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## **Education has remained the most crucial contributor to social, political and economic development of any nation**

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Education has remained the most crucial contributor to social, political and economic development of any nation. The contribution of education to development has been re-iterated by many scholars. Todaro (2003) asserted that a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of her people and utilize them effectively in national economy will be unable to develop anything else. The importance of secondary education in stimulating social economic development was emphasized by Psacharopolous and Woodhall, (1985) and Ayot and Briggs, (1992) who argued that enlightened labour force is crucial to economic development. This realization has created a high demand for secondary education especially in developing countries. For example it is projected that enrollment in Kenya's secondary school is to grow by 115% from 0.9 million students in 2004 to 2.7 million by 2015 (KIPPR, 2006). Kenya's visionary plan of being industrialized by the year 2030 demands that a majority of the youth should be able to access secondary education as a component of basic education. However, the increasing demand comes at a time of rising diminishing resources due to poor economic growth and rising poverty levels among the household. Education financing therefore is a challenge to developing countries. For many years financing of education has been traditionally left to the donors, households and governments. Mukira (2005) argues that income from fees charged to students is unreliable due to low income and high poverty levels among the households. Similarly, income from donors is unreliable as it comes with strings attached. The only source could be the government but it is similarly constrained by budgetary allocations and competition with other sectors of the economy. Therefore, there is need to explore other viable sources to finance education to promote participation of students at all levels especially secondary level. But what other financing options are available? Simatwa, and Ojwang (2011) identifies Income Generating Activities (IGAs) within schools as one of the viable sources that school management can tap use to narrow the budgetary fiscal deficit in the schools. They advocate for mobilization of school resources such as use of land, physical facilities and equipment to generate supplementary income so as to provide necessary learning resources to run schools effectively. The use of IGAs as a financing option has been found viable at higher institutions of learning. For instance when structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) were introduced in Nigeria, income generating activities such as research work and consultancy were used to help meet the deficit by

Nigerian universities (Kimuyi and Igwe; 1998). Elsewhere Brodersohn (1978) citing evidences from Caribbean countries at that time concluded that 25- 50% of operating and maintenance costs in schools could be financed through goods produced in schools. In Kenya, the introduction of module 2 programmes is among the most effective innovative programmes being used to generate funds internally to cushion budgetary deficit especially for capital developments (Lumuli, 2009). The funds raised by the programme have assisted the public universities in Kenya to expand education opportunities. Mukira (2005) and Kiveu and Mayo (2009) in their agreement with this assertion identifies such activities in schools as dairy farming, horticulture, housing estates, school canteens among others as some of the activities that schools could engage in to get additional sources of income. A report on poverty levels in Kenya (RoK 2005) showed that 66% of the population in Vihiga district lived in absolute poverty. The causes of poverty are identified as; lack of capital to invest, high population density, uneconomical land units, high dependency syndrome, HIV and AIDs, high cost of education and poor infrastructure. Poor families find it difficult to pay school fees and have their children remain in school. The Free Tuition Day Secondary Education has a substantial burden to the learners through earnings foregone and other expenses for uniform, travel, books, lunch and extra tuition. This study therefore, endeavored to establish the extent to which income-generating activities in public schools have been tapped to generate funds to supplement school budget in provision of teaching and learning resources, awarding bursaries to needy students, motivating staff and providing basic needs to students as an intervention measure to reduce fees payments by learners.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives;-

- i) To determine the type of income generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga District.
- ii) To establish the extent to which income realized from various incomes generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga District are used to mitigate students' retention.

## **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions

- i) What are income generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga district?
- ii) How are funds from various income generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga district used to mitigate students retention?

## **Significance of the Study**

The findings may form a basis and contribution to empirical backing on the planning of the use of IGAS towards support of education budget in schools. The findings may provide a reference

point to education stakeholders; policy makers and administrators who may use them in their effort to formulate policies governing education financing at secondary school level. Finally, the finding of this study may provide a data bank for other researchers who may be interested in similar studies in future.

### **Limitations of the Study**

At the initial stages the respondents were reluctant to give information since the study touched on sensitive matters of school finances. However, the researchers explained the importance of the study, the need for truthfulness on the side of the respondents, the assurance that their identity was not to be divulged and that the study was mainly for academic purpose. This made the respondents to cooperate. The researchers also used triangulation in obtaining data by using different types of instruments to obtain the same information from respondents by asking on the same thing.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Vihiga district. Therefore the generalization of findings to other districts and parts of the country may not be done or can be made cautiously as the way such funds are utilized in schools may vary from region to region as the challenges and opportunities faced may not be uniform.

### **Basic Assumptions**

The study was guided by the following assumptions;

- i) Incomes from income generating activities in schools are ploughed back in schools to promote participation of students in education.
- ii) Each school has a potential to generate some income that could go a long way in supplementing the cost of education in the schools.

### **Definition of Significant Terms**

Access – refers to availability of opportunities at Secondary School level for those who are eligible and meet the desired criteria.

Cost of education – refers to the price paid in providing or acquiring education. Drop out – refers to withdraw from a school at any level or grade before completing the required course. Income generating activities – refers to any commercial undertaking aimed at earning income for an institution. Initial registration – refers to students who were enrolled in form one of the cohort. Public Secondary school - refers to those schools that are registered as such and are supplied with teachers and occasional grants by the government.

Quality of education - refers to caliber of graduates of education system as evidenced through skills attained undertaking aimed at earning income for the institution.

Repetition – refers to a year spent by a student doing the same work at the same grade as his or her previous year in school.

Retention – refers to ability to remain and participate in school activities once requested up to the end of the cycle without dropping out.

## **Research methodology**

The study used descriptive survey research design. This design enabled the researcher to have in depth information on the type of income generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga District and how the income earned from these activities are being utilized to impact on the participation of students in secondary education. According to Frankle and Wallen (1993) descriptive survey studies are concerned with what people think and what they do. Since this study was concerned with finding out the type of income generating activities and how funds generated were used to enhance retention, the design was found to be relevant.

## **Target Population**

Target population includes all the members of real or hypothetical set of people events or objects to which the researchers wish to generalize results of their research (Borg and Gall 1996). In this research, the target population consisted of all 22 public secondary schools in Vihiga district represented by all the principals, class teachers, bursars and form four students. The study therefore targeted 22 principals, 80 form four class teachers, 22 bursars and 2,200 form four students (Statistical returns April 2012 District Education Office, Vihiga district).

## **Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

Sampling is the process of selecting part of the population for study with intent that the findings from the sample accurately represent population characteristics (Borg and Gall, 1996). The researcher used both saturated and purposive sampling. Principals, class teachers, Bursars and form four students were purposively selected to participate in the study. Purposive sampling allows the researchers to use cases that have required information to answer the research questions (Mugenda and Mugenda; 2003). In this case since the principals and bursars are people who deal with all financial matters in schools, they were assumed to be the most resourceful respondents. Similarly, class teachers and form IV students were assumed to possess the necessary information concerning students' social economic backgrounds, repetitions, drop outs and transfer of students in the schools. Saturation method was used to select ten students from each school using simple random sampling. Therefore, the study used 22 principals, 22 bursars, 22 class teachers and 220 students from the Public Secondary Schools in Vihiga District.

## Research Instruments

Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules, and observation checklists. Questionnaire was preferred due to its ability to ensure confidentiality of responses from respondents (Saunders, 2003). Four sets of questionnaires were prepared consisting of both open ended and closed ended questions; one for principals, another one for Bursars, form four class teachers and form four students. The questionnaires sought information on IGAs, and utilization of the proceeds in motivation of teaching and non-teaching staff, acquisition of teaching and learning resources and offering of bursaries and scholarship to the economically disadvantaged students all being activities aimed at increasing participation rates. Interviews were administered to 5 randomly selected principals with the aim of getting more information on exploitation of IGAs as alternative source of financing secondary school education. The researchers also use observation checklists in five randomly selected schools whose principals were interviewed in order to verify some responses captured through questionnaires and interviews on the presence of the IGAs in schools.

To ensure that the instruments were valid, the research instruments were presented to colleagues as experts to assess whether they captured the contents of the research questions as well as ascertaining whether the set items accurately represented the concepts under study. Their opinions and comments were used to improve on the content and face validity of the instruments. The instruments were further piloted in two schools in the neighboring Emuhaya district to check on the reliability. The instruments were administered twice within a period of two weeks to the same respondents in the schools. The data obtained formed two sets of data which were correlated and the correlation co-efficient obtained using the Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula giving a value of 7.5.

## Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining the relevant authorization permits and documents from relevant offices the researchers visited study schools to administer the questionnaires and carry out the interviews. Where possible the filled questionnaires were collected on the same day except for those principals who needed more time because of their busy schedule. Interview was conducted on the same day the questionnaires were administered, for those principals who had been selected for interviewing. Notes were made on the observations about the IGAs in the schools.

## Data Analyses Techniques

The editing and coding of the returned instruments was done immediately the data from the field was obtained. Since the study yielded a variety of data containing both qualitative and quantitative the responses were categorized into information according to the objectives of the study. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statements and presented in tables from which conclusion were made. Since collected data were none standardized the analyses was done

through the use of conceptualization. This involved incorporating the findings in the researchers' interpretation on the basis of reviewed literature and field experiences or conclusions from previous similar studies which is acceptable in research (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

## **Data Presentation, Interpretation and Discussion**

This section presents the findings captured from the field. They are presented under; background information, income generating activities in public secondary schools in Vihiga district and utilization of income from income generating activities.

### **Background Information**

The study was carried out in 22 schools, where 22 principals, 22 bursars and 220 students were used as respondents. Since the number of the respondents involved were few, and the researchers personally administered the instruments 100 percent response was achieved. The findings of the study are as given the presentations that follow. As part of background information the researchers sought to establish the type of secondary schools in existence in public secondary schools. If students miss a single meal in school, they could even end up burning the school yet they could not burn their homes even if they went without meals the whole day. Social economic background of a student determine the ability of the parent to meet the cost of education hence access and retention in schools. The study therefore sought to find out students' background information. First the researchers sought to find out whether the parents were alive. From students response it was established that 5 % of the students were total orphans, 11% had one parent alive and 84% had all parents alive. The study further sought to establish employment status of the parents. From students responses it was established that only 30% of the students had either a single parent or both parents in formal employment while 70% of the students had parents whose earnings were irregular hence unreliable to finance their education. The ability to meet the cost of education for a family is further determined by the size of the family. Researchers sought to find out the number of siblings in the student's families. From students' responses, it was established that the majority of families (70%) had more than 5 children while 30% had 5 children or less posing a challenge to many families to keep all their children to school or maintain them. Similarly the amount of fees charged has an effect on student's participation rates in school. The researchers were therefore interested in finding the amount of fees charged by various public secondary schools in Vihiga district. The findings are shown in table 1. The cost of education is further increased by other charges beside the school fees charged by schools. The researchers sought to find out whether there were other charges apart from school fees. It was established that all schools (100%) had other charges apart from school fees. The charges were for school uniform, medical fees, holiday tuition, SMASSE programme, Teachers' welfare among others. The amount charged for each activity varied from school to school. Some schools charged holiday tuition of up to sh.8000 per year. The researchers sought to find out if there were cases of drop outs in the schools. According to students and class teachers' response, all schools (100%) had suffered from students dropouts. The level of dropout is given in table 2.

From table 4.8 the majority of the principals (80%) ranked risk associated with income generating and lack of capital for investment (75%) as major hindrances. The fear was confirmed from remark from some principals in the interview where one remarked “why should I risk the little money raised through struggle to invest in a project whose returns I may not be sure of at the expense of academic raising extra money for the school?”. In another school a principal said that “In any case unlike other vote heads that are clearly specified on fees structures, there was no vote head on fees structure meant for investment in income generating activities”. Another principal retorted: “from which vote head” when asked why there were no IGAs in the school. The responses suggest lack of foresight and innovation on the parts of the school heads or a policy on the issue.

### **Recommendations of the Study**

Though teachers’ motivation is necessary in enhancing their performance, schools should give preference in the expenditure of IGAs funds to needy students to enhance their access, retention and transition through bursaries and scholarships. There is need for schools to initiate and take income generating activities seriously in order to generate reasonable additional funds to supplement their budgets so that students benefit in terms of low fees to be charged. Earnings from income generating activities should be channeled towards improvement of school environment that promote learning and retention. In order to have capital to finance IGAs in schools, the ministry of education should come up with a policy to create a special fund to be used in the investments in IGAs.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Similar study to be carried out in other regions in order to establish if the findings can be generalized

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