

Impact of Free Secondary Education Policy on Primary to Secondary School Education in Kenya. A Case Study of Mbita and Suba Sub-Counties.

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Abstract

Free Secondary Education policy was introduced in Kenya in 2008 ostensibly to make secondary school education affordable so as to enhance access, transition and student academic performance. Studies in USA, USSR, Japan, Sub - Saharan Africa and some parts of Kenya like Kangundo sub county have revealed that subsidized fees at all levels of education and particularly at primary and secondary school education levels enhance access, transition and academic performance. This seemed not to be the case in Mbita and Suba sub counties, where Gross Enrolment Rates were low at 4948 (33%) and 3546 (25%) respectively for the 2014 against national Gross Enrolment rate of 47.8%. The transition rates from 2010 to 2014 were 39.4%, 41.2%, 40.4%, 54.5%, 59.2% for Mbita Sub county, 56.2%, 54.4%, 61.1% and 59.2% for Suba Sub county which were lower than the national transition rates of 68.9%, 69.4%, 68.4%, 76.8% and 80.4% for the same period while academic performance mean scores in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education for 2011 and 2014 were low at 5.0 and 5.1 respectively. The objective of this study was to determine the influence of free secondary education policy on access to secondary school education in Mbita and Suba Sub-counties. The study involved the cohorts of students from the year 2008 to 2014, that is, the 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 cohorts. Analysis of the impact of Free Secondary Education policy on access to secondary school education showed that free secondary education policy was inextricably connected with access to secondary school education. Also, it is noteworthy that the coefficient of Free secondary education funding in small secondary schools was statistically significant with a positive sign, which depicted that by one unit increase in Free Secondary Education funds, the increase in access was by 409.592 units, in medium secondary schools, the coefficient of Free Secondary Education funds was statistically significant with a positive sign which depicted that by one unit increase in Free Secondary Education funds, the increase in access was by 711.803 units and in large secondary schools, the coefficient of Free Secondary Education funds was statistically significant with a positive sign which depicted that by one unit increase in Free Secondary Education funds, the increase in access was by 3700.167 units. It is clear that on average, one unit increase in Free Secondary Education funds increased access to secondary school education by 947.489 units in Mbita and Suba Sub counties, Kenya.

Key Words: Influence, Free Secondary Education Policy, Access, Mbita, Suba Sub - Counties, Kenya.

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