



Parental Financing and Their Influence On Academic Performance Of Secondary Schools In Mbita Sub County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of parent's participation in financing of school activities on students' performance in public day secondary schools in Mbita Sub-County. The study was motivated by persistent reports of low performance in national examinations which fluctuated between mean score of 5.621 in 2011 to 5.160 in 2015 in comparison to other Sub Counties in Homabay County. The role of parents was seen as the missing link in achievement of desirable performance as the government fulfilled her mandate of providing free education through the Free Day Secondary Education funds. The study population included 20 principals, 184 teachers, 776 parents and 776 students. The respondents who were sampled through purposive, incidental and random sampling method included principals, parents, teachers and form four students. The Study shows that there was a significant relationship between parental financing of school activities and academic performance ($R = .627$; $p < .001$). Parental financing of school activities explained 39.4% of the variance in students' academic performance ($R^2 = .394$, $F(1, 171) = 155.228$, $p < .001$). It was found that parental financing of school activities significantly predicted students' academic performance ($B = .355$; $p < .001$). The equation $Y = 25.927 + 0.355X_3 + \epsilon$. This shows that enhanced parental financing of school activities leads to increased and improved students' academic performance. In light of these findings, the study recommends that the government should formulate policies aimed at involving parents actively in planning, decision making and financing day secondary schools.

Keywords: Academic; Financing; Parents; Performance; Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Parents have for a very long time financed schools. In their study, Nancy and Lorraine (2004) found out that impoverished families are less likely to be involved in schooling than wealthier families and schools in impoverished communities are less likely to promote parental participation in school management. This is supported as well by argument of Feyfant and Key's (2006) which says that there are families who have the right intensions but are powerless especially those from rural backgrounds. Due to constraints of financial resources, available time and parental educational skills, low income parents often have difficulty becoming active partners in their children's education Hawkins, (2001).

In a study conducted in Malaysia, Hassan and Rasiyah (2011), it was concluded that parents with higher socio-economic status as reflected by higher income and educational attainment tend to spend more on their children's education. In addition, sufficient expenditure on education particularly on extra tuition and books matters as it would likely produce students with better educational outcomes. In families with low socio-economic status, majority of illiterate parents do not understand the requirements of their

children in studies and to do their home assignments, since they do not have enough resources to spend on extra tuition, the results is poor performance in academic achievement of their children. The finding of the study conducted by Okpala, Okpala & Smith (2001) also supports the view that economic circumstances are significantly correlated with academic achievement.

According to the cost sharing policy, the burden of erecting physical structures and purchasing instructional related materials were responsibilities of communities and parents Republic of Kenya (1988) it was established that most parents were not in a position to meet these costs and as a result many students were not able to attend school regularly. In order to reduce the financial burden on parents, the government introduced the free day secondary funds in all public schools. Republic of Kenya (2008) The introduction of free day secondary education has seen government of Kenya financing a huge part of the school budget including tuition, repair and maintenance, local travels and transport among others. The parents are now left with other costs like paying salaries to non-teaching staff, teachers on BOM service and expenses in the school which support learning. However the need for effective involvement of parents in the education of their children apart from meeting the costs in schools has largely been unrecognized in Kenya (Ngaroga, 2006).

In Mbita Sub County, there are more day schools compared to boarding schools. Due to low levels of income, most parents were not able to pay their school fees. This was reflected in the huge fee arrears that parents owed most schools in particular the day schools. Standards Assessment Executive Summary Report, Mbita Sub County (2015). So this research intended to establish to what extent the parents of Mbita Sub-county paid the school fee and other essential levies in the school that could motivate learning, how prompt the payments were made and to what extent lack or delay of payment of school fees affected the student academic performance. This study sought to examine whether parents irrespective of their socio-economic status provided school funds and scholastic material and other requirements necessary for excellent performance in academic work.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The performance of day secondary schools in Mbita Sub County between the year 2013 and 2015 has consistently been low and fluctuating. In 2015 for instance Day schools recorded an average performance of 39.15% pass, 37.44% in 2014 and 42% pass in 2013. The government is investing heavily in education in terms of capitation in these day schools yet low performance is still being registered. Every year the government fully remits its share of education financing to the schools but the parents fail to honor their contribution fully as manifested in huge school fees balances owed to the schools. The day schools have failed to produce the desired top grades in KCSE yet they had qualified teachers posted by Teachers Service Commission. There is an urgent need for an intervention to improve the quality grades, stabilize the performance and restore the upward trend.

2.0 Literature Review

In the past, parents' involvement in education was characterized by volunteers, mostly mothers assisting in the classroom chaperoning students and fund raising. Today the old model has been replaced with a much more inclusive approach: school- family- community partnership. This entire people participate in goal oriented activities linked to student achievement and school success.

Research studies reveal that various factors are responsible for scholastic failure of students, such as low socio-economic background, students' cognitive abilities, school related factors, environment of the home or the support given by members (Fan, 2001). Generally schools are considered places that provide appropriate learning environment for a child but the importance of parents and community cannot be ignored. In a study conducted in Karachi, Pakistan, it was concluded that the impact of motivation on learning of students is important. Without motivation students learning is not possible so in education the role of motivation is effective on students learning. Due to motivation, students do any task and achieve the goal. Motivation increases the performance of learning.

In another study done in Nigeria, Awanbor, (2005) holds that students who lack sufficient level of academic motivation exhibit a weak drive towards pursuit of academic goals. Such students manifest signs and symptoms of indifference and apathy towards school. Furthermore Awanbor, (2005) noted that

because of poor motivation due to inadequate remuneration poor teaching environment as a result of lack of basic teaching materials, listless and unmotivated learners in the classroom among others ,the teachers have become endangered species in their own profession. In addition, this study revealed that parents and home environment have great role to play in motivation of students for improved academic performance. In a study conducted in Uganda, Nyamusana, (2010), it was concluded that parents are not actively involved, let alone in financial management of their children’s schools which is why the schools resources are constrained as a result of which they are not well prepared for the attainment of good academic performance. The low involvement of parents in the financial management of their children’s schools has been due to the inability of the parents to offer commendable financial support to the schools and their children. For the students to have ease of mind and concentrate on academic work such requirements must be in place yet they require money. According to this study, Parents’ participation in financing is not limited to school fees alone but it may extend to include students personal requirements that contribute positively to improved academic performance in directly. This may include school uniform, sanitary pads for female students, proper medication and pocket money to ease the school life for the students.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Descriptive survey design based on questionnaire was used because the study objectives were descriptive in nature and may also require taking care of multiple reality likely to be found in the field (Amin, 2005). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the method is easy to manage and administer. Emphasis was put on collecting data from stakeholders and hence questionnaire was used to collect information from principals, teachers, parents and students. The data was described and summarized in tables.

3.1 Sample size and Sampling Technique

The list of schools was obtained from the Mbita Sub County director of education’s office. Of the 20 public day schools, 10% of the total number of schools i.e. two schools precisely was used for pilot study. The remaining 18 day schools and their principals were purposively selected to participate in the study. A simple random sampling method was used to select 6 teachers and 10 students in form four in each school. The rationale for choosing form four students in the school is that they have been in school longer to articulate the issues at hand; they are also old enough to give credible information compared to their counterparts in junior classes. Besides they are the main focus of the study.

Table 1: Summary of sample size

Category of respondent	Total population	No. selected	Sampling Technique
Principals	20	18	Purposive
Teachers	184	108	purposive
Parents	776	72	Incidental or volunteer
Students	776	180	Simple random

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Table 2 presents the views of principals on financing of school activities and academic performance:

Table 2: Principal Views on Financing of School activities and Academic performance

Financing School Activities	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
Parents in this school participate actively in financing school activities.	1 (5.6)	8 (44.4)	3 (16.7)	5 (27.8)	1 (5.6)	2.833
Parents pay school fees promptly to the school.	3 (16.7)	4 (22.2)	5 (27.8)	6 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	2.778
Parents finance the implementation of academic programmes in school	5 (27.8)	4 (22.2)	8 (44.4)	1 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	2.278
Parents fund motivation of teachers and students in this school	3 (15.8)	7 (36.8)	6 (31.6)	2 (10.5)	1 (5.3)	2.526
Payment of teachers employed by the BOM pose a serious challenge to this school	0 (0.0)	2 (11.1)	4 (22.2)	9 (50.0)	3 (16.7)	3.722
Parents are highly involved in the budget process of this school	4 (23.5)	7 (41.2)	3 (17.6)	2 (11.8)	1 (5.9)	2.353
Parents are highly involved in raising funds for the school	9 (50.0)	2 (11.1)	1 (5.6)	4 (22.2)	2 (11.1)	3.222

The study found that half of the principals 50.0% disagreed with the statement that parents in their schools participated actively in financing school activities. ie SD 5.6% D 44.4% total 50%. Only 33.4% confirmed that parents in their schools participated actively in financing their school activities. It was also found that while only 33.3% of the principals revealed that parents pay school fees promptly, significant number of the respondents at 38.9% did not agree with the statement, while 27.8% remained neutral. On whether parents finance the implementation of academic programmes in school, half of the respondents at 50.0% disagreed with the statement that parents financed the implementation of academic programmes in school. Only 5.6% agreed with the statement as 44.4% remained neutral on the statement. On whether parents funded motivation of teachers and students in this school, slightly over half of the respondents at 52.6% disagreed with the statement, while 15.8% disagreed with the statement as 31.6% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Over two thirds of the respondents at 66.7% supported the statement that payment of teachers employed by the BOM pose a serious challenge to this school, while only 11.1% disagreed with the statement. Based on participation in budgeting process, 64.7% of the respondents disagreed that parents were highly involved in the budget process of their schools. Only 17.7% agreed that parents were actively involved in budgeting process. Moreover, half of the respondents disagreed that parents were highly involved in raising funds for their schools. The Table 3 presents teachers views on financing of school activities and academic performance.

Table 3: Teachers Views on Financing of School activities and Academic performance

Financing School Activities	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
Parents in this school participate actively in financing school activities.	12 (12.1)	19 (19.2)	24 (24.2)	27 (27.3)	17 (17.2)	3.182
Parents pay school fees promptly to the school.	14 (14.1)	20 (20.2)	36 (36.4)	23 (23.2)	6 (6.1)	2.869
Parents finance the implementation of academic programmes in school.	25 (25.3)	31 (31.3)	18 (18.2)	15 (15.2)	10 (10.1)	2.535
Parents fund motivation of teachers and students in this school	15 (15.2)	16 (16.2)	30 (30.3)	26 (26.3)	12 (12.1)	3.040
Parents are highly involved in the budget process of this school	23 (23.2)	31 (31.3)	20 (20.2)	16 (16.2)	9 (9.1)	2.566
Parents are highly involved in raising funds for the school	13 (13.1)	25 (25.3)	15 (15.2)	29 (29.3)	17 (17.2)	3.121

According to teachers, most parents participated in actively in financing school activities, as shown by 44.5% of the respondents. However, significant number at 31.3% of the respondents disputed the statement. A similar study of Spernes (2011), in implementation of Education for all in Kenya, also shows the importance for schools and parents to share the responsibility for education. Normally, parents' responsibility is to provide economic resources: buying school uniforms, books and other necessities for schooling. The parents and community members are expected to meet educational costs for their children in respect to the school necessities. Some educational facilities are paid directly to school management for buying teaching and learning materials.

On prompt fee payment, most teachers at 34.3% disagreed that parents were paying their fees in time, while only 29.3% indicated otherwise. Majority of the respondents at 56.6% disagreed with the statement that parents financed the implementation of academic programs in the school, while only a quarter at 25.3% indicated otherwise. With respect to teacher motivation, it was found that 31.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that parents were motivating them adequately, while 30.3% remained neutral on the statement. It was also found that parents were not actively involved in the school budgeting process as indicated by 54.5% of the teachers. However, when it comes to raising funds for the school, most of the teachers at 46.5% of the teachers agreed that parents were very much involved in raising funds for the school. The table 4 presents parents views on financing of school activities and academic performance.

Table 4: Parents Views on Financing of School activities and Academic performance

Financing School Activities	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
Parents are involved in the budgeting process school	9 (13.6)	14 (21.2)	25 (37.9)	12 (18.2)	6 (9.1)	2.879
Parents hold fund raising functions for the school.	5 (7.6)	8 (12.1)	17 (25.8)	23 (34.8)	13 (19.7)	3.470
Parents finance the implementation of academic programmes in school.	9 (13.6)	20 (30.3)	14 (21.2)	19 (28.8)	4 (6.1)	2.833
Parents are usually informed about the school academic programmes funded by parents	6 (9.1)	9 (13.6)	12 (18.2)	22 (33.3)	17 (25.8)	3.530
Parents pay school fees promptly in school.	3 (4.5)	8 (12.1)	17 (25.8)	25 (37.9)	13 (19.7)	3.561
Students are sometimes sent home for school fees	0 (0.0)	2 (3.0)	5 (7.6)	23 (34.8)	36 (54.5)	4.409
Classes are sometimes lost when students are sent home for fees	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (12.1)	32 (48.5)	26 (39.4)	4.273
Parents fund motivation of teachers and students.	6 (9.1)	9 (13.6)	13 (19.7)	21 (31.8)	17 (25.8)	3.515

Most parents at 34.8% disagreed with the statement that they were involved in the budgeting process in the school. Only 27.3% of the respondents confirmed that they were actively involved in the budgeting process. However, over half of the respondents at 54.5% agreed that they hold fund raising functions for the school. In implementing the academic program, 43.9% of the respondents disagreed that parents financed the implementation of academic programmes in school, while only 34.9% agreed with the statement. However, more than half of the respondents at 59.1% agreed that they were usually informed about the school academic programs funded by parents. Most of the parents (57.6%) also agreed that they pay school fees in time, with only 16.6% failing to agree with the statement. It was also found that students were sometimes sent home for school fees as indicated by 89.3% of the respondents. On teacher motivation, the study found that 57.6% of the parents confirmed that they motivated teachers and students to improve on their performance, while only 22.7% of the respondents indicating otherwise. The related case study by Van den Berg and van Noort (2011) also argues that implementation of UPE employs several methods to ensure parental involvement in Uganda. One of the methods is for parents to assist inside the classroom by supporting teachers and children, or outside the classroom by helping administrators and organizing activities such as financing of school projects, planning and decision making through parent organizations and advisory committees. The table 5 presents students' views of school activities and academic performance

Table 5: Students' Views on Financing of School activities and Academic performance

Financing School Activities	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
My parents pay my school fee in time	21 (12.1)	39 (22.5)	56 (32.4)	34 (19.7)	23 (13.3)	2.994
My parents pay my fees in instalments.	18 (10.4)	29 (16.8)	37 (21.4)	59 (34.1)	30 (17.3)	3.312
My parents provide me with adequate scholastic materials necessary for academics.	22 (12.7)	47 (27.2)	35 (20.2)	41 (23.7)	28 (16.2)	3.035
Sometimes I miss lessons while helping my parents to acquire school fees.	35 (20.2)	49 (28.3)	38 (22.0)	31 (17.9)	20 (11.6)	2.723
My parent participates in motivating teachers and students in this school.	45 (26.0)	56 (32.4)	39 (22.5)	19 (11.0)	14 (8.1)	2.428

According to the study findings, most of the students at 34.6% disagreed with the statement that their parents pay school fees in time, while 33.0% agreed with the statement. Only 32.4% remained neutral on the statement. Majority of the students at 51.4% revealed that their parents pay school fees in installment, while only 27.2% indicated otherwise. On adequate provision of learning materials, the study found that most parents were providing adequate learning materials to their children as confirmed by majority of the respondents at 39.9% of the respondents, while another 39.9% of the respondents disputed on the statement. Most students 48.5% also disagreed with the statement that sometimes they missed lessons while helping their parents to acquire school fees. However, significant number of the respondents at 28.5% revealed that sometimes they could help their parents in fee searching. On teacher motivation, 58.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that their parents participated in teacher and student motivation. Only 19.1% supported the statement.

5.0 Relationship between parental financing of school activities and academic performance

The first research question sought to establish the relationship between parental financing of school activities and academic performance in day secondary schools. The regression equation was of the form:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + \epsilon_1$$

Where Y is academic performance of day secondary schools, B₀ is the coefficient of the constant term relating performance and parental financing of school activities, B₁ is coefficient of parental financing of school activities, X₁ is parental financing of school activities and ε₁ is error term for the equation. The regression output is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Regression for parental financing of school activities and academic performance

Model Summary^b						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.627 ^a	.394	.391	3.23329	1.738	
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1622.783	1	1622.783	155.228	.000 ^b
	Residual	2498.545	171	10.454		
	Total	4121.328	172			
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.927	1.214		21.365	.000
	Parental financing of school activities	.355	.028	.627	12.459	.000

From the findings in Table 6 there was a significant relationship between parental financing of school activities and academic performance (R = .627; p < .001). Regression analysis was used to test if parental financing of school activities and academic performance. The results of the regression indicated that parental financing of school activities explained 39.4% of the variance in students’ academic performance (R² =.394, F (1, 171) = 155.228, p<.001). It was found that parental financing of school activities significantly predicted students’ academic performance (B = .355; p<.001).

By replacing the significant coefficients into the equation connecting parental financing of school activities and students’ academic performance, the equation becomes:

$$Y = 25.927 + 0.355X_3 + \epsilon_3$$

This shows that enhanced parental financing of school activities leads to increased and improved students’ academic performance.

6.0 CONCLUSION

While parental participation in financing school activities was low, it was found that parental financing of school activities significantly predicted students' academic performance ($B = .355$; $p < .001$). This shows that enhanced parental financing of school activities leads to increased and improved students' academic performance. This findings support what Nyarko (2001),Chowa, Ansong & Akoto(2012) and Ampiah(2003) that reported that the parents are indeed involved in their children's education in Ghana though the involvement is low overall.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The escalating cost of education and the dwindling levels of government investment in education require that policy makers should look into innovative and viable strategies for financing secondary education at sub – county level. This may include:

1. Creating enabling environment for private investment in secondary education
2. Strengthening the existing community financing of secondary education
3. Strengthening scholarship and bursary schemes.
4. Set up fee waiver mechanism and income generating activities.

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