

Determinants of Educational Output in Public Secondary Schools in Central Province, Kenya

Ndiritu John K.

Abstract

Secondary education is indeed a crucial stage for the education system. This is where some primary schoolteachers are trained; it is also where the future students of higher education are selected having been taught essential skills. It is believed that students enter secondary schools as children and leave as young adults. This change of children to young educated adults calls for various inputs within the school setup. Each of these inputs is assumed to have a certain impact on the young adult produced by the school. It is, therefore, crucial to evaluate all the processes that students undergo through the secondary education level with an aim of identifying educational inputs with the greatest impact on the school product (output). This study was aimed at establishing the major determinants of output in secondary education and the extent to which each educational input used in the study explains the output. The study used survey design, which is concerned with the generalized statistics that result when data are abstracted from a number of individual cases. This study was carried out in Central Province, Kenya. According to Ministry of Education, Statistics Section, there were 690 public secondary schools in Central Province by 2008. Further, there was a total of 205,157 students in the province by 2008. The study was carried out in the public secondary schools where a sample of 69 public secondary schools represented by the head teachers, and 400 students were used from the province. The researcher used two questionnaires; one for the head teachers and another for form four students. Data analysis was done using SPSS and STATA. Regression analysis was used to estimate the relationship between inputs and educational output. After the study it came out clearly that among the endogenous inputs, the key determinant input on education output is student prior performance. The researcher regressed student current performance against his/her previous performance and the result gave a coefficient of determination of 94.3%. The second key determinant of education output is teacher experience. For the sake of this study, three year experience was used as the benchmark for an experienced teacher. On regressing student performance against teachers' experience, the results indicated that experience accounts for 75.7% of variability in the student performance. Further, the study found that most endogenous and exogenous inputs are key determinants of female than male student performance. The study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should provide more resources to ensure that more teachers at secondary school level acquire more skills. The fact that the higher the teacher qualification, the better the student performance means that more resources should be provided to ensure that even those teachers with the first degree pursue masters and doctoral degrees. Further, educational policy-makers should ensure that the investment made in teachers is sufficient and proportionate to the demands placed upon them. The fact that education inputs determine performance in females more than in males implies that female students in co-educational institutes should be fully equipped, while girls schools should be provided with more facilities. Based on these recommendations, the study proposes that similar studies should be carried out in primary and university levels of education. Further, a study on key determinants of male performance should be carried out as the inputs used in the study showed very low impact on male performance.

Full text: <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/3380>