

**NEW TECHNIQUES, THE EXTENT AND EFFECTS OF
COST SHARING ON ACCESS AND RETENTION OF
GIRLS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BONDO DISTRICT,
KENYA**

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Introduction

During the 1998/1999 financial year, expenditure on education by the Kenyan government continued to be the leading consumer of resources with a large share of 19.9% of the total development and recurrent accounts (Republic of Kenya, 1999). This was enhanced by the emerging demand for education which led to massive increases in the spending on education worldwide. In this regard the World Bank's position of cost-recovery is that if the project is genuinely productive, beneficiaries should be able to pay for the cost of goods and services it provides and still increase their income (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985).

The Kenya government therefore found it necessary to reduce the public expenditure in education and seek alternative sources of finance for education. The Sessional Paper No.1 of 1986 on Economic Management for Renewed Growth set procedures for reducing this expenditure to 30% of the total recurrent expenditure, to be done through increased cost-sharing in financing of education and training in the use of more effective measures in the utilization of educational facilities, equipment, materials and personnel (Republic of Kenya, 1986). Cost-sharing between the government, communities, churches and organizations was already in operation at this time in the secondary schools, although the expenditure in the budget was not a big problem since the enrolment was not as great as in the last two decades of the 20th century.

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Harambee activities had made a contribution to development projects since independence by providing 4% to 10% of the government's development expenditure.

Despite being voluntary, harambee has been the major source of financing several and extensive projects such as harambee secondary schools, colleges of science and technology, village polytechnics and health centers. The introduction of harambee classes in government-aided secondary schools relieved the government from the pressure of investing in the secondary education sector (Olembo,1984).The policy of cost-sharing was strengthened by the government through the Sessional Paper No.6 of 1988 in which the government of Kenya decided that through cost-sharing, it would reduce its financial expenditures on education. Through this policy the Government would provide teachers to all public schools, while the public, communities and beneficiaries would provide the learning facilities and the equipment needed. The parents would pay tuition fees, development fees, buy uniforms and pay other miscellaneous expenses (Republic of Kenya, 1988).

Girls have been largely affected by cost-sharing in terms of access to education. The majority of those not enrolled, underachievers and dropouts are girls. Exorbitant costs of learning have led to a high dropout rate among girls (Daily Nation, 15th March, 1997). Globally, 130 million of 6-11 year olds are out of school of which 77 million (59%) are girls. Out of 273 million (12-17 year olds) or secondary school going children, 148 million (54%) are girls. Republic of Kenya (1988) recommended that more opportunities for access be created for girls in secondary schools and that facilities are provided to enable them study technical subjects. However this has been affected by inadequate financing from both the government and communities despite increase in their participation rate from 41% in 1988 to 46% in 1995.

Secondary education is a key component of the government of Kenya's approach to the provision of Education for All (EFA). However, the Koech Commission Report of 1999 noted that gender inequality continued to persist in some areas, and that there were certain constraints that had continued to hinder girls from effective participation in education at all levels. The commission also noted that dropping out of girls from schools was much higher than that of boys in some areas, and girls' poor performance at the primary level continued to affect their enrolment and performance at the secondary level (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

According to UNICEF-ESARO (1992) the overall transition rates from primary to secondary

declined from 49% for boys and 47% for girls in 1989 to 43% for boys and 39% for girls in 1990. The transition rate for 1998/1999 was 44.8% (46.4% for boys and 43.1% for girls). This rate for the year 2000/2001 was 45.5% in general. Out of 481,111 pupils who sat for KCPE in the year 2000, only 218,946 got form one places (Daily Nation, 15th January, 2001). Although there was a high admission rate of 60% in 2007, the real transition rate was 46%, having risen from 41% in 2005. This is an indication that despite the fact that 60% are admitted a number do not take up their places or drop out due to high costs among other reasons. This implies that on average about 54% of pupils who completed standard eight in the year 2006 could not actually access secondary education, resulting into high wastage between primary and secondary education (Republic of Kenya, 2007b).

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 new techniques, the extent and effects 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.

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.

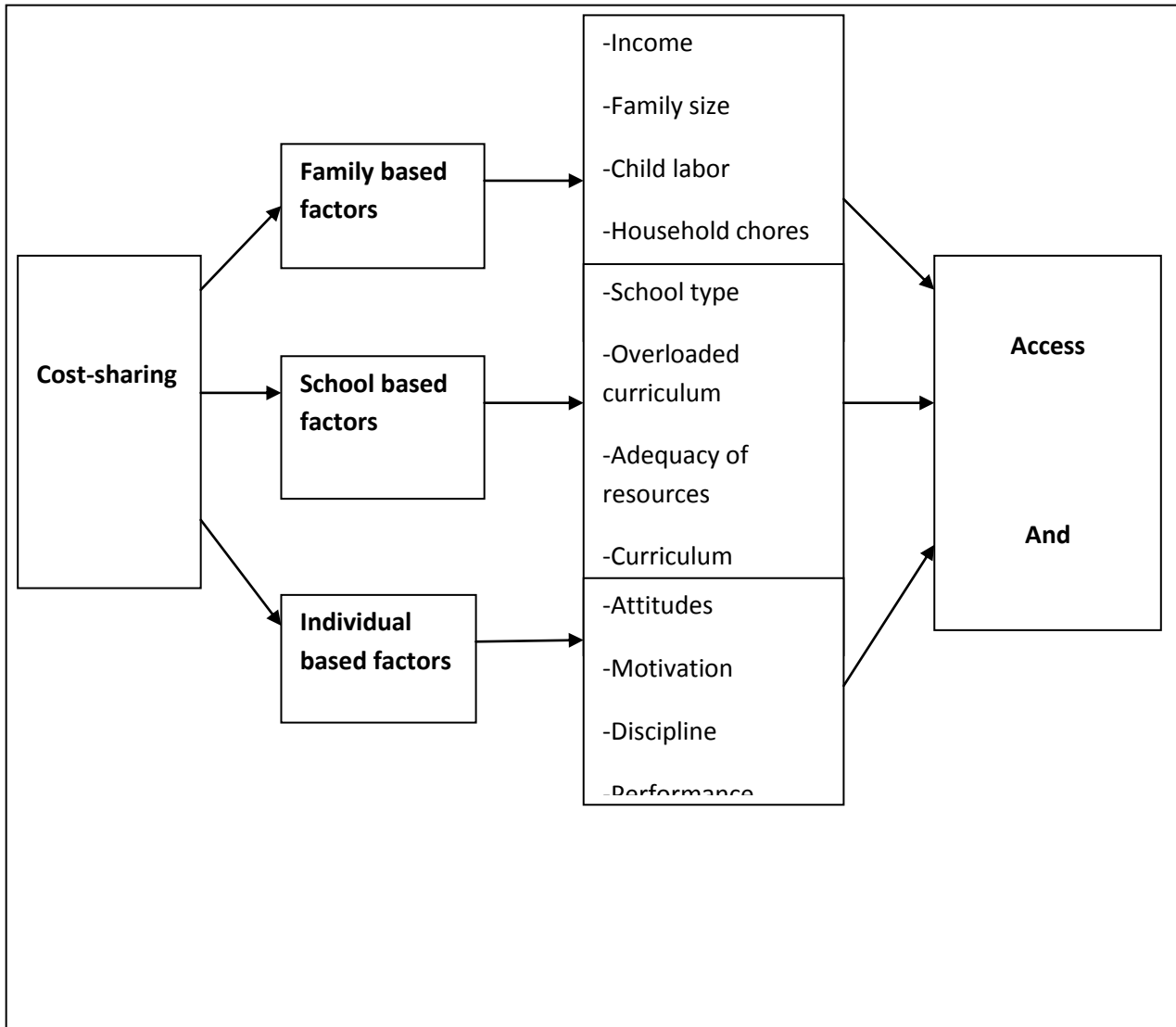


Fig.1. Conceptual Framework on Implications of Cost-sharing on Access and Retention of Girls in Secondary Education.

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.

Government Bursary

In an effort to assist the needy students, the government gave bursary funds to schools. A number of students with fees difficulty applied for bursary from the government in the period of study. Majority of the applicants failed to get it. Table 1 shows the percentage of applicants who got bursary in the sampled schools.

Table 1: Number of girls who received Government Bursary

Year	Enrollment of girls	Deserved		Benefited	
		No. of girls	% of Enrollment	No. of Girls	% of enrollment
2002	2030	900	44.3	350	17.2
2003	2140	1013	47.3	375	10.4
2004	2330	840	36.0	415	10.4
2005	2560	935	36.5	502	19.6
2006	2610	1037	39.7	470	18.0
2007	2730	930	34.0	395	14.4
Total	14,400	5655		2507	

The table indicates that the number of students who deserved the bursary decreased from 44.3% in 2002 to 34.0% in 2007. The percentage of students who got the bursary in relation to

enrollment was 17.2 % in 2002. This figure went up to 19.6 % in 2005, and then declined to 14.4 % in 2007. In addition, the percentage of students who got the bursary as compared to the number that deserved was fairly low. The number of those who benefited from bursary declined from 17.2% in 2002 to 19.6 % in 2005, before decreasing to 14.4 % in 2007. The implication here is that the bursary given to students was too little to cater for all the needy ones, and that the amount of money was too little to sustain them in schools.

All the head teachers (100%) indicated that the government bursaries for the needy, bright students were not enough to sustain the school fees for many needy students. They said they distributed the bursaries to many students and this enabled many of them to get a small fraction of the huge unpaid fees. Some of the students although were given bursaries, were unable to complete paying the rest of the fees. Such students, the head teachers said, could not be sent away completely for failing to complete paying their fees, and thus were left to pay their arrears at their own pace, which resulted into big fees arrears for the schools. Due to huge fees arrears the schools could not therefore effectively carry out their activities as planned because of inadequate funds.

The researcher sought to find out the conditions considered before students were allocated bursary. Eight (57%) head teachers stated that poverty was the major factor considered, while six (43%) of them felt that being an orphan was the main factor. All the head teachers reported that bursary given to students was not adequate to assist the needy students in their education. 75% of them indicated that the bursary fees covers less than 50% of the total fees and parents were not able to raise the remaining amount. Another 75% of them felt that bursary was allocated to students whose parents were able to raise fees while the very needy got nothing thus reducing the objective of access and retention. This finding deviates from the study by Karani, et al (1995) which indicated that government bursary should be channeled much more to the poor and vulnerable groups like girls instead of to the rich.

Moreover the head teachers were asked if cost-sharing encouraged more girls to attend school. The study found out that 11 (78%) of them felt cost-sharing does not encourage girls to attend school. They argued that since the bursary was not adequate the girls still dropped out of school due to inability to raise balance of fees. Out of the 14 head teachers 3 (22%) felt that cost-sharing

encouraged more girls to attend school, arguing that there were many government and non-governmental organizations that support the education of girls. On the question of the criteria to be used in awarding bursaries, all the 14 (100%) head teachers answered that it should be given to the needy students.

Donations and Harambee.

Funds generated from donations and harambee were for development projects. Only 5 schools received donations both locally and from foreign countries during the period 2002 to 2007. Local donors contributed KES 545,000 to 2 schools. A number of schools in the district held harambee through PTAs generated funds. The highest amount of money received from harambee was KES 945,000 while the lowest was KES 137,000. Thus harambee gave a total of KES 10,460,000 to schools involved.

Table 2 shows the amount of money received from donations and harambee (2002- 2007)

Table 2: Money received from donors and harambee 2002- 2007

Donors	Amount received (KES)	% of total received
Foreign donors	8,660,000	41.00
Harambee	10,460,000	49.42
Government donations	1,500,000	7.08
Local donors	545,000	2.50
Total	21,165,000	100.00

Discussion

From table 2, the foreign donors gave 41.00% of the total amount from donations and harambee 49.42% through the PTA. The government contributed 7.08% while local donors gave 2.57%. The implication is that harambee contribution was the major source of development funds in the absence of donors.

The study found out that the funds contributed by the government towards the development of physical facilities were channeled through the Constituency Development Fund. All the head teachers indicated that the contribution of the government during the study period was negligible and benefited a small number of schools. They noted that since the introduction of cost-sharing

in financing education the burden on parents had increased greatly as the funds generated through harambee are from PTA generated funds. They also noted that the contribution of donors had only benefited particular schools in the district and therefore was not a regular source of funding. Bogonko (1992) underscored the importance of harambee as a source of financing secondary school education, but noted that raising funds through harambee needs high income levels to be effective. Bray and Lillis (1998) observed that harambee projects and community financing accentuate both regional and social inequalities by shifting the burden of financing from the government to the households and the community.

Effects of Cost-sharing on Access and Retention of girls in Secondary schools In Bondo District.

The head teachers noted that before the intervention of SAPS the government contributed 68.8% of school funding, community 25% and parents 9.4% which went up later to 46.0% after SAPs. The contribution of donors also declined from 28.1% to 21.9%. The head teachers also indicated that cost sharing brought adverse effects on education of girls as the parents are expected to provide physical facilities, equipment, text books and other learning resources.

The costs borne by parents were heavy. All the 14 schools in the study got their income from fees and the government for recurrent and development expenditures. The other source of funds for recurrent expenditure was PTA which assisted most schools (100%) while 3 schools were assisted by their sponsors. Development funds were mainly from PTA with assistance from the communities through harambee.

Savings from fees were also injected into some development projects as indicated by one school. The government, NGOs, foreign and local donors assisted some schools with development funds.

Over 60% of the schools found it difficult to raise money through cost-sharing. The schools that found it easy to raise funds did well in academic performance therefore became competitive, making fees payment very prompt. The head teachers confirmed that fees and other levies payments determined the success of schools as the schools' budget depended mainly on the fees collections. They said that while the declining enrollment in schools showed the wanting popularity, the reverse was true. They noted that apart from the economic productivity of the community, other factors played a great role in determining fees payment.

Schools' popularity could be gauged on KCSE results or performance in national examinations. Many schools established in 1990s rarely had students qualifying for university admission. A school that did well in KCSE according to the head teachers had the confidence of the local community, enhancing payment of fees, which then reduced dropouts, thereby increasing enrollment for such schools. It was established in some schools that some parents not only withdrew their children from schools, but they also had very poor fees payments if they did not want the head teacher of a particular school.

The head teachers also concurred in their views that since education is viewed as an investment, parents could not enroll their children in schools that performed poorly in KCSE, as they viewed that as a direct waste of resources. Hence they could withdraw their children from such schools once the schools' KCSE results were not impressive, resulting to declining enrollment in such schools.

Textbooks and Teaching/ Learning Resources

Quality of learning highly depends on the provision of essential teaching and learning materials. Instructional materials are critical ingredients in learning, and the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them. Textbooks deliver the curriculum and therefore are the single most important instructional materials. When textbooks are available, instructional time is not wasted while teachers and students copy texts on and off the blackboard (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). Some studies conducted since 1970 found that the availability of learning materials contributes significantly to students' achievement (Fuller, 1986). Inadequacies in instructional materials constitute one of the most important factors adversely affecting the quality of education.

In secondary schools in Kenya, the onus of providing instructional materials lay on the households and communities. Households who either could not afford the expenses involved or could not fully appreciate the crucial importance of instructional materials or the quality of their children's education failed to underwrite the supply. As a consequence, the achievement of many learners was greatly weakened (Republic of Kenya, 1997b). Heyneman, et al (1981) found a stronger and consistent relationship between pupil achievement and availability of books. Jamison, et al (1981); Heinemann, et al (1984); Armitage, et al (1986) in their studies from Nicaragua, the Philippines, and Brazil have determined the positive effects on student learning

by increasing access to textbooks.

Schools relied on parents and school fees for purchase of textbooks. Most schools (71%) bought below 25% of the textbooks while only 29% of the schools bought three quarters (75%) of the textbooks. The government assisted 7 schools while donors helped 3 schools. In an in-depth interview, the head teachers reported that they did not have fully functional libraries, but book stores where students would borrow books from. Only two schools had fully functional libraries. The head teachers blamed cost sharing for the reduced number of text books in the schools when asked about availability of books.

Of all the respondents, 90% reported that there were very few textbooks in their schools and students were expected to buy their own; 5% of them said their schools have very few class textbooks shared by students in the ratio of 1: 10. Another 5% of the respondents stated that their schools bought the most essential textbooks which are shared in the ratio of 1: 5. World Bank (2005) complemented the idea that the safest investment in educational quality is to secure adequate books and supplies.

In an in-depth interview with the head teachers, majority of them indicated that shortage of trained teachers lowered the enrollment rates in many schools, which did not have trained teachers. They noted that trained teachers have the teaching skills coupled with their mastery of subject content that enables them to teach well and win students' confidence, who in turn liked the schools. Without the trained teachers, the schools which posted poor KCSE results, lost many students leading to declining enrollment. These sentiments were in line with those of Jagero (1999), Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985). These studies indicated in their findings that trained teachers do make a difference in students' achievement because training enables teachers to impart knowledge more efficiently than those who are not trained.

The head teachers also noted that since the government stopped direct employment of teachers in 1998, due to poor economy, many schools had suffered due to overloading of the available teachers. The situation forced many schools to hire the services of the untrained KCSE graduates to teach, as they could not afford to pay the unemployed degree holders who demanded higher salaries than the schools could afford to sustain. Many students on learning that there were no trained teachers to handle some subjects opted to drop out of such schools, resulting in declining enrollment (Republic of Kenya 2002b).

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