

Influence of County Government Financing of Teaching and Learning Materials on Access to Pre-Primary Education in Baringo Central Sub-County, Baringo County, Kenya

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the influence of county government financing of teaching and learning materials on access to pre-primary education. The paper relied on descriptive survey design and target population of one hundred and twenty-four (124) head teachers, One hundred and twenty-four (124) ECDE teachers, One hundred and twenty-four (124) PA representatives, One (1) ECDE Sub County Coordinator Officer and One District Education Officer (DEO) in Baringo Central Sub-county, Kenya. The teachers and PA representatives who participated in the study were selected using simple random sampling. The data analysis for descriptive statistics and inferential statistics was computed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings and results of the study shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between the county provision of teaching and learning materials on access of pre-primary education in Baringo Central sub-county, ($p < 0.05$). The study concludes that county government financing of teaching and learning facilities has generally enhanced the access to pre-primary education in Baringo Central Sub-County, Baringo County. The study further concludes that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also plays a vital role in providing the teaching and Learning equipment's in various ECDE Centers within the sub county. The study recommends that in order to give chance to many children to enroll in ECDE centers, there is need for county government to subsidize ECDE more than primary education. The study, therefore, recommends that the county governments should develop a public-private partnership policy framework in education sector to engage corporate and business organizations. This will cushion county government educational subsidies leading to more enrolment. The study suggests that there is need to conduct a study of this nature in wider areas, for instance covering the whole Baringo county or other counties.*

Keywords: County government financing, teaching and learning materials, access and pre-primary education

1. Motivation for the Paper

Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) specialist's emphasis on quality of preschool program for young children that results to improved social skills, better school grades performance, improved attention span and enthusiasm for lifelong learning Child Ventures, (2017). Moreover, studies show that high quality early childhood education preschool program helps to prepare young children for future academic, emotional and social achievement. A study by Gardinal-Pizato et al (2012) indicates that the early childhood education has a positive correlation with academic progress of the child in school.

Globally, childhood education is officially recognized as the initial stage of basic education that facilitates the integral development of the child. In Iceland, for instance, pre-school education lays the foundation for the children to be independent, active, thoughtful and responsible participants in a democratic society (Norrdahi, 2008). Due to enormous contribution of ECD across the world; there has been increased attention and various forms of funding to early childhood education in both developed and developing countries.

In Germany, Early Childhood Care and Education is split into state and local governments. Children between 0-3years are funded by the local authorities while for children between 3-5 years are funded through the Ministries of Social Affairs and Education. As of 1998, ECCE

expenditures amounted to 0.36% of GDP (UNESCO, 2003), with funding per enrollee at around \$500 by 2002. Also there are parental co-payments which cover 15-30% of costs which however vary according to number of children, income and type of care, but not exceeding \$350 per year.

South Africa has a comprehensive policies and programmes for children at the birth to age 9 with active participation of both parents and care givers. Seleti (2009) argues that ECD units and section in South Africa are well established in the department of education and social development. More importantly, since 2000, ECD became a budget item for the National Treasury. In other words, ECD in South Africa is a political priority and one of the major areas for government intervention. Despite government support, ECD financing is still inadequate and tracking dispatched finances is yet to be in place (Seleti, 2009).

In Kenya, the household members and the government meet the cost of education. The government spending on education is driven by the Sessional Paper no. 1 of 2005 on Policy Framework for Education and the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) as well as the Basic Education Act (2013). Ngaruiya (2006) argues that funding affects the process of teaching as well as learning of children. Adequate funding means; hiring qualified teachers, recommended pupil-teacher ratio, adequate learning materials, subsidized tuition fees and good leaning physical facilities.

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This study critically evaluated the impact of the county government financing in accessing the preschool education in Baringo central sub-county. However, despite the government intervention of making ECDE affordable in order to increase access to ECDE education, the cost of is still high since ECDE centres levy fees for pupils' teaching and learning materials, lunch, school buildings alongside other non-discretionary items such as school uniforms and stationery.

2. Statement of the problem

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) delegated the responsibility of pre-school education to the County government. However, this has not become operational since the basic facilities lacks funding from an organized government scheme. Illiteracy and high levels of poverty have adversely affected the access of pre-schooling in Baringo Central sub-county, Baringo County. Although training of the ECDE teachers and provision of teaching and learning materials is funded by government; there is little monitoring and no formal linkage between the primary schools and pre-schools. Moreover, families are the primary source of funding for ECDE.

According to Baringo Central Sub-county Director of Education's Office (2018) it is only 42% of pre-school age children that are accessing pre schooling, hence, leaving 58% of the eligible population out of the program. Therefore, this study focused on the influence of county government financing of teaching and learning materials on

the access of pre-school education in Baringo Central sub-county, Baringo County.

3. The objective of the paper

To establish the extent to which county government financing of teaching and learning materials influence access to pre-primary education in Baringo Central sub-county

4. Literature Review

Early Childhood Development and Education also refers to the activities and experiences provided to young children to facilitate acquisition and development of basic concepts, competences, values and attitudes. It is the early simulation and early learning for children before entry to grade one (NESP, 2013). It encompasses the physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development of a child from pre-natal up to the age eight (Child Venture, 2017).

Financing for early childhood development services has been inadequate to ensure access and quality for disadvantaged children who have the most to gain. Investments in pre-primary education in particular are startlingly low. In developing countries, on average, 0.07% of gross national product is spent on teaching and learning resources of pre-primary education compared to 0.5% in developed countries (UNESCO, 2015a). However, across the board, countries, both developed and developing, spend markedly less on pre-primary education when compared to primary education. As presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Expenditure for the Ministry of Education; 2013/14- 2017/18

	Ksh. Millions			
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Ministry of Education. State Department of Basic Education				
Recurrent Expenditure	42,204.06	51,316.39	57,519.21	54,977.03
Development Expenditure	8,843.94	11,156.42	5,258.23	8,188.86
Gross Total Expenditure	51,048	62,472.81	62,777.44	63,165.8

Source: The National Treasury 2017

5. Methodology

The examination utilized a distinct study. Unmistakable review was utilized for this investigation since it might regularly bring about detailing of significant standards of information and answer for huge issues, other than actuality discoveries. The target population included 124 head teachers, 124 ECDE teachers, 124 Parents Association(PA) representatives, 1 ECDE coordinator officer and one Sub-county director of Education in Baringo Central Sub-county. Out of 154 ECDE centers, 124 are public ECDE centres, hence beneficiaries of county government financing. The centres were first clustered and 63 randomly sampled. The rationale of clustering these centers was obtained by well-defined clusters according to the geographical areas of the school (at least 3 in every location). The head teachers, teachers and Parents association(PA) representatives in the 63 pre-school centres were automatically sampled and participated in the study. The questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect information. Both open ended and closed ended items were included in the questionnaires

and the collected data was analyzed as descriptive and inferential statistics for the study.

6. Results

To validate the research instruments, the questionnaires were tested in seven (7) pilot pre-schools that were involved in the study. Therefore, the results were found significant for the study hence the researcher administered research instruments to the selected schools for wider data collection in Baringo Central Sub County. The researcher consulted with supervisors who are professionals and experts in the field to assess the validity of the instruments.

7. Presentation of Data Analysis, Research Findings and Interpretation of Results

The study aimed at examining the influence of county government financing of teaching and learning materials on access to pre-primary education. This was achieved through administering questionnaires to ECDE head teachers,

teachers, parents’ association representatives and sub-county coordinators. The dully filled questionnaires were sampled data computed and present in Table 7.2

Table 7.2: Influence of county government financing of Instructional materials on enrolment rates in ECDE centres

Views	PA Representative		Sub county Director of Education		ECDE sub-county co-ordinator	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	14	22	-	-	1	100
Agree	22	35	1	100	-	-
Not sure	9	14	-	-	-	-
Disagree	13	21	-	-	-	-
Strongly Disagree	5	8	-	-	-	-
Total	63	100	1	100	1	100

The findings from Table 7.2 shows that majority of parents associations representatives at (57%) agreed that county government provided teaching and learning materials to ECDE centres in Baringo Central Sub County that enhanced enrolment rates in pre-primary education centres in the schools under the study. This implied that the provision of teaching and learning materials to pre-primary education had a positive influence on enrolments rates in pre-primary education in Baringo Central Sub County. However, (29%) on minority side, teachers disagreed that the county government do not fund teaching and learning materials to ECDE centres in Baringo Central Sub County that led to a negative influence on enrolment in pre-primary education. The findings further indicated that only (14%) of them had a neutral position on the statement. Both D.E.O and sub-county ECDE coordinator agreed at (100%) that the county government financing of teaching and learning materials enhanced enrolment in pre-primary education in Baringo central sub-county in Baringo County.

Further data analysis on inferential statistics for parents’ association representative, D.E.O. and sub-county coordinators was carried out to establish the relationship between the county government financing on teaching and learning materials and access to pre-primary education in Baringo Central Sub County.

The researcher was then prompted to use Chi-Square tests using SPSS software in order to achieve this objective. The collected data was analyzed and presented in Table 7.3

Table 7.3: Chi-square tests on relationship between County government financing teaching and learning materials and access on pre-primary education

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.817	9	.002
Likelihood Ratio	20.559	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.454	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	124		

Based on results in Table 7.3 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between county government financing teaching and learning materials and access to pre-primary education as illustrated by ($P < 0.05$). This implied that there is a strong relationship between teaching and learning resources that highly contribute to the high enrolment rates of pupils in pre-primary in ECDE

centres in Baringo Central Sub County. This shows there is utilization of learning and teaching resources, the instructional materials are received on time, and rigorously the county government disburses money for pre-primary thus these teaching and learning resources lead to high enrolment rates for pupils hence enhances student participation in Baringo Central Sub County. The results further implied that the teaching and learning influences enrolment rates of pupils’ pre-primary schools.

These findings concur to (Hungu, 2011), Despite the benefits associated with ECDE, many children in Kenya do not receive quality ECDE services, a situation blamed on insufficient government involvement in financing instructional materials for teaching and learning in Baringo central Sub County.

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of county government financing on teaching and learning materials on access to pre-primary education in Baringo central sub-county, Baringo county, Kenya. The study found that Parent Association representatives, D.E.O and ECDE sub-county coordinator were the majority who agreed by 57%, 100% and 100% respectively that county government financing of teaching and learning materials enhanced enrolment rate in ECDE centers.

The study further concludes that Non- governmental Organization (NGOs) also plays a vital role in providing the teaching and learning equipments in various ECDE centres within the Sub County. The study concludes that county government financing on access to pre-primary education in Baringo central sub-county is faced with a number of challenges. Some of the challenges noted include; inadequate allocation of funds by county government to ECDE education, poor budgeting techniques, lack of interest in education matters and corruption in allocation of funds.

This study concludes that money raised by the county government is not sufficient and also it is availed late in the year when the academic calendar of schools is halfway. This calls for measures to be put in place to ensure that funds benefits ECDE centres since it is the basic and crucial educational level that set a foundation of all pupils. The study further concludes that in order to ensure smooth learning of pre-primary education, solid partnerships should be considered between the county government and NGOs, private sector, religious institutions, families and local communities in order to expand and meet the funds required in enhancing further enrolment to pre-primary education.

8. Recommendation and Further Research

Considering the findings of the study, the researcher reached the following recommendations;

- 1) The study recommends that parents incur more cost on ECDE education level than primary education level. This is as a result of spending on school uniforms, paying ECDE B.O.M teachers and other entry fees. In order to give chance to many children to enroll in ECDE centers, there is need for county government to subsidize ECDE education more than primary education.

- 2) The study recommends that County government channel meager amount towards ECDE sector in the county budgetary allocation according to the ECDE Sub-County co-coordinators. The study therefore recommends that the county governments should develop a public-private partnership policy framework in education sector to engage corporate and business organizations to be involved in pre-primary education in the county. The policy framework should provide incentives for businesses and corporate such as tax breaks and reliefs. This will cushion county government educational subsidies leading to more enrolment in pre-primary level of education.

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Based on findings of the study, the researcher suggests the following for further investigations;

- 1) The researcher suggests that there is need to conduct a study of this nature in wider areas for instance covering the whole of the Baringo County or other Counties.
- 2) The study suggests a similar study to be carried out in public day secondary schools in Baringo Central Sub County to establish influence of County governance financing on access to public day secondary education

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