

Provision of Learning Resources by Constituency Development Fund and Its Influence on Retention of Learners in Public Boarding Secondary Schools in Kenya

Robert Nakhosi Wamalwa¹, Patrick Cheben Simiyu¹, Lynnette Nabwile Wanjala^{2,*}

¹University of Nairobi

²Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology

*Corresponding author: lwanjala@gmail.com

Abstract Provision of learning resources by CDF influence retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools is part of an effort by the Kenya government to equip secondary school. It is aimed at increasing access to secondary schools, ensuring retention of students, promoting transition and completion rates in secondary schools. It is also aimed at reducing disparities and inequalities in the provision of secondary education. The set out to determine whether there is statistically significant relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The researchers ran a correlation on a data from a sample of 338 persons which comprised of comprised of the 5 head teachers, 23 teachers, 294 learners and 16 CDF committee members in public secondary schools in Kitale Municipality, TransNzoia County, Keya. We established that there is a statistically significant linear relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. The study also established that despite the CDF providing learning resource to boarding schools it had very little impact on learners retention as many of those in schools were from the high socio-economic status and hence their retention in school was already guaranteed. The study recommends that the government should allocate more funds for promotion of facilities in schools which are non-boarding schools.

Keywords: *learning resources, constituency development fund, retention, public boarding schools*

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1. Introduction

Education provides a foundation for development, the groundwork on which much of our economic and social wellbeing is built. It is the key to increasing economic efficiency and social consistency. By increasing the value and efficiency of their labor, it helps to raise the poor from poverty. It increases the overall productivity and intellectual flexibility of the labor force. It helps to ensure that a country is competitive in world markets now characterized by changing technologies and production methods. By increasing a child's integration with dissimilar social or ethnic groups early in life, education contributes significantly to nation building and interpersonal tolerance [11]. Hence, governments need to provide funds to support a broad based equitable expansion of secondary education with incentives for private provision and subsidies to disadvantaged students to ensure equality of opportunity and eventually eradicate

poverty. Provision of learning facilities and allocation of government bursaries to deserving students enables them to access education.

In most developing countries, the disadvantaged members of the society such as orphans and the poor are not enabled to access education. This is more specifically pronounced in marginalized communities as well as low income households. In these countries, few disadvantaged members of the society such as orphans and the poor enrol in schools and the few who enrol, drop out early due to socio cultural and economic factors which include poverty (Towett, 2004). Consequently these orphans and the poor lack their basic right of meaningful education. The lagging behind in education of vulnerable learners in these communities leads to diminished life chances in various areas such as employment, health and participation in political processes that affect their lives. This is consistent with the observation that restricted opportunity is one of the most powerful mechanisms for transmitting poverty across generations among the marginalized [4].

The government of Kenya recognizes the fact that education is the main pillar in the overall development process of the country [14]. Consequently, it has developed an education policy that is geared towards education for all. It is aimed at eliminating disparity in all levels of education by 2015, a step that is in conformity with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) [15]. The government of Kenya has put in place several interventions to provide schooling opportunities for the poor and vulnerable. In 2003, the government of Kenya introduced Constituency Development Fund (CDF) bursary with an aim of assisting the poor and the vulnerable groups in the community to meet their basic needs such as health and education. Among these interventions include free primary education, subsidized secondary education, education bursaries and CDF. Various constituencies in Kenya, through the CDF, operate a bursary fund for secondary schools as part of a social dimension of development programme initiative targeting poor and vulnerable students.

The CDF bursary as one of the interventions aimed at achieving four objectives: increasing access to secondary schools, ensuring retention of students in secondary schools, promoting transition and completion rates and reducing disparities and inequalities in the provision of secondary education. The bursary scheme targets to assist orphans, children from arid and semi-arid lands, children in difficult circumstances and other vulnerable groups, children from poor households especially those without income and generally the girl child [12]. But despite these, issues such as corruption, political patronage, nepotism and tribalism have plagued the CDF award process to schools. Worse still is the little regard for defined bursary eligibility criteria. There is inadequate information to facilitate re-orientation of the CDF to make it a needs-based initiative. For example, students from high socio-economic backgrounds received more bursary support than their counterparts from the humble backgrounds as a result of political pressure exerted on the CDF committee [2]. The learners of TransNzoia County, Kenya, are eligible to this fund. It is not confirmed whether the poor and the vulnerable groups are aware of these interventions. This study therefore sought; to establish how the CDF has assisted the learners in the provision of education in TransNzoia County. Although funds are disbursed by government for onward awarding to needy students in TransNzoia County, such students have had to transfer from public boarding to public day secondary schools which are cheaper. This implies that equity in the allocation of the CDF to schools and students has not been achieved fully. It is on such background that the researchers sought to determine the extent to which provision of learning resources by CDF influence retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools

in Kitale Municipality, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya.

2. Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design. According to Anastas (1999) descriptive research design helps to provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where that are associated with a particular research problem. Gay [5] observes that descriptive survey research design is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. Hence, this study employed the descriptive design to collect quantitative data and establish the extent to which provision of learning resources by CDF influence retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale Municipality, TransNzoia County, Kenya.

All the five (5) boarding schools in Kitale Municipality were used in the study. Given that the study's target population was 2658, which comprised of the head teachers, teachers, learners and CDF committee members, the researcher used the Morgan and Krejcie [6] Table for sample size determination to arrive at 338 respondents. The 5 head teachers and 16 CDF committee members were purposively sampled. The remaining 317 respondents were proportionately distributed among the teachers and students according to their population size. The sample size was as shown in Table 1.

For this study, data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Creswell [3] observes that collecting data from both primary and secondary sources helps the researcher to employ strategies of inquiry that involve collection of data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems hence improving instrument validity because the strengths of one approach can compensate for the others' weaknesses. As such, the study used questionnaires, interviews and document analysis as tools for data collection. The validity of the instruments was checked by the experts in the area of study. In this study, instruments were tested twice (test-retest) within a space of three weeks. Thus, the same instruments were administered twice to the same group of subjects using test-retest method (Kothari, 2003). Thereafter, Cronbach Alpha coefficient was obtained as 0.763. According to Lichtman, [7], as a rule of thumb, acceptable alpha should be 0.70 or above. In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was higher than the minimum acceptable value. Therefore the items were considered reliable. The analysis of the data was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The researchers used Correlation to establish the influence of CDF bursaries provision of infrastructure on retention of students in schools.

Table 1. Sample Size

No	Category	Sample Size (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Public boarding Secondary School Head Teachers	05	1.48
2	Secondary School Teachers	23	6.81
3	Secondary School Students	294	86.98
4	Constituency Bursary Fund Committee Members	16	4.73
Total		338	100.00

3. Results and Discussions

The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which provision of learning resources by CDF influence retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale Municipality, TransNzoia County. The study was therefore guided by the following null hypothesis: HO_1 - There is no statistically significant relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. To determine this objective the study had to look at the following areas:

3.1. Sources of Funding of Physical Facilities in Public Boarding Secondary Schools

The study sought to determine the sources of funding of physical facilities in public boarding secondary schools. To determine this, head teachers were asked to state where the sourced funds for the physical facilities in their schools. This was summarized in Table 2.

The study established that PTA is the major funder (100.00%) of the physical facilities in public secondary schools. CDF (80.00%), GOK (60.00%) and LATF (60.00%) were also identified as a source of funding for the physical facilities in public secondary schools. This implies that CDF plays a crucial role in funding the

physical facilities in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale Municipality, TransNzoia County.

3.2. Extent of CDF Funded Physical Facilities in Public Secondary Schools

The study also sought to establish how CDF funds have been used to facilitate the provision of physical facilities in public secondary schools in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia County. The results are as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that most of the facilities (36.36%) in schools were funded by the PTA. Head teachers also indicated that the projects which most benefited from CDF funds were the classrooms (5 out of 5), science laboratories (4 out of 5), administration block (4 out of 5) and dining halls (4 out of 5). The other facilities were funded by GOK (19.58%), LATF (24.34%) and other bodies (15.49%). This implies that schools did not only rely on CDF funds for facilities. It also shows that the CDF funds were inadequate, thereby making it necessary to seek funds elsewhere. This finding is in tandem with that of Kippra (2005) on the accountability and performance of the CDF. It revealed that, only 15.7% of the respondents rated its accountability as good. Majority of the respondents expressed high levels of distrust in the CDF managers. Mwangi [10] also observes that giving out money through the constituency is fraught with pitfalls. To him, students who deserve never get the money because of political interference.

Table 2. Sources of funding of physical facilities in public secondary schools

Facility	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
CDF	4	80.00%	1	20.00%	5	100.00%
PTA	5	100.00%	0	0.00%	5	100.00%
GOK	2	40.00%	3	60.00%	5	100.00%
LATF	3	60.00%	2	40.00%	5	100.00%
Other Sources	3	60.00%	2	40.00%	5	100.00%

Table 3. Shows the sources of funding of physical facilities in public boarding schools

Facility	CDF	PTA	GoK	LATF	Other Sources	Total
Classrooms	5	4	3	1	1	14
Toilets	2	5	3	1	2	13
School land	1	3	1	0	1	6
Libraries	3	4	3	1	1	12
Dormitories	3	4	2	0	2	11
Science labs	4	4	3	0	1	12
Teachers' houses	2	3	1	0	2	8
School vehicles	2	4	3	0	3	12
Computer	1	5	4	1	1	12
Administration block	4	3	1	1	3	12
Dining hall	4	4	0	0	1	9
Home science room	1	4	0	0	3	8
Computer lab	3	5	4	1	1	14
Total	35 (24.65%)	52 (28.67%)	28 (19.58%)	6 (24.34%)	22 (15.49%)	143 (100.0%)

NB: N>5 because of the multiple responses from the head teachers.

Table 4. Effectiveness of CDF on provision of facilities

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Head teachers	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	0 (00.0%)	3 (60.0%)	2 (40.0%)	5 (100.0%)
Teachers	1 (4.36%)	3 (13.04%)	4 (17.39%)	8 (34.78%)	7 (30.43%)	23 (100.0%)
Constituency Bursary Fund Committee Members	7 (43.75%)	8 (50.0%)	1 (6.25%)	0 (00.00%)	0 (00.00%)	16 (100.00%)

Source: Author, 2016.

3.3. Effectiveness of CDF on provision of facilities

The study sought to identify the effectiveness of Government funding in acquisition of educational resources in public boarding secondary schools. The findings were as shown in Table 4.

The study established that majority of the head teachers (100.0%) and teachers (65.21%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that CDF was effective in provision of facilities in public boarding secondary schools in TransNzoia County. It is only Constituency Bursary Fund (CBF) Committee Members (93.75%) who agreed or strongly agreed that CDF was effective in provision of facilities in public boarding secondary schools in TransNzoia County. This might be due to nature of their work with the CDF. This finding implies that CDF is not very effective in the provision of facilities in public boarding secondary schools and hence there is need for the government to change tact in order to make it effective. The finding corroborates with that of Mucai [8] who established that in the boys and girls boarding secondary schools CDF funding, though having contributed to the availability of educational resources, was insufficient which hindered acquisition of educational resources like textbooks and laboratory equipment. Unlike the mixed day secondary schools, much of the physical facilities like

laboratories and libraries in the boys and girls boarding secondary schools had been acquired through the parent's initiative (Parents Teachers Associations' levies) and not through CDF.

3.4. Relationship between Provision of Learning Resources by CDF and Retention of Learners in Public Boarding Secondary Schools

The analysis of the study objective went ahead to look at whether there exist a relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary school. This analysis tried to address the following hypothesis through the teachers' questionnaire:

HO₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya.

HO_A: There is a statistically significant relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia County, Kenya.

Table 5. Relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools

		Retention of learners	Provision of learning resources
Retention of learners	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	22	
Provision of learning resources	Pearson Correlation	.864**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	22	22

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 shows a strong positive linear relationship ($r = .864$) between provision of learning resources and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. In addition, the relationship was significant ($p = .000$; $\alpha = .05$). Therefore the hypothesis that "there is no statistically significant difference between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools", was rejected. This shows that there is a statistically significant linear relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. This implies that provision of learning resources by CDF enhances retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. This finding corroborates with that of Asayo [1], who established that the CDF

introduced in 2003 sponsors development of physical facilities like laboratories and libraries among others. These interventions are important milestones in the Governments efforts of enhancing equitable distribution of educational resources to all secondary schools and retention of students in school.

4. Conclusion

The study set out to determine whether there is any significant difference between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. The study showed that the CDF funds were inadequate, thereby making it necessary

to seek funds elsewhere in order to provide learning resources. The study established that there is a statistically significant linear relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools. Despite this, it was established that the learning facilities provided by the CDF to boarding public schools do not play a significant role in sustaining the learners in school, as most students in those schools come from slightly well of families where their retention in school is already well guaranteed. This is proof enough to show that though public boarding schools do not much need the CDF as other forms of secondary schools. Thus, despite there being a significant linear relationship between provision of learning resources by CDF and retention of learners in public boarding secondary schools, the CDF needs to focus on other categories of schools such as the day schools for its impact in learner retention in school to be felt within the Municipality.

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