Internationally, Parents control the initial decision of a child to attend school and often influence the nature of a child's

sustainable development. Despite the government's effort in funding of secondary education through Free Day Secondary Education, parents have had to chip in so as to meet some costs of running of schools. Some students have dropped out of school due to lack of the required resources such as school fees and learning equipment; this has resulted to educational



participation in education. Support that the children receive in education may influence persistence with school. Retention of learners in secondary schools is strongly related to family background and education of parents (Afonso, 2006). Parental support is critical in the area of moral, psychological and basic necessities of the child towards shaping of the child's life (Pelt, 2009; Holford, 2010). Ngwiri (2008) asserts that the parent is the first teacher of the child. Moreover, parental contribution in areas of fees, teaching materials and uniforms has been vital for the expansion of education in Kenya (GoK 2012). Parental participation can be enhanced by ensuring that demands on them are kept to the minimum and are related to improvement of the learning. Amounts of funds demanded as well as reasons for such demands should be worked out with the consensus of all parents through real democratized process and most important of all, ensure that parent's contribution are correctly utilized in ways that are clearly transparent and accountable.

Family related factors such as low socio-economic status which lowers the parents' capacity to pay school fees and also buy reading materials for their children, and low educational attainment of parents who thus cannot motivate their children to learn contribute to low internal efficiency (Odebero, 2002). The low retention levels are further worsened by the negative perceptions held by some students towards education, which due to high level of educated unemployment causes poor attitudes towards regular schooling (Verspoor, 2008). In Kenya, the stakeholders recognize that although major strides have been made in education in quantitative terms, there are serious shortcomings in the education system. Despite heavy investments in the 8:4:4 system of education, high wastage as a result of low retention in school among secondary school learners is experienced (GoK, 2012). Wastage is the worst form of inefficiency because when learners drop out of school, resources already invested in them go to waste.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Clarity is evident on how the education sector needs to be able to meet the objectives of the vision 2030 in order to create a

wastage. Cohort survival rates are low and repetition rates and dropout rates are the highest in form one (repetition rate 6.5%, dropout rate 9.12%) and form two (repetition rate 5.84%, dropout rate 5.88%). The data of form three is reflected as follows: in 2012 the county had 50,440 students in public day secondary schools and those who were registered for KCSE in 2013 were 33,821 (65.98%) implying a wastage rate of approximately 34.02%. It was in the light of this that the researcher wanted to find out the socio-economic factors responsible for low retention rates, high repetition rates, high dropout rates and absenteeism in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu Sub County, Bomet County, Kenya.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the socio-economic stipulations that contributes to internal efficiency; retention rates, repetition rates, dropout rates and average attendance and recommend possible strategies to improve education sector in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu Sub County in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives to:

- i) Examine the extent to which parental income levels influence internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu, Bomet County.
- ii) Establish the extent to which students' engagement in household duties influence internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu, Bomet County.

1.4 Research Questions

In pursuit to achieve the above objectives the researcher inquired answers to the following questions.

i) How does parental income levels influence the internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu, Bomet County?

iv) How does students' engagement in household duties influence the internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu, Bomet County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be useful in enlightening the school management about the effects of socio-economic factors on internal efficiency of education. Parents/guardians may also get knowledge about their roles in ensuring internal efficiency of education in public day secondary schools and that students attend schools regularly to enhance access to general education standards. The understanding of the socio-economic factors by parents and students on internal efficiency of education is hoped to help them understand the importance of parental level of education, family structure, parental income levels and students' engagement in household activities on internal efficiency of education.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework shows how parents income levels and students' engagement in household duties may influence internal efficiency of education.

Parental income levels can affect the academic performance of a students because children will look up to their parents for various needs that are required in school. The students' engagement in household duties will also affect the students in that they will suffer from fatigue and will not be able to concentrate on their studies, besides that they will waste a lot of time that they could use studying.

On the other hand, there are a number of intervening variables which needs to be taken into consideration so as to enhance the effectiveness of internal efficiency of education. Some of these variables as shown in the conceptual framework include, awareness campaigns being held so as to enlighten the parents on their characteristics which are affecting the academic performance of their children. Another intervening variable includes holding annual meetings in the school for parents as well as involving them in the decision-making process. This helps in improving the attitude of parents towards the education of their children and thus encouraging them to be directly involved in the academic progress of their children.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt descriptive survey design. It was preferred as it explains the existing status of both the dependent and independent variables. It is relevant to the study because it seeks to collect data from respondents about the socio-economic factors affecting internal efficiency in public day secondary schools in Chepalungu Sub County. There is also a need for engagement of quantitative approaches in collection of data. The use of questionnaires and surveys help in getting information from the respondents appropriately without any

inhibiting factor. In the study, the target schools were 62 public day secondary translating to a population of 62 principals, 327 Class teachers and 3,277 students (Chepalungu Sub County Enrolment Report, 2020).

Due to the large number of class teachers and students in Chepalungu sub –county, a sample of between 20% and 50% of schools and class teachers was sampled for easy analysis as recommended by Gay, Mills and Airasian, (2012). This resulted to a sample size of 62 principals and 78 class teachers; to sample the students the researcher used Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination table. Questionnaires and document analysis were used as tools for data collection.

A Structured Questionnaire with both open and closed ended questions was used in obtaining relevant data for the study. The questionnaire items were face-validated to ascertain its suitability for use in data collection by an expert in the field of study. The language, contents and the structure of the items were critically examined and possible corrections and suggestions were made. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using a test –retest method. A reliability coefficient of 0.8 was obtained for the instruments using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient in a pilot study conducted with 13 teachers in two- public day secondary schools. The research instrument was administered personally by hand to the Teachers in the public day secondary schools selected. This was after obtaining permission from NACOSTI and the relevant heads of the institutions. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics by the aid of SPSS. Qualitative data was organized into themes of the study.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Influence of Parental Income Levels on Internal Efficiency in the Provision of Education

The other objective of the study was to investigate the influence of parental income levels on internal efficiency in the provision of education. Data on this objective was obtained by probing the respondents on the income of the parents and the reasons leading to the students' drop out.

The researcher investigated the parents' occupation status/employment. This was to investigate the financial background of the parents and how it affects the student's academic performance. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Occupational Status of Parents

Occupation Status of Parents	Frequency	Percentage
Self employed	75	28
Employed	46	17
Unemployed	149	55
Total	270	100

The findings in Table 1 indicate that the majority of the respondents 55% were unemployed. The students from unemployed parents performed poorly than those from employed parents. This explains the poor performance by the students since majority of the parents are not employed and therefore, they are not very capable of providing the necessary learning materials for their students leading to poor academic performance.

The low financial background status perpetuate education deprivation Kaspro (1999) hence the unemployed parents will definitely find it difficult to pay school fees and meet other educational expenses for their children while employed parents have higher income and therefore deploy their resources in a manner creating preschool conditions conducive to a successful school performance. Prewit, 1989; note that family income level influence educational chances for the child since this determine the motivation with which the child pursues basic education.

However, the researcher cited two cases of school going children whose performance was good and yet they came from poor family background. After investigation the researcher realized that these children get sponsorship which is offered to some school children in this area. There were also few cases from the employed parents who performed very poorly. This can be as a result of poor parental commitment due to job occupation.

The researcher then sought to investigate the parents' average income per month in relation to academic performance. The results are shown in the Figure 4.1.

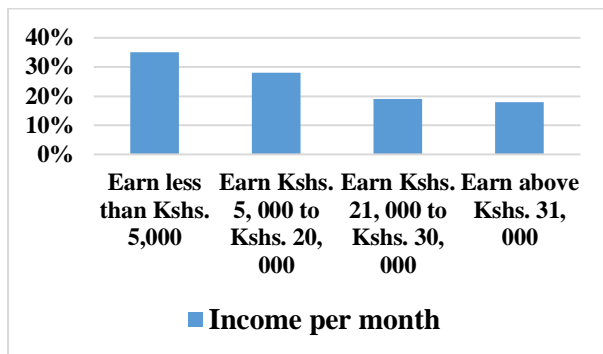


Figure 1 Average Range of Parent's Income Per Month

The findings on Figure1 indicated that most (35%) of the parents earn less than Kshs. 5,000. This explains the poor academic performance by the students in the public day secondary schools and hence provision of education. This is as a result of inadequate income that the parents are earning and thus are not able to provide the required learning materials to their children to enable them perform well.

The findings are a reflection of Mwoma (2008), who indicated that education usually entails expenses such as buying reading materials, stationery among others. This introduces the element of family economic status into question. Studies have noted that family economic status determines the extent of parental involvement in their children's education. Parents who are illiterate and poor and cannot afford to buy supplementary learning materials are less likely to be actively involved in their children's education. They are preoccupied with different chores to fend for their families and, paradoxically, children are expected to engage in some form of child labour that can contribute towards family provisioning and sustenance at the expense of their education resulting to poor academic performance.

Table 2. Reasons for Student's Dropout

Statements	Yes	No
Students who drop out of school come from poor families	240 (89%)	30 (11%)
Students who perform poorly in academics decide to drop out of school	162 (60%)	81 (30%)
Students are absent to assist their parents at home	257 (95%)	14 (5%)
Drug abuse results in school dropouts	248 (92%)	22 (8%)
Late school starters drop out before completion	140 (52%)	130 (48%)
Early school starters drop out before completion	43 (16%)	227 (84%)
Students who are orphans drop out of school before completion	149 (55%)	122 (45%)
Students who dropout are from parents with low level of education	140 (52%)	130 (48%)
Students who dropout are those whose parents live together	51 (19%)	219 (81%)

Table 2 indicates that the majority 89% of the respondents indicated that students who drop out of school come from poor families while 60% indicated that students who perform poorly in academics decide to drop out of school. A majority 95% indicated that students are absent to assist their parents with work at home. It was also indicated that drug abuse resulted in school dropouts while a majority indicated that late school starters drop out before completion. A majority disagreed that early school starters drop out before completion while the others indicated that students who are orphans drop out of school before completion. A majority indicated that students who dropout are those of parents whose level of education is low while a majority disagreed that students who drop out are those whose both parents live together.

Sabates (2010) reports that children are starting secondary school in greater numbers than ever before but dropout rates are significant and this leads to low levels of secondary school completion. The student completion rates (SCR) declined from 76.8% in 2018 to 74.6 in 2019. The decline in SCR could be attributed to dropouts and repetition occasioned by socioeconomic factors such as poverty, child labour and family structure (Economic Survey, 2019).

4.2 Influence of Students' Engagement in Household Duties on Internal Efficiency in the Provision of Education

The study investigated the influence of students' engagement in household duties on internal efficiency in the provision of education by probing students' involvement in work at home, teachers enhance student socialization to facilitate their performance in the society, parents' adequate provision of students' schools needs and students' involvements in domestic chores affect their academic performance.

The study assessed if the students are engaged in any work at home and the results are presented in Figure 2.

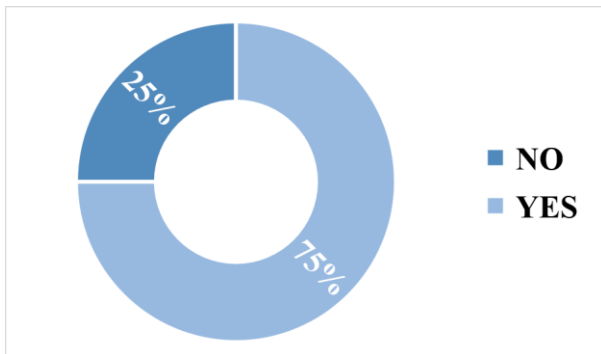


Figure 2 Students' Involvement in Work at Home

The findings on Figure 2 shows that the majority 75% of the students are involved in domestic work at home. The involvement of the students in domestic chores is likely to affect their performance in KCSE.

These findings confirm what Roschanski (2007) found out that involving children in domestic chores lead to irregular attendance of school leading to poor performance and eventually drop out.

The study also assessed if the students find household duties affecting their academic performance the results are presented in Figure 3.

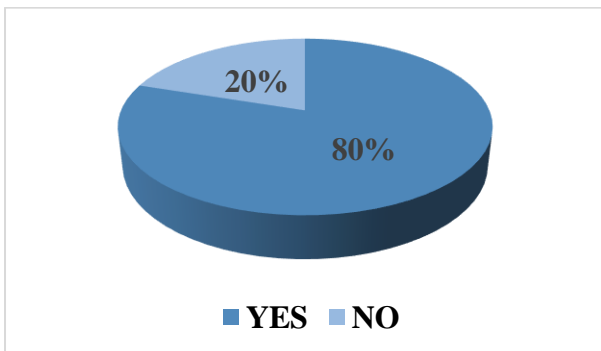


Figure 3 Students' Involvements in Household duties

The data on Figure 3 shows that a majority 80% of the students' respondents said that their involvement in domestic work at home affect their academic performance at the Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs) and may also have an impact in the final exams KCSE. This shows that most of the students are involved in domestic chores which are affecting their KCSE performance. Other scholars (Khataret al. 1998; Khandker 1996; Patrinos and Psacharopoulos; 1997; Kanbargi; 1988) have also reported that the fact that a child is working increases the probability of failing a grade (or grade repetition) and even dropping out of school.

5. CONCLUSION

1. Parental income levels affect the internal efficiency of education. Parents are supposed to provide for their children the basic needs and other essential needs they may require for their education. Parents are also supposed to pay school fees

and other levies in school. This is only possible if the parents have certain levels of income.

2. It can be concluded that household duties affect internal efficiency because students are forced to be out of school to attend to household duties and lack concentration due to fatigue associated to household chores.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage and compel more substantive and sustained involvement of parents and the community in the Student's education affairs in schools. Parent-teacher associations are required to be more engaged and assertive. Parents and the communities have tended to be casual and indifferent on matters that relate to student's education progress maybe because of social-economic circumstances and parental education levels which must be enhanced.

2. Through PTAs, churches, counselling agencies and grassroots administration, households and communities must be sensitized and educated against negative attitudes and values that tend to undermine the progress of students' education such as child labour, forced marriages and rituals like circumcision that keep victims away from schools for unduly lengthy periods. Strictly enforce the adherence to the Education Act that has provisions that compel parents and communities to send and facilitate retention of students in schools or risk legal sanctions

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