

THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION COSTS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN KENYA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF BUNGOMA COUNTY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Attainment of education related millennium development goals in Kenya is largely hinged on availability and appropriate use of financial resources to acquire supportive inputs to the education process. Two years away from the deadline, the promise of Education for All (EFA) is still a challenge that stands out among the disadvantaged poor populations who cannot finance their own education. Even when they start school, they have to drop out due to push out factors related to costs of schooling. Often, this is before acquiring the basic skills required to make a useful contribution to national development. This study sought to investigate the relationship between unit cost and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Bungoma County. Descriptive survey research design was used. Proportionate random sampling was used to select eighty class teachers in twenty schools who served as respondents, and gave feedback through structured questionnaires. Pearson's correlation was used to measure the degree of relationship. Statistical tests were done at $\alpha=0.05$. It was found that a significant positive relationship existed between unit cost and academic performance, and government efforts to provide financial subsidy to education were still not adequate to cover vulnerable groups. Therefore innovative funding approaches involving a wide range of stakeholders need to be devised to help shore up government efforts and mitigate the deprivation that vulnerable groups endure.

Keywords: Education costs, academic performance, subsidy, vulnerable groups.