

Factors Influencing Internal Efficiency of Public Secondary Schools in Bungoma County

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Abstract—Education plays a critical role in promoting economic, social, cultural and political development of individuals, communities, nations and humanities. The Government of Kenya has consequently been allocating substantial resources to the education sector. In fact, the Government has been shouldering tuition fees in all public secondary schools since 2008. Despite these efforts by the Government, there are notable wastage in secondary school education sector. It has been noted that individuals, societies and humanity can realize returns to education if schools are operated efficiently. This study was designed to establish factors influencing internal efficiency of public secondary schools in Bungoma County. Internal efficiency is the flow of students from the point of entry to the point of completion with minimum dropout and repetition. In this study, the indicators of internal efficiency are progression and completion rates. A descriptive survey design was used. The sampling units were public secondary schools in the County. By the time of study, there were 130 public secondary schools in the County. Stratified random sampling was used to sample schools while purposive sampling was used to sample head teachers and class teachers in the sampled schools. Therefore the population was 130 head teachers and 520 teachers. A sample of 97 head teachers and 388 class teachers were drawn from a population. A questionnaire was used to gather data from head teachers and class teachers. Students' record collection schedule was used to gather data to the study. The questionnaire and students' record collection schedule were validated by constructing relevant items based on the objectives and reviewed by four lecturers in the Faculty of Education and Community Studies, Egerton University. The lecturers' comments were incorporated in the final questionnaire and schedule to enhance validity. A reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated and found to be 0.83 using Cronbach alpha. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics used were frequencies and percentages. The study established that public schools in Bungoma County were experiencing internal inefficiency. On average dropout rates were 24%. The findings imply that a substantive percentage of learners are not completing basic education. They drop out before acquiring necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to actively participate in development process. The Ministry

of education should enact appropriate strategies aimed at retaining learners in public secondary schools.

Index Terms— Internal Efficiency.

I. INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality education is one of the most important responsibilities of all governments in the world because education contributes to improving peoples lives and reducing poverty in many ways. These values ranges from helping people to become more productive and earn more, improvement in health and nutrition, growth and promotion of social development through strengthening social cohesion and giving people more capacities to maximize their potentials (Psacharopoulos, 2002). The provision of education to as many people as possible has thus been the focus of both individuals and governments in many countries. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 by the United Nations Organization identifies education as a basic human right (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2001). Kenya subscribes to this declaration. The country is also a signatory to the international protocol that established Education for All agenda in Jomtien, Thailand, 1990. Consequently, Kenya is committed to: Elimination of poverty as a hindrance to educational development, promotion of human rights through provision of Education and attainment of sustainable development by the provision of quality basic education for all (Republic of Kenya (RoK), 1998; 2003).

In the quest to provide Education for majority of its citizens, Kenya has put in place strategies to ensure increase in secondary school enrolment since independence in 1963, despite the setbacks. For instance, for a period of 18 years, that is, 1985-2002, enrolment at the secondary school level had been increasing except for 1989-1993 and 1998-2000 (Achoka, 2007). The budgetary allocation to education has been substantial amounting to 31% of the total government expenditure. (Ministry of Education (MoE), (2008).

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The secondary school education is recognized as the spring board to tertiary education and training. It is critical in every country for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it is central to development because it provides insights, skills and competencies that are needed for economic growth and national development. Secondly, it is at this level that learners consolidate their basic knowledge gained in primary school and acquire the common culture that will allow them to be useful citizens in a peaceful society. For this matter therefore, it is a significant juncture in the national and educational development.

According to R.o.K. (1980, 1998, 2003) some of the objectives of this sector of education are to:

- i) Promote experience and growth of the whole person through integrated development of mental, physical and emotional attributes and abilities.
- ii) Promote communication skills, numeracy, scientific concepts and skills.
- iii) Promote social equity through provision of education to all Kenyans including those from disadvantaged communities and households, girl-child and the handicapped.

In the quest for these noble goals however, the secondary school cycle in Kenya faces some challenges. Among them are, low transition rates between primary and secondary schools and high dropout rates (R.o.K., 1998; 2003). In

addition, it is noted that some of the factors contributing to dropouts from secondary school education include early girl-child marriages, inability to pay school fees due to poverty, hazards of HIV/AIDS pandemic; violence and drug abuse (R.o.K., 2003; Achoka, 2006; 2007).

A study carried out by Achoka (2007), on ten cohorts between 1990 and 2002 established that dropout rates for the ten cohorts ranged between 10 and 50%. The highest dropout rate for the girls was 50% in the 1997-2000 cohort while that of the boys was 30% in the 1992-1995 and 1998-2001 cohorts. Most importantly, for every cohort, 50% of the girls dropped out. Similarly, 30% of boys enrolled in 1990/93 and 1998/01 dropped out. The author also observed that on average, dropout rates for boys was 17% while for the girls was 21%. The same study also noted that completion rates ranged between 70 and 100%. Very high completion rates of 90-100% could be due to repeaters in Form 3 and Form 4 which is a common occurrence in some parts of Kenya. The average completion rate for the boys is 87% while for the girls is 81%. Dropout rates are shown in Table 1 and completion rates Table 2

Table 1 Dropout rates for 10 cohorts by gender between 1990 and 2002 B – Boys while G - Girls

1990/93		1991/94		1992/95		1993/96		1994/97		1995/98		1996/99		1997/00		1998/01		1999/02		
B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
%	20	30	20	20	30	30	10	10	10	10	10	20	20	20	10	50	30	10	10	10

Source: Ministry of Education (2003)

Table 2 Completion rates for ten cohorts by gender between 1990 and 2002. B means boys while G, girls

1990/93		1991/94		1992/95		1993/96		1994/97		1995/98		1996/99		1997/00		1998/01		1999/02		
B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
%	80	70	80	80	70	70	90	90	90	90	90	80	80	80	90	50	70	90	90	90

Source: Ministry of Education (2003)

Table 3 Transition Rates between 1999 and 2006

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Rates (%)	46.1	43.3	46.5	43.6	46.5	50.5	51.2	55.4

Source: Ministry of Education (2006)

The statistical analysis in Table 1 shows that every cohort in Kenya within the period considered 1990-2002, had dropout rates. Emerging from this fact is a crucial question, where do the girls and boys who drop out of these cohorts go? And what do they do wherever they go?

From the data in the table 1, it is clear that as a nation, Kenya incurs a loss through drop out in educational sector. The drop out signifies unfulfilled aims, goals and objectives for the individual, community, and nation as a whole. For instance, for any dropout at the secondary school level, the country loses potential work force. Therefore, in Kenya, all stakeholders must ponder over some of the specific factors that may be contributing to high rates in secondary school dropout.

United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2009), shows that 36 million children of primary school age in Africa are out of school and that 1.5 million are in Kenya, an indication that Kenya did not achieve the objective of Education for all by the year 2015 as stated in the Millenium Development Goals. The report further states that by 2015, 900,000 children will be out of school due to poverty, early girl-child marriages, hazards of HIV/AIDS pandemic, violence and drug abuse unless effective strategies are put in place to retain them in schools.

Kenya has a large percentage of children of primary and secondary going age. UNICEF (2009), indicates that 58% of its population is under the age of 18; making it imperative for more investment in primary education. However, transition rates have been low as shown in Table 3.

From Table 3 it is clear that the transition rate from primary to secondary is low given that in the period between 1999 and 2006, the transition rates were only 50% on average. This scenario however changed in 2008/2009 due to introduction and implementation of Tuition Free Secondary Education as shown in Table 4

Table 4 Transition Rates between 2011 and 2015

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rates (%)	69.4	68.4	76.8	80.4	82.3

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2016)

The increase in enrolment rates is attributable to the introduction and implementation of tuition free secondary education though in some areas like former North Eastern province; the transition rate is only 19.4%. These statistics shows that as a country we still have a problem that needs to be addressed to enhance transition rates.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST, 2005), notes that on average; the completion rate in Kenya is 87%, an indication that 13% of the 70% who enroll in secondary schools do not complete secondary school education. It also states that the dropout in secondary school level stands at 30%. The implication of this is that the long term objective of the government to provide every Kenyan child with basic quality education and training by the year 2015 may not be realized. Similarly the universal access to basic education and training that ensures equitable access to education and training for all children, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups may not be realized. In addition, basic education as a basic human right is not accessible to 30% of the eligible students. This will continue to have adverse effects on the provision of education; hence it must be addressed in order to alleviate the potential negative effects.

In its part, the Kenya Government has been increasing its national budgetary allocation to education. According to the highlights of the 2015/2016 budget, the sector was allocated Ksh 27.1 billion more from Ksh 335.7 billion in the 2014/2015 financial year. Out of this Ksh 32.7 was set aside for tuition free secondary education, Sh. 14.1 billion for free primary education, Ksh. 52.9 billion for university education, Ksh. 181.1 billion for TSC and Ksh.17.58 billion for the lap top program. It is projected that the budget for education by 2018 will be 32% of the government spending (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2016)

Despite the government's effort of introduction of Tuition Free Secondary Education and increasing its budgetary allocation to the sector to enhance efficiency of public secondary schools in Kenya, MOE (2009) notes that 27% of those who enroll in form one do not complete form four. The same source avers that the average national repetition rate is

1.7 percent. This indicates that public schools are still experiencing internal inefficiencies. Individuals, communities, and nations can only realize returns to education, when schools are run efficiently. This study sought to establish factors influencing internal efficiency in public secondary schools in Bungoma County

II. OBJECTIVES

- i. To determine levels dropout, repetition, progression and completion rates for the period between 2005 and 2012
- ii. To establish factors influencing dropout and repetition in public secondary schools as perceived by teachers

Research Questions

- i. What are the levels of dropout, repetition, progression and completion rates in public secondary schools in Bungoma County
- ii. What are the factors influencing dropout and repetition in public secondary schools in Bungoma County

A. Study Design

This study used descriptive survey research design. According to Kerlinger (1973), a descriptive study is not restricted to fact finding; but may often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems. This design involves the measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data. Descriptive survey research design is also crucial since it entails the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative data in connection with two or more variables, which are then examined to detect the patterns of association (Bryman, 2004). This study enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on parental support and learner characteristics and also on internal efficiency of public secondary schools in Bungoma County.

B. Study Area

The study was carried out in Bungoma County. The rationale for choosing Bungoma County is that; poverty levels are high, there are incidences of dropout and repetition and the researcher's own interest and knowledge of the area. According to Singleton (1993) the ideal setting for the study

is one that is directly related to the researcher's interest. He also points out the setting should be easily accessible to the researcher and that it should allow immediate rapport with the participants.

C. Population of the Study

The target population was all head teachers and class teachers in the County. There were 130 public secondary schools in the County. Therefore there were 130 head teachers and 520 class teachers in the County at the time of the study (Bungoma District Education Office 2013)

D. Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The study used stratified random sampling to sample the schools. The strata were based on constituencies and on the categories of schools in the County. There were five constituencies in the County. A list of all public secondary schools in the County were obtained from the County Education Officer's office. Serial numbers were then given to the schools that were on the list. The sample size for the study was determined according to Kathuri (1993) and Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) who recommended the following formula that was developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1 - P)}{D^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where S = required sample size, N= the given population size, P = population proportion assumed to be 0.5 as this yields the maximum possible sample size required, D = the degree of occurrence with highest occurrence and X^2 = is the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom.

The sample size was 97 head teachers and because there are four classes in each school four class teachers were purposively sampled. In schools that had more than one stream simple random sampling was used to select one class teacher. Therefore 388 class teachers constituted the sample. The sample distribution is shown in the Table 4.

Table 5 The Distribution of the Sample

Constituency	Population	Category and number of schools		Sample	Head teachers	Class Teachers
Webuye	30	County	6	4	4	16
		Sub-County	24	18	18	72
Sirisia	28	County	8	6	6	24
		Sub County	20	15	15	60
Kimilili	30	County	8	6	6	24
		Sub County	22	16	16	68
Kanduyi	24	County	4	3	3	12
		Sub County	20	15	15	60
Bumula	18	County	5	4	4	16
		Sub County	13	10	10	40
Total	130		130	97	97	388

Source: Bungoma District Education Office (2010)

E. Instrumentation

The researcher used questionnaires and student data collection schedule to collect relevant data.

F. Questionnaire for Head Teachers and Class Teachers

This gathered information on factors influencing dropout and repetition in their schools.

G. Student Data Collection Schedule

Student data collection schedule was used to collect data on drop out, repetition, progression, completion numbers in each of the sampled schools. The tool was also used to collect data from class attendance registers, admission registers, discipline book and KCSE computer print outs.

H. Validation of the Instruments

Appropriate and relevant items were constructed to ensure valid and reliable data. In this case all research objectives were covered by cross-checking the research objectives and the corresponding items. In addition, (Gay, 1987) asserts that validity is established by expert judgment; therefore face and content validity of the instruments were verified by the study supervisors and other three educational experts in the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Education Management, Egerton University.

I. Reliability of the Instruments

A pilot study was carried out in fifteen schools that were not part of the sample. The completed questionnaire were collected and then coded. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement that is how consistent scores are from one measurement to another. The reliability index of 0.84 was obtained which was above 0.70 Cronbachcoefficient which is the accepted threshold for social science research. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) note that Cronbach alpha is used to determine reliability for both objective and essay type questions.

Based on the comments from the supervisors and educational experts and the reliability results, the items in the questionnaire were revised accordingly and then appropriately administered to the selected sample.

J. Data Collection Procedures

Permission was sought to conduct the study from the National Council for Science and Technology, the County commissioner and Sub County Education Officers in BungomaCounty through the chairman, Department of Curriculum Instruction and Education Management; the Dean, Faculty of Education and Community Development and Graduate school at Egerton University. After which, data were collected from the sampled schools. The researcher visited the sampled schools introduced himself and sought consent from the principals to conduct research after

explaining to them the purpose of the study. Having been assured of confidentiality and anonymity, the principals and class teachers were asked to read the instructions clearly and then were requested to respond to the items in the questionnaire.

The completed questionnaires were collected after two week. Within the same time, the researcher was doing content analysis from class attendance registers, admission registers and KCSE results printouts to establish enrolment, repetition, progression, dropout and completion figures.

K. *Data Analysis Procedures*

Data analysis was done both qualitatively and quantitatively. According to Patton (1990) massive qualitative data collected from the field need to be organized into significant patterns to reveal the essence of the data. Before the actual data analysis, questionnaires were checked to determine if accurate sample was obtained in proportion to issued questionnaires. They were also checked for completeness. Internal efficiency indicators (dropout, repetition, progression and completion rates calculated.

Data was analyzed according to objectives using both descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages used to analyze the objectives. The data was presented by use of tables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. *Level of internal efficiency of public secondary schools in Bungoma County*

The first objective of the study sought to establish the level of internal efficiency of public secondary schools in Bungoma County for five cohorts from 2005 to 2009. In the internal efficiency, the following rates of internal efficiency were established:

- i. Dropout rates
- ii. Repetition rates
- iii. Progression rates
- iv. Completion rates

In addition to the above measures of internal efficiency, the factors contributing to dropout and repetition were examined. This was premised on the fact that once issues of dropout and repetition are addressed, progression and completion rates will be enhanced.

Internal efficiency was measured with respect to its four dimensions namely; dropout, repetition, progression and completion rates. Internal efficiency data was gathered using the students’ data schedule. Data on each internal efficiency dimension from the sampled schools was averaged and then transformed to a cohort average. Table 8 shows the average percentage dropout, repetition, progression and completion rates by cohort

Table 6: Levels of Internal Efficiency

	Cohort				
Internal Efficiency	2005-2008	2006-2009	2007-2010	2008-2011	2009-2012
Dropout	20.09	19.72	18.89	28.26	32.02
Repetition	2.49	2.34	3.28	2.78	3.51
Progression	81.84	82.36	82.83	72.46	69.96
Completion	77.42	77.94	77.83	67.96	64.96

Table 6 shows that the drop-out rates for the five cohorts ranged from 18.89% to 32.02%. It was lowest among the 2006 – 2009 cohort and highest among the 2009 – 2012 group. The overall average drop-out rate for the period under study was 24%. An examination of the results in Table 8 reveal that the drop-out rate by year was not systematic as it did not follow any trend. The question that arises is where do

these students go. This shows that schools are not operating efficiently. Each dropout represents a waste. These findings are consistent with that Achoka (2007) whose study found out that dropout in Kenya ranges from 10% to 50% and MoEST (2001) which established that dropout rates in Kenya stands at 30%. The findings are also consistent with those of Sang, Koros, and Bosire (2013) whose study found out that dropout rate for Kericho District in 2007 was 28.6%.

As a Country, Kenya incurs a loss through drop out in educational sector. The drop out signifies unfulfilled aims, goals and objectives for the individual, community and nation as a whole. The implication of this is that the long term objective of the government to provide every Kenyan child with basic quality education and training will not be realized. Similarly the universal access to basic education and training that ensures equitable access to education and training for all children, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups may not be realized.

The four years of secondary education are an important stage of physical, intellectual and psychological development when the youth matures into adult roles. As much as this is the situation, only 47% of those who complete primary education proceed to the secondary education while only 12% of this group proceeds for further education in public universities and middle level colleges. From the 12% that proceed to the university, 4% are girls while 8% are boys. This is an indication that wastage exist in all levels of education system in Kenya and therefore solutions to this problem should be found to enhance internal efficiency of public secondary schools. Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (2010) avers that wastage arising from dropout is a serious challenge that must be addressed so as to ensure that resources in terms of time, energy, money and opportunity cost are not wasted. It is therefore necessary for Kenya through the Ministry of Education to investigate why this trend exists and to come up with strategies to minimize its level and deal with causes. Bray et al (2002) assert that high dropout rate which is high among the low income groups and girls is a threat to issues of internal efficiency of the school system. Pupils who drop out from school complicate enrolment forecasts, teacher supply forecasts and erode the education budget. In addition, resources already invested in them go to waste (Chiuri and Kiumi 2005).

The Table 6, also indicate that each cohort experienced repetition rates of between 2.34% to 3.51% for the period under the study. Eiseman (1997) established that in the Latin American and Caribbean countries average repetition rates are 19% and 8% for primary and secondary schools respectively. A study on rural day schools by Ncube (2004) in Zimbabwe found that the number of students repeating a level

increases with the level of grades in school. Of the 2527 who repeat over a period of four years, the study established that 5.7% were in form one, 7.6% were in form two, 30.2% were in form three and 56.5% were in form four. A large proportion of those students in form three and four were those who had failed the "0" level examinations the previous year and had returned to repeat either in form three or four. This shows that repetition rates in Zimbabwe are far much higher than in Kenya.

According to RoK (2003) the national average repetition rates in secondary schools was 15.4%. Boys registered 5.8% and girls recorded 9.6%. These rates are higher than the rates in Bungoma County. Lower rates of repetition in Bungoma County could be due to the government policy of automatic promotion and poverty whereby many parents cannot afford to pay school fees twice in the same grade. Another factor contributing to low repetition rates could be the opening of village polytechnics where form four leavers can easily enroll. The findings of this study are consistent with that of Koros, Sang and Bosire (2013) who reported that repetition rates in Kericho were 1.09 for form one, 1.14 for form two, 1.31 for form three and 1.32 for form four. Repetition signifies inefficiency as learners spend many years in school and belatedly enter the labour market, thus increasing the opportunity cost to the individual and society. Those who repeat also disproportionately use the resources allocated to education sector besides utilizing the space which would have been used by other students (Chiuri and Kiumi 2005). A study by DFID (2001) reported that repetition reduces completion rates for any given cohort, which further compromises the internal efficiencies of schools.

Table 6 also shows progression rates as 81.84 for 2005 cohort, 82.36% for 2006 cohort, 82.83% for 2007 cohort, 72.46% for 2008 cohort and 69.96% for 2009 cohort. On average the progression rates were 77.89%

From the Table 6 it is clear that, not all students who enroll in form one, complete form four within the required period. On average 73 percent complete within the required period. 27 percent do not complete. A small percentage repeats while about 24 percent drop out of schools in Bungoma County. These finding are consistent with that of Sang, Koros and Bosire (2013) whose study established that Kericho District

had a completion rate of 62% in 2007. Completion rates in Bungoma County, during the period under the study is far much lower than the completion rates in the country. The average completion rates, according to MOEST (2006) was 87%. Kenya policy framework for education and training paper No. 1 (2012) notes that completion rates stand at 76.8% (79.2% for boys and 74.4% for girls in 2010. This calls for concerted effort by all stakeholders in the country to address lower completion rates in the Country. The implication is that the people of Bungoma do not compete favorably with people from other parts of the country in terms of access and completion rates in secondary schools.

The implication is that as a County, Bungoma would lag behind in development process because a good percentage of learners do not complete school. This also means that the resources invested in them go to waste. Secondary education in Kenya is under the basic education. The Kenya Constitution (2010) gives every Kenyan Citizen a right to basic education. As a country, Kenya is a signatory to international conventions that advocate for education as a basic human right. In Bungoma County, 27% do not complete secondary education. This calls for concerted effort to identify the causes of wastage and enact strategies to enhance completion rates in secondary schools in Bungoma County and other Counties in the country where completion rates are low.

B. Factors influencing dropout from secondary schools in Bungoma County

The study sought to establish the factors influencing dropout in public secondary schools in Bungoma County. The responses are shown in Table 9.

Table 7: Factors influencing to drop out in Bungoma County

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
School fees	378	89.15
Cost of education	356	83.96
Pregnancy	300	70.75
Academic performance	160	37.73
Marriage	80	18.86

Discipline	310	73.11
Drug use	80	18.86
Attitude	77	18.16
Peer influence	101	23.82
Family conflicts	30	7.07
Role models	25	5.89
Parental concern	110	25.94

From Table 7, the major contributing factor to drop out from secondary schools in Bungoma County is failure of parents to pay school fees at 89.15 percent. This failure to pay school may be largely attributed to poverty. The County’s poverty level is 52% (Kenya Economic Report, 2013). Many households in the County depend on agriculture which does not fetch much to cater for school fees and other household necessities. According RoK (1997-2001) agriculture is the mainstay of the county’s economy, accounting for 75% of employment. Majority of parcels are small holding under 2 hectares each. Subsistence farming is dominant. Cash crops grown are sugarcane, maize and coffee. (Bungoma District Development Plan, 1997-2001) The County’s poverty level is 52% (Kenya Economic Report, 2013).

Many people live in abject poverty in developing countries. For examples, in Kenya national poverty level as at 1999 stood at 52.69% (R.O.K 2000) and as at 2012 it stood at 46% (Kenya Economic Report, 2013). Manifestations of poverty are seen in lack of basic requirements for example access and retention in education institutions, vocational training and employment. Fields (1998) and World Bank (1989) concur that access to education and poverty are inversely related, that is, the higher the level of education of the population, the lower will be the proportion of the poor in the total population and the reverse holds. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985, P.115) agree that the effects of poverty are direct in that

The poor families certainly find it difficult to pay fees even free education imposes substantial financial expenses through earnings foregone and out of pocket expenses for clothes, travel and books. Moreover, poor families on average tend to have more school age children than the higher income families This may explain why many young people who are of school going age are engaged in motor cycle business in Bungoma

County. This is because in poor families, children's labour is often critical to the income for survival of the household. This is especially so among both the urban and the rural poor. In agreement Odada (1989, P.89) contents that:

The reason why many children do not go to school is that school is not free. Students have to meet direct costs and opportunity costs. These costs are very high for the average family. Many parents who have limited resources only choose to invest in boys.

Jolly (1969) found out that the income of the individuals affected their access to social services such as education and health. Schultz (1961) asserts that education is an investment in Human Capital, being an investment therefore choices have to be made by the individuals demanding it. Education is considered a durable producer good and so associated with this investment process are the direct and indirect (opportunity costs). As for the poor parents, the high opportunity costs of sending the children to school would lead to low participation, dropout and repetition.

The Government of Kenya introduced free tuition in secondary school in 2008. This policy was meant to reduce dropout in Kenya secondary schools. Despite this policy, 27% of students in Bungoma County do not complete school. There is therefore the need for County specific measures to address the issue of wastage. Such measures include empowering parents to enable them pay school fees and introduction of selective vouchers to finance education of the poor. The Government should also provide and enforce school fees guidelines as some schools are charging between Kshs. 60,000 and 100,000 per year. These charges are far much beyond the ability of most parents in the County given that 52% of the population is living below the poverty line.

From Table 7, it is clear that the cost of education influences dropout from school. 83.96% of the respondents noted that the cost of education does influence students drop out from school. This is despite the fact that the Government in its effort to enhance retention of learners in school has waived tuition fees in all public secondary schools in Kenya. This finding indicates that the cost of education is still too high to afford by a large proportion of parents in Bungoma County.

This calls for more effective strategies of financing education in Kenya.

Ngeno, Simatwa and Ayodo (2014) observed that poverty plays a major role in student dropout and that poverty has multiplier effect whereby children drop out of school to serve as house helps, herders and to get married.

The other major factor contributing to dropout from school is indiscipline of learners at 73.11 percent. Indiscipline result into pregnancies, drug abuse, absenteeism, suspension and expulsion of students from schools. All these eventually lead to drop out from school. This finding concurs with Ng'eno, Simatwa and Ayodo (2014) whose study established that indiscipline contributed to dropout. They noted that indiscipline affect more boys than girls in Kericho District. More boys become undisciplined when they realize that they cannot make it academically. In essence such undisciplined students use this option to drop out of school so that they join fellow peers as touts in bus parks, motor bike transporters, hawking and hotel business as attendants. Musyimi (2011) also noted that in Makueni County, Kenya, indiscipline was one of the factors that led to dropout.

Pregnancy is another factor contributing to dropout from schools in Bungoma County. 70.75 percent of the respondents stated that pregnancy contributes to dropout from school as most of those who become pregnant get married and also parents refuse to take them back to school, despite the Government policy allowing such girls to go back to school. Some parents also may not be aware of the Government policy of student mother re-entry in school after they have given birth. Pregnancy of girls could be attributed to poverty at the household level. Uromi (2014) and TIGINT report 2008 and 2010) agree that socio economic status is among the leading causes of teenage pregnancy. The poor girls can easily be preyed upon by people who can give them little money. Many of the girls are in day schools and therefore they can easily be lured while going to and from school. According to TIGINT, the causes of teenage pregnancies are peer pressure. During adolescence, teenagers often feel pressure to make friends and fit in with their peers. Many times these teens let their friends influence their decision to have sex even when they do not fully understand the consequences associated with the act. Teenagers have sex

as away to appear cool and sophisticated, but in some cases the end result is an unplanned teen pregnancy. Absent parents also contribute to teen pregnancy. Teen girls are more likely to get pregnant if they have limited or no guidance from their parents. Many parents have busy lives that prevent them from providing the guidance and support that young teenagers need to make good decisions on issues such as sex.

Uromi (2014) notes that girls have high aspirations for their education, despite concerns with poverty, gender based violence, the consequences of early pregnancy and marriage. She further notes that in Tanzania more than 8000 girls drop out of school due to pregnancy. Though many countries agreed to increase opportunities for all children to have access to education to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, girl students pregnancy is among the rapidly growing social challenge that hinder the realization of the rights of the girl child to education (MoEVT, 2008 and BEST, 2010).

The Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region is characterized by high school dropout rates in the world. Teenage pregnancy prevalence is 143 per 1000 girls and resultantly, women are losing battle of equal access to secondary educational (James et al, 2000). Nyambura, (2000) also identifies poverty, lack of school facilities, and distance to school as major obstacles to schooling among girls. She also states that too much leisure, illiteracy and low level of education contribute to teenage pregnancy for school girls.

Ng'eno, Simatwa and Ayodo (2014) established that early marriages and pregnancies do affect dropout. Many girls perform well in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education but fail to access secondary school education either because they are pregnant or are married immediately after sitting KCPE. Achoka (2007) also found that early marriages and pregnancies were causes of girls' failure to be in school. The findings are also in agreement with that of Musyimi (2011) who noted that in Makueni County, teenage pregnancies were some of the factors that affect girls' continuity in secondary education.

Therefore, there is need to put in place strategies to curb teenage pregnancy. These strategies include; formulation of students anti pregnancy clubs. There must be organization of clubs for students in which they can discuss and debate on prevention of pregnancies, parents and guardians should be

encouraged to educate their children on reproductive health and strengthen family life education in schools besides guidance and counseling.

Other factors contributing to dropout from school are negative attitude towards education generally and some parents prefer to educate only boys as opposed to girls. These findings agree with that of Ng'eno, Simatwa and Ayodo (2014) whose study established that there is discrimination against the girl child. UNESCO (2011) also noted that in Sycheles and South Africa, boys were given priority compared to girls who are rarely given a chance by parents to go to school. The other factor is ignorance of some parents on the importance of education.

Other factors contributing to dropout are poor academic performance (37.73%), lack of parental concern (25.94%), peer influence 23.82%), drug abuse (18.86%) and lack of role models (5.89%).

The findings of this study show that role models and family conflicts are not major factors leading to dropout. There are a significant proportion of people in Bungoma County who have completed secondary and college education. The main factors to be dealt with are costs of education, discipline and pregnancy. These finding are in tandem with findings of the research that was done by International Labour Organization (ILO 2011) that established that the factors leading to drop out in Kwale County in Kenya are: costs of education that are unaffordable by many parents, truacy, child labour, drug abuse, negative attitudes towards education, pregnancy and early marriage and HIV/AIDS. Achoka (2007) and RoK (2003) also note that some of the causes of primary and secondary schools dropout include early marriages, inability to pay schools fees due to poverty, hazards of HIV/AIDS pandemic, violence and drug abuse.

C. Factors influencing repetition in public secondary schools in Bungoma County.

The study sought to establish the factors influencing repetition in public secondary schools in Bungoma County and the responses are shown in the Table 8.

Table 8 Factors influencing repetition in public secondary schools in Bungoma County

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Attendance due to school fees	405	95.51
Pregnancy	145	34.19
Academic performance	160	37.73
Discipline	136	32.07
Drug use	50	11.79
Parent/student decision	205	48.34
Transfer	150	35.37
Health	60	14.15
Exams	20	4.71
Parental concern	110	25.94

From Table 8, the major reason for repetition is absenteeism occasioned by failure to pay school fees. 95.51% of the respondents stated that school fees is a major reason contributing to repetition. Failure to pay school fees increases absenteeism. When students stay out of school for long period of time, their performance is adversely affected, there is poor coverage of syllabus, they miss examinations, perform poorly in examination and at times they fail to register for Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). All these result in repetition of grades.

The other reason is parent/student decision at 48.34%. Some parents and students themselves make decisions to repeat grades on the basis of academic performance. This is due to the belief that repetition would improve student academic performance. Another factor leading to repetition in secondary schools is pregnancy. This was stated by 34.19% of the respondents.

Other factors leading to repetition of grades by learners in Bungoma County are poor academic performance (37.73%), transfer (35.37%), indiscipline (32.07%), lack of parental concern (25.94%), sickness (14.15%), drug abuse (11.79%) and cheating in examinations (4.71%).

These findings are consistent with those of Achoka (2007) and RoK (2003) whose studies established that the causes of

repetition include inability to pay school fees due to poverty, hazards of HIV/AIDS pandemic, violence and drug abuse. Koros, Sang and Bosire (2013) also established that repetition is due to poor performance in examination arising from student entry behavior in form one and student absenteeism.

D. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

- i. Schools in Bungoma County are experiencing internal inefficiencies. There are a proportion of students dropping and repeating grades. On average 24% of learners dropped out of schools in Bungoma County for the period under the study.
- ii. The major causes of internal inefficiency in public schools in Bungoma County were failure of parents to pay school fees, the high cost of education and indiscipline.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education should come up with fees structure and fully enforce them to enable many parents afford education for their kids
- ii. The Government should increase its share of education subsidy because many parents are unable to afford the cost of education.
- iii. Guidance and counseling units in schools should be strengthened to reduce dropout and repetition caused by indiscipline

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