

The Relationship between Subsidized Free Day Secondary Education and Retention in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

A workforce that can adapt to the fast changing global dynamics is critical for sustainable growth and development. Secondary level segment in the education cycle of a Kenyan plays a key role in the development of this workforce and is important since it de-links one from elementary (primary) learning, provides a chance for one to complete the cycle of basic education and anchors as a springboard to either tertiary or higher learning. The study focused on the relationship between subsidized free day secondary education (SFDSE) and learners' retention in secondary schools. The specific objectives were to determine retention rates of students in secondary schools before and after the introduction of SFDSE by the government since the year 2008 and the adequacy of SFDSE funds in enhancing retention of learners in secondary schools in Bungoma County. The target population of the study comprised of all the 3,993 stakeholders in the education sector including the Educational Officers, Principals, B.O.G chairpersons, P.T.A chairpersons and Parents from each Sub County in Bungoma County in Kenya. Cross-sectional survey research and proportional stratified sampling were adopted to obtain a sample size of 340 respondents purposively for the study. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data from the respondents. Qualitative data collected was analyzed using content analysis while quantitative data using descriptive statistics. The results indicated SFDSE had increased enrollment and transition rates and reduced dropout rates of the learners at secondary level education level. The study recommended that due to the importance of SFDSE which had enhanced retention, the amount allocated per child should be increased and the government should also remove the extra burdens from the parents by removing extra charges. The information was useful to education planners, stakeholders and well wishers.

Keywords: Subsidized Free Day Secondary Education, Learners' Retention

Full text: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1105323.pdf>