Effect of Rising Cost on Quality of Education in Public Secondary Schools in Ainamoi Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract: The study sought to assess the effects of rising cost on quality of education in public secondary schools in Ainamoi Sub-County, Kenya. The study analyzed past theories related to the topic under the theoretical review that is systems theory. The researcher used descriptive research design to capture the information on the effects of rising cost of education. The findings indicated that rising costs has affected the quality of education in public secondary schools in Ainamoi Sub-County.

Keywords: Rising, Cost, Education

Introduction

Since Kenya attained its independence, the provision of education has been at its Centre stage (Mang’eng’e, 2018), as education was seen to play a critical role in socio-economic and political advancement. It’s because of this that the government has kept on addressing challenges facing education sector through commissions, committees and task forces (sectionals paper No. 1 of 2005). The previous reports starting from the post-independence stipulated a proposal of an education system that encouraged national unity and create adequate human capital for general national development. The government was convinced that formal education system was a pre-requisite for higher and sustained economic growth. The Kenya government felt the pinch of solely supporting education and this led to a shift in the funding. The strategic plan of 2018-2022 of Ministry of education recommended an increase in sharing of cost between the government, Parents and community towards provision of quality education. The government funds tuition only while parents and other stakeholders have had to bridge the missing gap.

Bennell and Ntagaramba (2008) argue that when school heads effectively govern and allow participatory management to take course, teachers feel energized and motivated, and their sense of ownership and empowerment increases as this has the dictates of the budget and how the school is managed against. Well implemented school plans can increase collegiality and give teachers the satisfaction to commit themselves to school improvement goals and not only them as budget affects up to the students therefore the quality of the education is not compromised. Highly motivated teachers are the key factors of a successful educational system (Seead&Rizwani, 2012). For an educational system to be deemed to provide quality education it depends on the precincts of how the resources are utilized as this affects the learning process, the running of the school and all these depends on externals forces that’s basically the market which has a spiraling effect as it keeps on soaring.

This unquenchable search for quality education has not however been exempted from the current economic crisis which makes the cost of goods and services to rise. Many African countries have been forced to cut down on public spending, especially on education where the government has come up with ways to have the fee guidelines put in place. These fundamental facts sharply constrain the options open to provision of quality education and have serious implications on education sector. Education in Kenya has been exerting a lot of pressure on the national budget due to its rapid growth. This rapid growth has however not been met by a proportionate increase in resources available. The zeal that characterized many nations at independence to massively invest in education soon waned off due to high costs. The available resources from the government could not equitably be distributed to all sectors for maximum development. Many sectors, notably education had to seek involvement of other partners in meeting its financial requirements. In Kenya, there was an already felt need of discovering new or improving old ways of raising money and this has to be done carefully without compromising the quality of education.
There have been frantic efforts by the government to cut down on recurrent expenditure on formal education under the Ministry of Education to less than 30 percent (Republic of Kenya; 2015). The difference in terms of the ministry’s monetary requirements is to be realized through cost-sharing and in the employment of more cost-effective measures in the use of educational resources. Under such a separation, it calls upon educational institutions, especially public secondary schools to establish a means of broadening their resource base to avoid transferring the whole burden to parents, which scrutinizes the budgeting and the prudent use of resources in school’s vis a vis the quality of education provided. One of the main challenges school face in budgeting with regards to the rising cost entails the use of available physical resources for maximum returns. Institutions of learning have a major part to play in generation of the extra funds needed for their smooth running. The possibility of raising further funds for education from parents is already diminishing rapidly with the government fee guideline which according to the ministry should be adhered to strictly. Therefore, this calls for prudent strategies of education financing in schools, let alone improving current education quality.

The Ministry of Education through the County Director of Education and Boards of Management thus breathe life into the Budgets by approving them. A budget reflects a balance between income and expenditure of a School. However, the market forces of demand and supply, which Schools and the Government have no control over, causes price fluctuations. In most cases prices do rise and destabilsizes the practicability of the budgets. Provision of quality services in Public secondary Schools is dependent on the full implementation of the budgets, however, price fluctuations possess a great challenge to this. The School Boards of Management (BOM) and Principals who are the accounting officers are put at a fix as they have to ensure that quality services are offered in Schools. The biggest problem that is faced by public secondary schools is the rising costs of goods and services while revenue stagnates. Based on these major issues that face many schools currently, this study therefore focused on finding out the effects of rising costs on quality of education in public secondary schools in Ainamoi Sub-County.

Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the systems Theory of Administration.

The Systems Theory of Administration

This concept of systems theory suggests that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Englehardt& Simmons, 2002). Rice, (2013) describes a system theory as a progression of interrelated and associated parts, with the end goal that the communication of any part (subsystem) influences the entire framework. Each part is firmly connected to different pieces of the association and no single part exists in the disengagement of others. The frameworks hypothesis lays on the accept that in all frameworks from the Galaxy planetary framework, the general public, training framework, school and study hall have various parts performing various capacities, however so that each part associates and is related with different parts and with different frameworks (condition) around it. Thusly what influences one section, influences different parts in the framework and its condition. Schools are basically frameworks by their own privilege since they comprised of a few sections serving various capacities, which are interrelated. From the point of the framework of view school the board includes overseeing and tackling issues in each piece of the associations yet doing as such with the understanding that activities are taken in one piece of the association influence different pieces of the association. For example, executing an answer for an issue in a school's educational plan guidance and oversight capacity will probably influence different parts of the school, for example, staffing workforce assignments, physical offices, and network connection and fund errands.

Cost of training is a consequence of a bunch of variables including the free public secondary teaching just as the financial turn of events and typical cost for basic items. In public secondary schools, the cost of instruction is dictated by foundation advancement, compensations for staff just as educating/learning types of gear and assets. The frameworks hypothesis is pertinent to the instructive organization in light of the fact that the instructive framework or even a solitary school unit or a youngster is a framework, and the idea of communication and association of parts with the others and with the more extensive framework is material. Educational program instruction and student work force: assignments of school organization Pupil Personnel errands Staff faculty: Tasks of school organization Rising Cost in Education School Plants and Physical Facilities undertakings of school organization Strategies on cost decrease by school organization. This study sought to find the effects of rising cost on quality of education in public secondary schools in Ainamoi Sub-county, Kenya.
Methodology and Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Orodho, (2009), descriptive survey is the engagement of a sample population in a bid to get their views, beliefs, attitudes, opinion among other attributes that allows the person to pass information through interview and questionnaires. Description of attitudes, beliefs, opinions and other personal attributes done in research using a survey (Wambalaba, 2009). The researcher used both questionnaires and interview schedules during data collection making the design very appropriate. The descriptive nature of research design was used in order to collect information on the impacts of rising costs on quality of education in public secondary schools in Ainamoi Sub-County. This design provides a quantitative and numeric description of trends, attitudes and/or opinions of a population being studied by having a sample of that population. The researcher generalized and made claims about the general population from the sample population.

Results and Discussion

The study further sought to establish the effect of the rising costs on the quality of education while identifying the affected areas and the priority areas due to the rising costs. The findings are indicated in table 1,2 and 3

### Table 1: Boards of Management perspective on Effect of Rising Cost on Quality of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board discusses the effects of unforeseen rise in costs and factors it in the budget.</td>
<td></td>
<td>7(23.3%)</td>
<td>6(20%)</td>
<td>17(56.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting and budget approval done termly to cater for changes in cost of goods and services in school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>9(30%)</td>
<td>12(40%)</td>
<td>9(30%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget approval put in place measures to counter effects of rising costs</td>
<td></td>
<td>5(16.7%)</td>
<td>7(23.3%)</td>
<td>18(60%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The board is keen on budget approval</td>
<td></td>
<td>15(50%)</td>
<td>6(20%)</td>
<td>17(56.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data

Boards of Management was asked to indicate their level of agreement concerning their perspective on effect of rising cost on quality of education. From table 4.12, 7(23.3%) Boards of Management disagreed when asked on whether board discusses the effects of unforeseen rise in costs and factors it in the budget. 6(20%) respondents were undecided and majority of 17(56.7%) respondents agreed. This was not seen as major effect. The results imply that quality education and performance were affected by the rising costs. This may also mean that the available funds are channeled to other areas. These findings agree with the findings of the study done by Espinosa (2017) who asserted that the school Principal should always consider the board’s decision on financial matters in school.

Asked whether budgeting and budget approval are done termly to cater for changes in cost of goods and services in school, 9(30%) respondents disagreed, 12(40%) respondents were undecided while 9(30%) respondents agreed. These findings agree with the findings of the study done by Silva (2015) who insisted on importance of budgeting before initiating the program.

Concerning whether budget approval put in place measures to counter effects of rising costs, 5(16.7%) respondents disagreed, 7(23.3%) respondents were undecided while majority of 18(60%) respondents agreed. These findings agree with the findings of the study done by Jayamaha (2015). He reiterated in his study that budget should be adjusted in a way that it will accommodate any upcoming emergency measure that needs to be solved.
On whether the board is keen on budget approval, 15 (50%) respondents disagreed, 6 (20%) respondents were undecided while majority of 17 (56.7%) respondents agreed. The findings of this study are in agreement with the study done by Espinosa (2017) who addressed the financial challenges and the importance board gives to the school in matters solving budgetary problems.

Further findings indicated that Boards of Management agreed that the Principals and their staff pay a crucial role in mitigating the rising costs, because they indicated that they task them with coming with creative ways of having to cascade through the fluctuating cost without burdening the parents, since they only approve such plans.

Table 4.13 Heads of Departments’ perspective on Effect of Rising Cost on Quality of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect of Rising Cost</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demotivated teachers</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teaching and learning materials</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow development</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus not covered</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data

Heads of department were asked to indicate their level of agreement concerning their perspective on effect of rising cost on quality of education. From table 4.13, 4 (20%) Heads of department strongly disagreed when asked on whether rising cost has demotivated teachers. 2 (10%) respondents disagreed, 6 (30%) respondents agreed and majority of 8 (40%) respondents strongly agreed agreeing with the findings of the study done by Bennell (2016). In his study, teacher motivation is the key to academic excellence in every school. Financial appreciation given to teachers motivates them highly.

On whether poor performance can be attributed to the rising cost, 3 (15%) Heads of department that participated in the study strongly agreed. 2 (10%) respondents disagreed, 3 (15%) respondents agreed while majority of 12 (60%) respondents strongly agreed giving an indication that rise in cost affect the quality of education negatively. On the other hand, when asked if inadequate teaching and learning materials are due to the rising cost, 8 (40%) heads of department agreed that it affects the quality of education while majority of 12 (60%) respondents strongly agreed. The findings of this study agree with earlier study by Kones (2012) which established that the biggest effect of the rising cost in its study was the academic performance of the schools as opposed to the development of the schools and operations.

On whether slow development was as a result of rising cost, 6 (30%) heads of department strongly agreed, 3 (15%) respondents disagreed, majority of 12 (60%) respondents agreed and 2 (10%) strongly agreed. The researcher also sought to find out if syllabus coverage was an effect of rising cost, 2 (10%) respondents strongly agreed, 3 (15%) respondents disagreed, 4 (20%) respondents did not indicate their responses, 5 (25%) respondents agreed and majority of 6 (30%) respondents strongly agreed. These findings corroborate with the findings of the study done by Ntagaramba (2016) who asserted that syllabus coverage and slow development of the schools are attributed to the rising cost.
Table 2: Bursar/Accounts clerk perspective on Effect of Rising Cost on Quality of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demotivated teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6(66.7%)</td>
<td>3(33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9 (100%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teaching and learning materials.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2(22.2%)</td>
<td>7(77.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow development</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6(66.7%)</td>
<td>3(33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus not covered</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2(22.2%)</td>
<td>4(44.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data

Bursars/accountants were asked to indicate their level of agreement concerning their perspective on effect of rising cost on quality of education. From table 4.14, majority of 6(66.7%) Bursar/school accountants agreed when asked on whether rising cost has demotivated teachers. 3(33.3%) respondents strongly agreed agreeing with the findings of the study done by Mgeni (2015) which established that priority ought to be given to strategies that motivate teachers.

On whether poor performance can be attributed to the rising cost, all 9(100%) Bursars/school accountants that participated in the study agreed. On the other hand, when asked if inadequate teaching and learning materials are due to the rising cost, 2(22.2%) Bursar/school accountants agreed that it affects the quality of education while 7(77.8%) Bursars/school accountants strongly agreed. The study established that the most affected area due to the rising costs was teaching and learning materials. All the respondents agreed that the teaching and learning materials were inadequate due to the rising costs. The study agrees with earlier study by Kones (2012) which established that the biggest effect of the rising cost in its study was the academic performance of the schools as opposed to the development of the schools and operations. Schools have developed alternative strategies to deal with the rising costs, for example finding alternative ways to raise money for school projects. Some of the effects include effect on the availability of the teaching and learning materials resulting into effects on the coverage of the syllabus in the schools and affected the academic performances of the schools.

Further findings from the Principals interviews, most of the Principal indicated that the effects of rising cost include; shortage of funds for schools administration as most programs and fund-based, stalling of projects and slow progress on development, prioritizing of essential programs in school.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the study came to a conclusion the rising cost has impact on the teaching and learning materials since these are the essentials in a school, which in the long run affects the quality of education that is delivered in schools. To curb the rising costs, schools should develop strategies to earn extra income to assist them.
Recommendation of the Study

The following recommendations were made:

i. Government should ensure that schools which do not have alternative income are encouraged to seek for alternative sources of financing such as farming or hiring out of school assets such as the playground, halls, chairs etc.

ii. The study recommended that in order to further enhance financial management in public secondary schools there ought to be budgetary controls and all school stakeholders ought to be involved in the budgetary process.

iii. The school Principals should develop school procedures that require school members including teachers and support staff to participate in income generating activities to help schools manage rising costs.

iv. The Principals need to devise ways to ensure that school fees are cleared by parents having in mind not to disrupt the learning of students in school, this can include accepting school fees payment in kind.

References