AN ANALYSIS OF RETENTION RATES BEFORE AND AFTER INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT FUNDED TUITION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KERICHO COUNTY, KENYA

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INTRODUCTION

- Education is a form of investment in human capital which yields economic benefits by increasing the productivity of its people (Weeks, 1963).
- As such, it has been declared a basic human right globally and recognized by article 26 of the universal declaration of human rights in the year 1948 (Council of African Ministers of Education, 2000).
- Governments in both developed and developing countries allocate much of their resources to education. Kenya in particular has placed a lot of emphasis on education as a means of empowering her citizens socially and economically since it attained independence in 1963.
- This emphasis is reflected in the budgetary allocations to education which has been increasing over the years. For instance, in Kenya, the Government's expenditure on education rose from Ksh. 73.48 million in 1963 to Ksh. 149.4 billion in 2011/12 financial year (Republic of Kenya [RoK], 2011). In the 2011/2012 financial year, 18.5 billion (12.38%) of the Ministry of Education's (Ministry of Education's [MoE's]) total expenditure was allocated to Government funded tuition secondary education (RoK, 2011).
- The Kenyan Government, with effect from January, 2008 introduced Government funded tuition to make secondary education more affordable and accessible to all children who qualify for secondary school education regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds (Ohba, 2009). The Government funded tuition Policy was implemented on a per capita basis of Kshs.10, 265 per student in all public secondary schools to meet tuition fees (RoK, 2008).
- **Retention rate**: Refers to the proportion of students who can be accounted for between the beginning and the end of a given grade in a given year in an education cycle.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In 2008, the Government funded tuition was introduced in all public secondary schools in Kenya. As a result of this intervention, there has been substantial increase in enrolment from 1.3 million students in 2008 to 1.8 million students in 2013. This represents 30.7% increase. However, despite this significant improvement in enrolment, it is not clear whether the students who benefited from Government funded tuition were retained in the classes from the beginning to the end of the school year. The effect of Government funded tuition on student retention and transition rates in Kericho County Secondary Schools has not been documented. Therefore, the purpose of this paper was to determine the extent to which Government funded tuition affects student transition and retention rates in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of Government funded tuition on students' retention rates in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

Objective of the study

The study's objective was to compare the retention rates before and after the introduction of Government funded tuition in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

Research Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following hypothesis:

HO_1: There is no statistically significant difference in retention rates before and after introduction of Government funded tuition in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of literature was done in order to identify and fill the existing knowledge gaps. The review was done on four themes as shown:

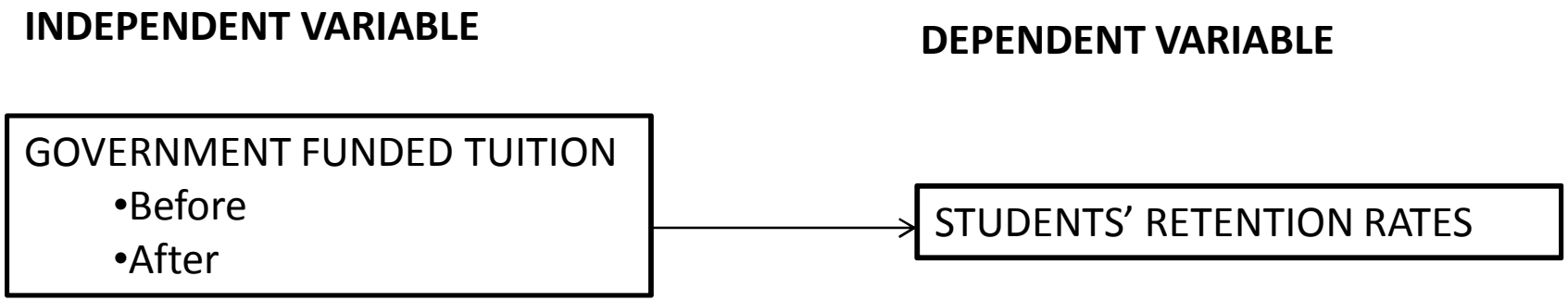
Themes	Related Literature
Secondary Education Status before Introduction of Subsidized Secondary Education in Kenya	MoEST, 2002; MoE, 2008; Munavu, Ogutu, & Wasanga, 2008; IPAR, 2007; Orodho & Njeru, 2003; Abagi & Odipo, 1997
Subsidized Secondary Education in Kenya	MoE, 2011; Ohba, 2009; RoK, 2008; MoE, 2008;RoK, 2012
Relationship between Subsidized Secondary Education and Students' Enrolment	IPAR, 2012; MoE, 2008;MoE, 2011;
Theoretical Framework	Orodho, 2005; Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The production function theory and the classical liberal theory provided the theoretical underpinning for this study. Production function is the process that transforms inputs into outputs. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) points out that the relationship between inputs and outputs of education is called the education production function.

Education in the context of the production function theory is viewed as a productive activity that combines various inputs such as finances (fees and grants) and other resources such as teaching-learning materials to transform the enrolled students into graduates.

The classical liberal theory of equal opportunity states that each person is born with a given amount of capacity which to a large extent is inherited and cannot be substantially changed (Orodho, 2005). Thus educational systems should be designed so as to remove barriers of any nature (economic, gender or geographical). By making secondary education affordable, the Government meant making basic education available to all children regardless of their social classes.



Researcher's conceptualization

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used cross sectional research design, which is a type of survey design normally used in situations where the population of study is large and is examined at a single point in time (Borland, 2001). Cross sectional research design involves collection of data on more than one case at a single point in time in order to gather a body of quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables, which are then examined to detect their pattern of association (Bryman, 2004).

The study examined the aspects of student retention in public secondary schools for the years 2004-2007 before the introduction of Government funded tuition and 2008-2011 after the introduction of Government funded tuition which have already occurred. The design therefore made it possible for the determination of the effects of independent variable, which is Government funded tuition on the dependent variable namely; student retention rates.

Study Area

The study was carried out in the larger Kericho County. The larger Kericho is made up of three districts namely Kericho, Bureti and Kipkelion. It is located to the South West of the country and lies within the highlands west of The Great Rift Valley. Kericho was split to curve out the present Bureti and Kipkelion districts.

Target Population

There were 148 public secondary schools in the larger Kericho County as of the time this study was undertaken. The study targeted all the public secondary schools in the larger Kericho County.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain the sample size of this study in the large Kericho County which is made up of Kipkelion, Bureti and Kericho Districts. The table for finite population developed by Krejcie, and Morgan, (1970) was used obtain a sample of 108 principals who were the respondents to this study. from the target population.

A total of 108 questionnaires were administered by the researcher but only 76 dully filled were returned hence making the valid sample of the study

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Findings from the study are presented using means, standard deviations and t-test. The internal efficiency indicators specifically student retention rates before and after the introduction of Government funded tuition are presented and discussed.

The study to compare the retention rates before and after the introduction of Government funded tuition in public secondary schools in Kericho County for the years 2004-2007 and 2008-2011.

Comparison of Students' Retention Rates Before and After Government Funded Tuition

Data on the students' enrolment at the beginning and end of years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 was collected and used to compute the retention rates of each of these years.

The mean student retention rate before Government funded tuition was then computed using the retention rates of the four years. The students' retention rates after Government funded tuition for years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 were also computed using the numbers of students enrolled at the beginning and end of years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

The mean retention rate after Government funded tuition was derived from the retention rates of the four years i.e. 2008-2011. Table 1 gives a summary of the mean retention rates before and after Government funded tuition.

Table 1:
Mean student retention rate before and after introduction of Government Funded Tuition (2004-2007)-(2008-2011)

Epoch	Year	Mean Retention Rate n = 76	Std deviation
Before GFT	2004	0.99	0.02
	2005	0.97	0.02
	2006	0.97	0.06
	2007	0.97	0.02
	Epoch mean	**0.97**	**0.02**
After GFT	2008	0.99	0.02
	2009	0.98	0.01
	2010	0.98	0.01
	2011	0.98	0.09
	Epoch mean	**0.98**	**0.02**

Data in Table 1 showed that the mean student retention rate (M= 0.98, SD = 0.02) after Government funded tuition was slightly higher than the mean retention rate (M = 0.97, SD = 0.02) before Government funded tuition.

The results in the table do not indicate whether the difference between the students' retention rate before and after introduction of Government funded tuition was significant at the 0.05 level. It was therefore necessary to conduct the t-test to check whether the two rates were significantly different or not. The results of the t-test are given in Table 2:

Table 2:
Comparison of Retention Rates of Students Before and After Introduction of Government Funded Tuition

Epoch	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-value	p-value
Before Government funded tuition	76	0.97	0.02	150	1.089	0.278
After Government funded tuition	76	0.98	0.02			

The results in Table 2 reveal that difference between the mean retention rate (M =0.98, SD= 0.02) after introduction of Government funded tuition was not significantly different from the mean retention rate (M= 0. 97, SD= 0.02) before introduction of Government funded tuition, t (150) = 1.089, p = 0.278. This implies that Government funded tuition did not enhance the retention rates of students.

The null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant differences in retention rates before and after introduction of Government funded tuition in public secondary schools in Kericho County was accepted.

Hence, the study finding above established that the introduction of Government funded tuition did not enhance the retention rates of students in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The rationale for the introduction of the Government funded tuition was to enhance retention and transition rates in public secondary schools among others.

The results of the study revealed that Government funded tuition has had no effect on retention rates in public secondary schools in Kericho County.

The implications of this study therefore is that access to education will still be constraint as students' retention rates will remain low. The Government may not be able to meet its access to secondary school projections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is need to strengthen the management and implementation of Government funded tuition if the Government's projections in retention rates are to be realized.
2. That motivation strategies that would see students being retained in schools and progressing through subsequent grades need to be explored further
3. That retention rates of students be improved further through increasing allocation of Government funded tuition and enhancing the administrators' capacity to manage it well.

THANK YOU