

Towards Achieving Quality Education in Kenya: Safeguarding Sustainable Free Day Secondary Education

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Abstract

The Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) was envisioned to make education in secondary schools more inexpensive and to enhance the success of students academically. These were to be attained via the reduction of user fees, textbooks provision, and other learning resources. However, stakeholders in this education sector are confronted with several problems. Many parents claim that FDSE is free, and this is probably going to influence their gathering of the other costs of education. It is against this background that the research sought to determine the effect of maximizing FDSE on the education quality in Kenya. The FDSE funds adequacy is vital in determining human capital quality available in Government free day secondary schools. Insufficiency of funds from the Free Day Secondary Education program conceded human capital quality. It is because the Free Day Secondary Education program failed to offer employment of human capital to manage the resultant enrolment increase and to provide capacity building of the present human capital to handle the changes evolving with the launch of the Free Day Secondary Education program. The rise of workload for the support staff and teachers also lessened the quality of personalized teaching they are supposed to provide to learners. However, due to the delay of FDSE funds' disbursement, the acquisition, motivation, and human capital sustenance were negatively impacted as the funds were not reliable. It implies that FDSE funds sufficiency significantly influences the human capital sufficiency available in Government free day secondary schools. Hence, free day secondary education impacts the human capital adequacy to a great extent in government day secondary schools. The Government should increase funds for FDSE allocated to government day secondary schools as the study revealed that they were not adequate to enhance full students' participation in government day secondary schools. This study recommends that there is need to put in place appropriate measures to ensure that the required facilities are put in place to support the entire FDSE program.

Keywords: Free Day Secondary Education, Quality, Safeguarding, Sustainable, Kenya

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1.0 Background Information

Governments around the globe have contributed colossal measures of their use on training, the legislature of Kenya is focused on; end of neediness as an impediment to the instructive turn of events; the advancement of human rights through the arrangement of training; achievement of supportable improvement by the arrangement of value fundamental training for all (Achoka, 2007). The Government gave responsibility for the arrangement of value instruction and preparing as a human appropriate for all citizens in Kenya via the launch of FDSE in 2008 to improve retention of a student in institutions (Kipeen, 2015). In 2008 the dispatch of Free Day Secondary Education was intended to discourse poor community participation, low-quality education, illiteracy, high cost of education, and rates of low completion at the secondary level (Benjamin, 2016).

Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) was executed after the taskforce on Affordable Secondary Education of 2007 scrutinized means and techniques of minimizing the cost of secondary education on households. These determinations were a positive interchange towards the apprehension of the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Achoka, 2007). Corresponding to the policy of Subsidized Free Day Secondary Education, the Government is anticipated to convene to tuition fees of Ksh 10 265 per learner, which rose to Ksh 12 870. At the same time, the paternities were needed to convene other requirements such as boarding fees, transport, and lunch for students in boarding institutions, as well as project development (Table 1). It was aligned with the commitment of the Government in making sure that special and regional needs and gender differences were addressed (MOE, 2008).

Table 1: Subsidized Free Day Secondary Education Policy

S.NO	Vote Head	GOK (KSh.)	Parent(KSh.)
1	Tuition	4 144	0.00
2	Boarding Equipment and store	0.00	30 385.00
3	Maintenance and Improvement	5 000	2 000.00
4	Other Vote heads	9 400	20 371.00
5	Activity fees	1 500	798.00
6	Medical and Insurance	2 000	0.00
7	SMASSE	200	0.00
8	Total Fees	22 244	53 554

Source: MOE (2020)

This is a fees panel by a Kenyan parent towards supporting his/her child to acquire secondary level education. The fees paid by the parent sees them pay Ksh. 30 385 that accounts for 56.74% of the amount towards food and the upkeep of students in school. Parents pay Ksh. 20 371 on other vote heads that cover operations in school, such as electricity and school operation (Administration). It carries 38.05% of the fees paid by the parent. Similarly, these costs are higher in boarding schools than in day schools (Kipeen, 2015).

The FDSE technique emerged as an outcome of meeting the administration's 2007 vow of accomplishing Education for All (EFA) and the Act of Education that advocates for the arrangement of essential training as a privilege of a learner (Achoka, 2007). A significant obstacle to getting additional training was seen as its significant expense credited to destitution, the considerable expense of instructional material, school outfits, private educational cost, advancement demands, and transport (Malechwanz, 2020). In 2004 this expense remained at Ksh. 22 381 for every understudy for every year and was the significant reason for over 70.5% of young auxiliary students not selected by 2004 (Masara, 2015). Also, the projected 70% transition rate of learners by 2008 due to FPE meant that enrollment in secondary school was also to rise exponentially and reach 2.7 million by 2015. In such circumstances, FDSE became inevitable (Wanjala, 2017).

Government subsidy (capitation) to schools to actualize Free Day Secondary Education is Ksh. 22 244 (Table 2). This allocation implies money that is direct to teaching, and learning in classes is tuition Ksh. 4 144. It accounts for 18.63% of capitation. School operations are covered under other vote heads (Muchiri, 2017). These vote heads include local travel ad transport. Administration costs that cover daily running expenses of the school electricity, personal emoluments. It comes to a total of Ksh. 9 400. Hence school operations carry 42.25% of the capitation (Kipeen, 2015).

Table 2: Free Day Secondary Capitation

S.NO	ITEM	AMOUNT(KSh.)
1	Tuition	4 144.00
2	Medical/Insurance	2 000.00
3	Activity	1 500.00
4	SMASSE	200.00
5	Other vote heads	9 400.00
6	Maintenance and Improvement	5 000.00
7	Grand Total	22 244.00

Source: MOE (2020)

Wanjala (2017) revealed that even after the outlining of subsidized fees, the rates of enrollment continued to be low due to funds to sustain FDSE were delayed and inadequate before distribution. Subsequently, the execution of the FDSE program by the Government has not greatly discriminatory access to the education quality in a free secondary institution. It is in contradiction to this contextual that the research sought to determine the effect of maximizing FDSE on the education quality in Kenya.

1.1 Objective

To examine how quality free day secondary education can be offered sustainably in Kenya.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study focused on the factors affecting specific forms of investments by the Government of Kenya and parents in the education sector and quality of FDSE in Kenya.

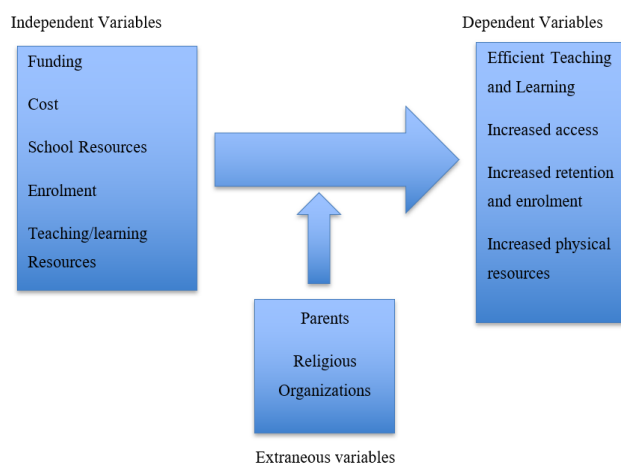


Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing investment, extraneous and quality variables of FDSE

3.0 Methodology

This study will employ a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. Questionnaires were used to collect data from secondary school principals whereas interview schedules will be used to collect data Government officials and Parents and Teachers Representatives.

4.0 Maximization of FDSE and Quality of Education

The following are factors that affect the quality and maximization of Free Day Secondary education.

4.1 Adequacy of School Funding

The Government of Kenya has emphasized the provision of education as a leading policy imperative. The subsidized secondary education (SSE) provision is significant in Kenya, given that Kenya is a low-income country (Muchiri, 2017). Major factors facing the implementation of FDSE include delay in disbursing the FDSE funds, over enrolment of learners leading to strained physical facilities, inadequate facilities, acute shortage of teachers, inadequate funds from the Government for expansion, and poor cost-sharing approaches. Many parents claim that FDSE is free, and this is probably going to influence their gathering of the other costs of education. Principals felt that the FDSE funds delay and are inadequate, thereby affecting the school budgets (Ng'ang'a, 2012).

4.2 Cost of Provision of Education

The expenses of arrangement and development of education quality are heightening, whereas available resources for education in secondary schools are decreasing. There has been a rise in enrollment in secondary education over the years (Wanjala, 2017). The main funding sources of secondary school education are the Government and households, while the other fund sources include religious organizations, the private sector, development partners, and NGOs. Public sources mostly finance bursary to students, teachers' emoluments, whereas households finance operations, maintenance, the cost for the provision of equipment and suppliers, physical infrastructure, and repair (Ramchander, 2018).

4.3 School Resources

Schools' resources can be brought up in an assortment of ways, yet the significant sources of financing ought to be founded on sources that create steady and developing income to schools. Sources that create little and exceptionally inconsistent incomes do not allure for the support of major operating costs of schools (Benjamin, 2016). As a result of expanding interest for secondary education due to the FDSE program, it is getting progressively essential to improve projects of revenue sources that minimize budgetary obstructions to secondary education.

4.4 Student Enrolment

FDSE strategy prompted an impressive fee decrease in secondary schools. Under FDSE, guardians are just responsible for the meeting of caution money (for new students) and improvement expenses, which are proposed to be a limit of Ksh. 2 500 and lunches; rather than the past limit of Ksh. 11 000 every year according to the national rules for school expenses. Benjamin (2016) discovered that there are high enrolment rates in secondary schools, which was not reliable with the rates of consummation because of various difficulties that included school funds, instructional materials, and physical facilities, among others (Ng'ang'a, 2012).

4.5 Adequacy of teaching/learning Resources

The most significant reason for schools is to give learners improved and equivalent open doors for learning, and the greatest significant asset an institution has for achieving that intention is the information, commitment, and aptitudes of its educators (Masara, 2015). Educators, in this manner, should be very much overseen. The head instructors' duty in human assets the board includes: inspiring and leading staff, appointing duties successfully, and peacemaking. With an expanded number of learners because of FDSE, the proportion of teacher-learners perhaps might go high, instigating an increase of workload to teachers. It perhaps represents a test to headteachers who are depended on to give assurance that the nature of education is not undermined (Kipeen, 2015).

5.0 Conclusions

- (a) The provision of FDSE in government day secondary schools has increased students' retention rate and reduced dropout rates; subsequently, this has led to high completion rates and that FDSE subsidy has increased transition rates from government day secondary schools. FDSE policy hurts government day secondary schools' academic performance. It is ascribed to fees affordability, which generated high demand for enrolment in secondary schools in a situation of insufficient teaching/learning facilities.
- (b) FDSE has resulted in augmented enrolment in schools, which has resulted in an overstretch in the use of available resources. The Government has not budgeted for the extra students who enroll, which also affected the proper implementation of the program. The government funding is not adequate, and there were delays in disbursement of the funds, which affected the effective implementation of the FSE and purchasing power of the schools.
- (c) The non-timeliness and inadequacy in FDSE funds' disbursement negatively affect the availability of quality human capital in secondary schools. The inadequacy of funds for the Free Day Secondary Education program affects the quality of human capital as the FDSE program fails to offer employment of human capital to manage the resultant enrolment increase and also to offer the capacity building of the present human capitals handle the changes evolving with the launch of the Free Day Secondary Education program.
- (d) The physical resources existing are allocated by a large number of learners enrolled via the Free Day Secondary Education program, therefore, dwindling in their quality. It is a challenge for the management of an institution to enhance the quality of the physical resources through repairing and purchasing new physical resources due to delayed Free Day Secondary Education funds disbursement. The insufficient FDSE funds also cannot enable the administration of an institution to construct or purchase high-quality available physical resources.

6.0 Recommendations

- (i) The Government should increase funds for FDSE allocated to government day secondary schools as the study revealed that they were not adequate to enhance full students' participation in government day secondary schools. The Government should increase the amount of FDSE tuition per child per year and remit it in good time to secondary schools so that the school managers could plan with precision and be able to retain the students in schools for full participation.
- (ii) Given that the financial sources in government free day secondary schools cannot convene to the wanted facilities for improving education quality, the Government must increase the amount of funds disbursed to institutions as a result of the high cost of living and inflation. The contribution by the Government of Kenya must be disbursed in time, if possible, before the start of a term to prevent delayed disbursements, which leads to monetary constraints that hamper the quality of achievement in schools. However, providing enough finance to the quality assurance officers. All of these are based on promises formulated by the Kenyan Government and documented in the Basic Education Act, 2013.
- (iii) The Government, through the Ministry of Education, should have a review on the Free Day Secondary Education program to cater to financial resources needed to offer for the additional human capital to cope up with the resultant enrolments increase.
- (iv) The study recommends that there is need to put in place appropriate measures to ensure that the required facilities are put in place to support the entire FDSE program. It also recommends that there is a need to hire more teachers to handle the influx of the number of students joining secondary education due to the FDSE program.
- (v) The study also recommends that more finances be allocated and released on time to support FDSE Programs by enabling the Head Teachers to plan for their activities ahead of time.

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