

**CONTRIBUTION OF COST SHARING STRATEGY ON
ACCESS AND RETENTION OF GIRLS IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN BONDO DISTRICT, KENYA**

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Introduction

Education is viewed worldwide as the cornerstone of social, economic and political development; and as a fundamental strategy for human resource development. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) have concluded that education of the labour force appears to explain a substantial part of growth of output in both developed and developing countries since 1950.

Investment in education is the key to the development process in any country. Its importance is reflected in the growing recognition in the formal, informal and non formal education and training which enhance and provide skills, knowledge, attitudes and motivation necessary for economic and social development. Significant resources have therefore been invested over the years by the government of Kenya and other stakeholders to expand and improve education at all levels (Republic of Kenya, 1997).

Kenya's education has experienced growth since 1963. According to Economic Surveys, 1997 and 2002, primary school enrolment tripled from 891,533 in 6,053 schools in 1963 to 5,530,200 in 15,465 schools in 1993, and to 6,314,600 in 18,901 schools by 2001. Enrollment in secondary schools also went up from 30,121 in 151 secondary schools in 1963 to 638,388 in 1995 to 658,256 in 1996 and to 818,247 in 3621 schools by 2002 (Republic of Kenya, 1997b, 2002b). This increase is attributed to among other factors the rising social demand for education and training opportunities; a fast growing population; the government's commitment to making education

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accessible to most Kenyans; the demand for manpower to meet the development needs of the country; and the participation of the community in providing educational facilities and infrastructure through “harambee” contributions (Republic of Kenya, 1988).

Secondary education plays a significant role in supplying middle level manpower for economic growth and development. Planners expect subsequent leaders in the next decades to be secondary school leavers who will constitute the human resource base of the country for subsequent growth. Secondary education therefore strengthens the general intellectual skills that were relevant to many occupations and subsequent education. Thus its basic goal is to prepare the individual for adult responsibility and the world of work (World Bank, 1988).

Education is largely financed by the public sector in many countries. The manpower and rates of return arguments justify the increasing rate of the state in financing of education (Ayot and Briggs, 1992). The emerging demand for education led to massive increase in the spending on education worldwide. In 1960, the world used 3.2% of world Gross National Product on education alone. This rose to 4.8% in 1974. The GNP devoted to education in the developing countries particularly Asia, Latin America and Africa rose from 2.3% in 1969 to 3.9% in 1984 and to 4.5% in 1994 (World Bank, 2003).

Purpose of the Study.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implications of cost-sharing policy on access and retention of girls in secondary schools in Bondo District during the period 2002-2007. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of cost-sharing on access and retention of girls in secondary schools in the district.

Objective of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to Investigate the contribution of cost- sharing policy in financing of education.

Conceptual framework

The provision of education requires monetary and non- monetary resources. In Kenya, each level of education requires some amount of money necessary for the teaching and learning processes. The government and the beneficiaries contribute the largest proportion of the resources in secondary education. It is noted that the government’s role has consequently become

increasingly limited to provision of teachers' salaries, and the beneficiaries meet the rest of the cost. However, there seems to be an imbalance between the government subsidy and the beneficiaries' fee payment on one side and the corresponding demands of education at this level on the other side. At the secondary education level, parents pay for various expenditure items including school uniforms, textbooks, admission charges, transport, boarding expenses, examination fees, development fees and other levies charged by the schools. Since it was evident that the government and the parents could not fill the financial needs of secondary education, other private sources have been included to form part of Income Resourcing Activities like harambee fund raising, rents, school sponsors' donations, Non-governmental organizations, Faith-based organizations and the private sector among others (Republic of Kenya, 2002a). The concept and understanding of cost-sharing is that the government could provide teachers to all schools, while the beneficiaries provide resources for learning facilities. Already Kenyan parents are bearing a major portion of the secondary school expenditure. Ayot and Briggs (1992) supported the view that a family might contemplate incurring the cost of taking their children to primary school, but may abandon the whole exercise due to financial sacrifice needed at the secondary school level. The goal of secondary education is to prepare individuals for the world of work. It is expected that students who enroll in this level of education will complete their studies in order for them to achieve their objectives. Students' access and retention in schools may be related to a number of factors like school facilities, fees, uniforms and socio-economic factors among other things. When schools tend to have low access and retention, then there must be underlying factors that need to be investigated in order to solve the problems. The model developed below identifies school inputs like teacher education and training, school facilities, adequacy of teaching materials and resources and their administration as being vital factors in access and retention in education. The model summarizes the way the home and school environment characteristics and processes interact to influence schooling.

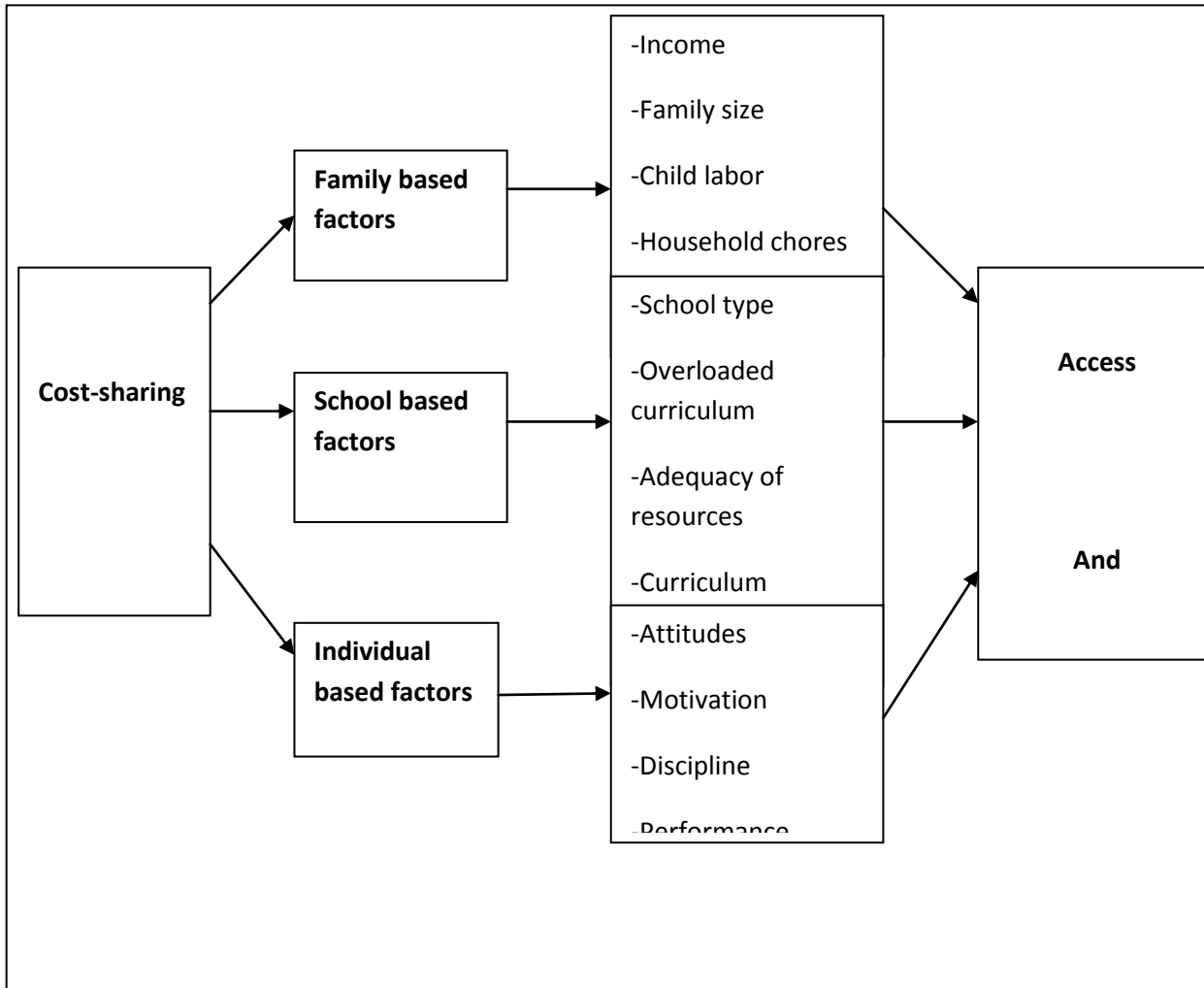


Fig.1. Conceptual Framework on Implications of Cost-sharing on Access and Retention of Girls in Secondary Education.

The home characteristics such as parental socio-economic status and attitude towards boys' and girls' education influence the stereotypes that exist that will influence the fears of parents and the girls' ambition as well as preoccupation. The parental socio-economic status and home possessions influence parents' support to the school in terms of paying fees and buying books. The home processes such as parental economic support of school needs influence physical facilities that exist and the teaching aids that are available to teachers and learners. The home and school characteristics are intertwined, hence play concurrent roles in the process of access and retention in school. According to the conceptual model, access and retention of girls in schools is influenced by family factors which determine whether the communities find it profitable to

educate girls. Once families have decided that education of girls is a wise investment, structural factors like availability of school places, physical facilities of the school, learning and teaching resources and parental attitude, may serve to inhibit the progression of females through the education cycle. Access alone, however does not guarantee survival. The school culture defines Education is also seen to be an economic investment which should be an asset in future and should remain within the family genealogy. Because of the economic benefit, a family has to make choices where gender becomes a critical factor in making decisions regarding who goes to school and for how long (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). Family, school and individual based factors are all interrelated and play diversified roles to influence financing of education which can hinder or facilitate access and retention in schools.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results, analysis and discussion of the data collected during the study. The purpose of the study was to establish the implications of cost sharing on access and retention of girls in secondary schools in Bondo district, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives:

The results were presented based on the study objectives and the demographic data of the sample of study. The analysis of data involved the use of frequencies and percentages. The results were presented in the form of tables.

Contribution of Cost-sharing in Financing of Education.

Funds raised by Secondary Schools.

The sources of funds for secondary schools were found to include the government, parents, community, income -generating activities and donors; both local and foreign. The government gave grants in the form of teachers' salaries and bursary for needy students. All the schools relied on the funds generated through fees and the government, a few through the income-generating activities and some from the harambee and donations. There was no income generated from the local authorities or business firms. Table 4.1 shows the proportion of money raised by secondary schools in 2007.

Table 4.1: Proportion of money raised by Secondary Schools in 2007.

Source	Unit amount (KES)	Percentage
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Fees	13,910	49.0
Government grant	13,100	46.0
Harambee	1,000	4.0
Government bursary	157	0.6
Income generating activities	90	0.4
Total	28,557	100.0

School fees formed the major source of funds for secondary schools other than the government. It accounted for 49% of the funds raised by the schools in the district, while the government gave 46% as grant, and 0.6% as bursary. Harambee contributed only 4% and income-generating activities 0.4%.

The biggest proportion of money generated by secondary schools comes from the parents on whom the burden of financing operating costs for secondary education has been shifted. At secondary education level, parents pay for various expenditure items including school uniform, textbooks, admission charges, transport, boarding expenses, examination fees, development and other levies charged by schools. On average household funding of secondary education constitute about 54% of total costs, due to the cost-sharing policy in funding education. This implies that despite relatively high levels of public funding for secondary education the financial burden for the households will continue to grow unless measures are put in place to reduce the burden.

Income-generating activities in schools.

Table 4.2 shows the various income-generating activities in schools between 2002 and 2007.

Table 4.2: Income-generating Activities in the Schools.

Activity	No. of Schools	Percentage
None	4	29.00
Vegetable	3	21.40
Maize	2	14.00
Hiring out school chairs	1	7.12

School bus	1	7.12
Beans	1	7.12
Milk	1	7.12
Bee keeping	0	0.0
Poultry	1	7.12
Total	14	100.00

The majority of schools represented by 29.0% had no income-generating activities for the entire period of study. Those that had the (IGPs) produced vegetables (21.4%), maize (14.0 %), beans, (7.12%), hiring out of school chairs (7.12%), school bus (7.12%), milk (7.12%), bee keeping (0 %) and poultry (7.12%).

The income collected from the income-generating activities was very low. About 11 of the schools that were involved in the activities got lower than KES 10,000 per annum with only one school (7.14 %) getting over KES 20,000. This implies that income-generating activities cannot be relied on by the schools as an alternative means of financing secondary education. Lack of funds was the main reason given by most schools for failure to start income-generating activities. Other reasons were lack of initiative 14.3% and lack of cooperation from the community 14.3%. The D.E.O. also supported the view that schools were reluctant to start the income-generating activities, while some schools that had farming programs complained of harsh climatic conditions in the region, in addition to inadequate space to set up the farms.

The introduction of cost sharing as a policy in funding education brought about alternative sources of financing education. Olembo (1986) advocated that due to cost sharing, secondary schools should get revenue from improved land utilization and livestock production. Achola (1998) stated that many secondary schools can improve their revenue by producing their own food to cut on the cost of feeding. Income Generating Activities as an alternative way to funding education was not found to be contributing much as very few schools used it as a means of generating extra funds in Bondo district. The fact that about 11 schools studied managed to raise just about KES. 10,000 per annum is an indication that Income Generating Activities cannot be relied on to finance education in Bondo District.

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