

## Influence of Public Awareness of County Bursary Fund Allocation on Retention of Needy Secondary School Students in Baringo County, Kenya

Tallam Chepkalum Paul<sup>1</sup>; Jane Njoroge<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Masters of Arts in Public Policy and Administration, Kenyatta University, Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Department of Public Policy and Administration, Kenyatta University, Kenya

Author email: [tallampaul@gmail.com](mailto:tallampaul@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The objective of the study is to examine the extent to which public awareness on County bursary fund allocation has influenced the retention of needy students in secondary school. The study employed survey design in the collection of data. A study sample of 133 respondents was engaged in from a total population of 6,093 obtained from a stratified random sampling technique. The questionnaire was the method of data collection used to gather the Primary data. The questionnaires were coded and edited for completeness and consistency. They were further processed by utilising statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) program. The analysis procedure included inferential examination and descriptive statistics. The descriptive analysis method provided the sample data in quantitative form, which ended in producing mean and standard deviation. The study established the relationship between dependent and independent variables by conducting regression analysis, which found out that the P-values of awareness of county bursary fund, was 0.001, which is less than 0.05 significance level; this implies that variable is significant. The study concludes that communication through the public participation forum, posters, radio social media was detailed enough to make the application and submission easy for the applicants. The study recommends that more awareness campaign should be enhanced using varies forms of communication. Still, posters and notices should be prioritised as they scored the highest value of 43.4 % as compared to other communication media. The researcher also concluded that the fund retained needy students in secondary school with 61.1% of the interviewed school principals, 65.9% of the bursary applicants and 80% of the bursary committee secretaries agreeing.

**Key terms:** Retention, Needy secondary school students, Bursary fund awareness, bursary fund allocation.

\*\*\*

### How to cite this article in APA (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)

Tallam, C. P. & Njoroge, J. (2020). Influence of Public Awareness of County Bursary Fund Allocation on Retention of Needy Secondary School Students in Baringo County, Kenya. *Editon Cons. J. Arts., Humanit. S. Stud.*, 2(01), 197-205.

\*\*\*

## Introduction

The study proposed that the Bursary Fund committee announce the County as a campaign to make people aware of Secondary school bursary fund as a source of financial assistance for the needy students. Njau (2013) stated that inadequacy of information concerning Secondary Education Bursary Fund was one of the challenges facing the program.

To raise awareness of bursary, the government uses various forms of communication media including, newspapers, public notices, public Barraza, social media County website and any other form of communication. Musili (2013) expressed that the principals should be holding frequent meetings with the parents to sensitise them on the need to apply for bursary funds. This is because even when students are aware of the bursary funds, they may not get the necessary encouragement from the parents to apply for the same.

The county government through the ministry of education and department of civic education is also mandated to sensitise the communities on general county information and training including the availability of county bursary, who to benefit, application procedure and duration of application. However, there have been several complains of potential beneficiaries not aware of the existence of county bursary fund. For those who are knowledgeable, application procedure remains a challenge to them despite the many efforts put in place to raise the level of bursary fund awareness by all the stakeholders.

The government of Baringo County introduced County Bursary Fund Program in the year 2014 for it to promote needy student from the humble family set up to gain access and be retained in schools. In the beginning, hope was high that the fund would benefit the needy students

only. Contrary to this expectation, several disadvantaged students have been reported to drop out of school due to the high cost of education despite the existence of bursary funds. It has also been noted that several financially able students have been benefiting from the fund at the expense of the needy students due to lack of sincerity of bursary committee, applicants, school principals and other stakeholders. This researcher was prompted by the realisation that Baringo county bursary funds are distributed to learners unfairly. Therefore there was a need to establish the determinant that leads to this shortcoming.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

An empirical reviewed literature on awareness of bursary fund allocation is discussed as presented below.

**Awareness and Retention of Secondary School Students**  
Onyango (2015) noted that one of the factors affecting effective bursary allocation was an awareness of the existence of the funds. The study informed that all principals (100%) and all students (100%) interviewed were aware of the constituency bursary fund allocation. This implies that the principals had passed the information to all students about bursary allocations. Despite the fact that all students seemed to be aware of the constituency bursary fund, it was found out that only 30 per cent of the respondents had applied and 70 per cent had not applied hence missing out from the beneficiary list.

According to a study done in Gem constituency by Onuko, (2012), it revealed that the degree at which public sensitisation on the fund impacted on retention, senior teachers commented by saying that they knew about it from the District Education officer and circulars. Similarly, others knew about it from the media, from Councillors, barazas, chief meetings, political rallies and still others

knew through the Constituency Development Fund office. As if this is still not enough others through the staff meetings, Parent, Teachers Association meetings, churches, school notice boards and student who had benefited. Students, on the other hand, responded to this by indicating that they got information from principal, senior teachers and by attending the assembly, similarly they cited that they were informed by parents, Constituency Development Fund Chairman, fellow students, former classmates in primary, former headteachers in primary school among others. Also, the study sort information on requirements for bursary application and noted that some of the requirements needed were attaching report form to prove good performance in school; attaching death certificate, fee structure signed by the chief; submit the application and the report form; chiefs and officials identify the student and prove of poverty among others. The level of awareness on constituency bursary fund in Eldoret East constituency was very low hence a big challenge on retention due to lack of consolidated effort in uplifting awareness bursary fund has affected the functionality of constituency fund in achieving its objective of promoting retention (Seronei 2015).

### **Retention of Secondary School Needy Students**

In Canada, the legislature formed the Canadian millennium scholarship foundation. This was a formation, which was meant to disburse 325 million U.S dollars to needy students from a humble family background in the form of bursaries to boost annual entry in post-secondary education (Finnie, 2010). Lewin (2009) indicated that completion rates were improved significantly in Bangladesh due to the introduction of a bursary scheme to secondary school.

Onuko, (2012) found out that there was an increase in retention in day schools after students were provided with bursary fund in Gem district, this also ended up too high completion rates at the end of their schooling. To conclude

on this, a study revealed that High school Education Bursary had enhanced an increase in retention, which later enriched improved completion rates of students in Juja Constituency, Kiambu County (Njau, 2013). Contrary to the above findings, Rukwaro (2015) found out that Bursaries have not improved retention in the long run. The reason cited was that most respondents indicated that still, students terminate schooling due to failure to pay school fees. Therefore, students are sent away from school for the sole reason of looking for fees, yet bursaries are available in Githunguri Constituency, Kiambu County.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research design, target population, sampling technique, data collection tool and research analysis method are discussed as presented below.

#### **Research Design**

A survey design was employed in data collection whereby the researcher asked respondents questions in person, on paper, online and by phone through a written questionnaire. Survey design is one form of primary research in which obtaining data is first-hand from its source. Kothari, R.C (2008) states that survey features describing, recording, analysing and reporting situations that exist now or existed previously. Alreck and Seattle (1995) conclude that surveys or questionnaires are useful in collecting information on the user's profile, his or her job responsibilities and opinion of the current version of the product or similar product. It is easier to collect both quantitative and qualitative information by using surveys.

#### **Target Population**

The targeted population were Bursary committee secretaries, bursary applicant and school principals. In Baringo County, there are thirty (30) administrative wards geographically situated in six sub-counties each with a targeted ward bursary committee. The number of bursary applicants were 5960 for the financial year 2018/2019 and

the numbers of secondary schools are 103 in Baringo County. The following table indicates the total number of bursary committee secretaries, school principals and bursary applicant the County. Table 1 below shows a summary group population.

**Table 1 Target population**

No.	Category	Population
1	Ward Bursary Committee Secretaries	30
2	School principals	103
3	Bursary applicants	5960
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6093</b>

### Sample and Sampling Techniques

Stratified random type of sampling was employed in the identification of the sample to be studied. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) states that stratified random sampling is a sampling method in which persons to be studied are identified in such a way that presents strata in all population are less or more repeated in population. This technique was applied in the case of bursary applicants who were categorised into twelve wards out of thirty wards in the County.

### Bursary Committee secretaries sample frame

The number of the ward in Baringo County are thirty (30); each ward has a bursary committee with a secretary. All wards are geographically located in six sub-counties namely Eldama Ravine (6 wards), Mogotio (3 wards), Baringo Central (5wards), Tiaty (8 Wards), Baringo North (4wards) and Baringo South (3 wards). Purposive sample technique was used to identify 12 wards, two from each sub-county namely Ravine, Koibatek, Mogotio, Kisanana, Marigat, Ilchomus, Tenges, Kabarnet, Kabartonjo, Barwesa and Churo/Amaya after considering the geographical suitability and financial capability of the researcher.

### School Principles Sample frame

In terms of sample size for school principle, there are 103 secondary schools in the County in which some of the needy students who benefit from Baringo county Bursary fund learn. A purposeful sample of 22 principals was used for this study. The twenty-two principals were chosen in the following criteria, two in National School, six in extra county school, six from county school and eight in sub-county school within the County.

### Applicants sample frame

To identify applicants (Parents/Guardians) sample size, the formula formulated stated by Njoroge (2020) was used in the determination of the sample size. The formula is presented as follows,

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

The variable is as follow;

n - Sample size

N- Total Target Population

e –Level of precision at a 90 per cent confidence level

On application, the sample for applicants obtained as;

$$n = \frac{5960}{1 + 5960(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = 99.33$$

$$n = \sim 100$$

The following table shows the sample size in summary of every respondent sub-sector.

**Table 2 Summary of Respondents Sample Size**

Category	Popul.	Sample	Sample Percent.
Ward Bursary committee (secretaries)	30	12	40%
School Principals	103	22	21%
Bursary Applicants (Parents/Guardian/Student)Sampled Wards	5960	100	2%

<b>Total</b>	6093	134	3%
--------------	------	-----	----

### Research Instruments

A semi-structured questionnaire was the tool used in data collection; this contains a closed and open-ended type of questions, which the researcher used to ask questions to the respondents. The tool was used to gather information from school principals, Ward bursary committee secretaries and bursary applicants. Gay (1992) attributes questionnaires as a tool that provides respondent liberation to explain his or her opinion, view and suggestions concerning the study. The questionnaire used in this study contained five parts. Section one gathered background data of the respondents, the second, third and fourth section of the questionnaire obtained data related to retention of secondary school needy students, adequacy, awareness and accountability of county bursary fund respectively. The last section was used to obtain challenges faced by bursary fund allocation and possible solutions.

### Data Analysis

The form of the data is qualitative and quantitative in nature. The data was collected, edited and cleaned. It was coded and analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used in summarising, presentation, and interpretation. Tables, frequencies and percentages were used in presenting and summarising the data. The inferential statistics was used analyse the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The multiple regression model was used in predicting the relationship and the overall effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

### RESEARCH RESULTS

The collected data on awareness on the availability of bursary funds, Methods used in passing information and Role of the bursary fund in retaining needy students in the school were presented as indicated below.

### Awareness on the availability of bursary funds

In this section, the research study sought to establish the availability of information on the availability of the bursary funds. The modes of communication and the effectiveness of the communication procedures used were evaluated. The results are presented in the tables.

### Methods used in passing information on bursary funds

The study sought to establish the methods used in communicating about the county bursary funds and how the respondents got the information. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 Methods of communication used.**

	Frequency	Per cent
Public participation	8	7.1
Barazas	9	7.8
Word of mouth	36	31.9
Posters, newspapers posts or notices	49	43.4
Radio, television, social media	11	9.7
Total	113	100

### Source (Field Data, 2020)

From the table, 7.1 per cent reported that the information on county bursary was passed through public participation forums. 7.8 per cent cited Barazas as the methods used in passing the information. 31.9 per cent highlighted word of mouth as the main source of information with 43.4 per cent citing print media as the main source of information. 9.7 per cent indicated radio, television and social media as the main method used in disseminating information. The findings imply that the print media (posters/notices) is widely utilised in communicating relevant information on the county bursary funds in Baringo County.

Awareness of the availability of bursary fund had a significant relationship with retention of needy students in secondary school. The descriptive analysis showed that the information on county bursary was passed through public

participation forums, Barraza's, word of mouth, print media, radio, television and social media. According to the data collected, the print media (posters, newspaper or notice) is widely utilised mode of county bursary communication. The respondents also agree that communication is detailed enough to make the application and submission easy for bursary applicants. The study revealed that there was consistent communication on the application of the bursary fund, but there was uncertainty on the results of awarded applicants. Therefore, there are no clear methods outlined in giving feedback to the

applicants meaning that the bursary committee needs to improve on feedback and complain mechanism in order to improve on bursary effectiveness.

#### **Role of the bursary fund in retaining needy students in school**

The study purposes in establishing the contribution of the bursary fund in retaining needy students in schools. The participating respondents were asked to confirm whether the fund had any contribution in keeping such students in school. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Role of bursary fund in the retention of needy students**

	Principals	%rate	Bursary applicants	%rate	Committee secretary	%rate
Yes	11	61.1	56	65.9	8	80
No	7	38.9	29	34.1	2	20
Total	18	100	85	100	10	100

Source (Field Data, 2020)

From the above results, the majority of the respondents agreed that the Baringo county bursary fund played a role in retaining the needy students in school. 61.1% of the interviewed school principals, 65.9% of the bursary applicants and 80% of the bursary committee secretaries agreed that the fund played a role in the retention of needy students in secondary schools. The findings conform to the study by Lewin (2009) indicated that completion rates were improved significantly in Bangladesh due to the introduction of a bursary scheme to secondary school. Keith (2009) also revealed in her conclusion that bursary promoted high retention and transition rates among students.

#### **Regression analysis**

The regression analysis was adopted to determine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The results are presented below.

**Table 5 Model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate
1	.611 <sup>a</sup>	.514	.501	.673

a. Predictor: (Constant) Public Awareness

b. Dependent Variable: Retention of needy students

Source (Field Data, 2020)

From the results, the R square value was 0.514, which means that the independent variables can explain for 51.4% of the variations in the dependent variable. The unexplained 48.6% are other variables that are not included in this model.

**Table 4.6 Analysis of Variance**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.686	8	5.662	11.196	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	16.434	105	.454		
	Total	35.120	113			

a. Dependent Variable: Retention of needy students

b. Predictors: (Constant), Public Awareness

Source (Field Data, 2020)

Analysis of Variance was used in determining whether the model was significant. A model is considered significant if

the p-value is less than the significance level. The p-value, 0.000, was lower than the significance level, 0.05, thus the model was significant.

**Table 4.7 Regression Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardised Coefficients Beta	T	Sig
1	(Constant)	.224	.076		2.454	.014
	Public Awareness	.223	.075	.326	3.369	.001

Source (Field Data, 2020)

### Interpretation

From the table above, the significance of the variables is less than the level of significance, 0.05, which implies that they are statistically significant. The derived regression model is as follows.

$$Y = 0.224 + 0.223X + \epsilon$$

Where Y= Retention of needy students, X =public awareness,  $\epsilon$  =Error term

The constant 0.224 indicates the retention of needy students' level, which is explained by other factors. The public awareness of county bursary had a coefficient of 0.223 which means that a unit change in public awareness would cause a 0.223 unit change in the retention of needy students with a P-value of 0.001 which is less than 0.05 significant level thus indicating that it is statistically significant. The dependent and independent variables relationship, therefore means that to attain higher retention of needy students in school, public awareness

must be raised, so that information about the fund to reach a larger number needy students.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The following discussion shows a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations obtained from the research study. Population target of the study were major stakeholders of Baringo County Bursary Fund, which included Secondary School Principals, Bursary applicants, and Ward bursary committee secretaries in Baringo County. The Stratified sampling technique was used to sort out the sample representatives out of the population, and its findings were used to come up with conclusions of the research study. Analysis of the collected data was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and the results displayed in tables. The studied variables were awareness of county bursary fund as an independent variable and retention of needy secondary school students being categorised as the dependent variable. The

independent and the relationship of the dependent variable was tested using regression analysis. From the findings, the P-values of awareness was 0.001, which is less than the level of significance of 0.05; therefore, it implies that the variable is significant.

From the findings, awareness of the availability of bursary fund had a significant relationship with retention of needy students in secondary school. The descriptive analysis showed that the information on county bursary was passed through public participation forums, Barraza's, word of mouth, print media, radio, television and social media. According to the data collected, the print media (posters, newspaper or notice) is widely utilised mode of county bursary communication. The respondents also agree that communication is detailed enough to make the application and submission easy for bursary applicants. The study revealed that there was consistent communication on the application of the bursary fund, but there was uncertainty on the results of awarded applicants. Therefore, there are no clear methods outlined in giving feedback to the applicants meaning that the bursary committee needs to improve on feedback and complain mechanism in order to improve on bursary effectiveness.

The research study also sought to establish the contribution of the bursary fund in retaining needy students in schools. The findings revealed that it is evident that majority of the respondents agreed that the Baringo county bursary fund played a role in retaining the needy students in school. 61.1% of the interviewed school principals, 65.9% of the bursary applicants and 80% of the bursary committee secretaries agreed that the fund played

a role in the retention of needy students in secondary schools.

**Conclusion:** As per awareness of county bursary allocation, it was revealed that the communication through the public participation forum, posters, and radio social media was detailed enough to make the application and submission easy for the applicants, but there was uncertainty on feedback and complained communication after an award of bursary, which ultimately affects retention of needy students. The print media (posters, newspaper or notice) is widely utilised mode of county bursary communication at the highest value of 43.4% as compared to another mode of communication.

The researcher also concludes that the Baringo County Bursary Fund retained needy students in the school with 61.1% of the interviewed school principals, 65.9% of the bursary applicants and 80% of the bursary committee secretaries agreeing.

**Recommendation:** The researcher subsequently found that the bursary applicants were aware of county bursary existence and its application procedure, but they had a challenge in receiving feedback information on those who were successful, and those were not successful. The study recommends that more awareness campaign should be enhanced using varies forms of communication, but posters and notices should be a priority as it proves effective in communicating bursary fund awareness as revealed by the data analysis conducted. The study was focused in Baringo County alone yet there are 47 counties in Kenya, a further research study is proposed to be conducted in any of the other counties offering bursaries in order to get another opinion, which could be used to make more generalisation on the research study topic.

## References

- Alreck, P. L., & Settle, R. B. (1995). *The Survey Research Handbook: Guidelines and Strategies for Conducting a Survey*. New York: IRWIN Professional Publishing.
- Finnie, R. (2010). *Student Loans, Student Financial Aid and Post-Secondary Education*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/136008002200013482>
- Gay, L.R. (1992): *Educational Research, Competences for Analysis and Application*. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.
- Kothari, C.R. (1985). *Research Methodology*. New York: Willy Eastern Limited
- Lewin, K. M. (2009). *Financing education in Mauritius: An analysis of cost and internal efficiency*. Port Louis, Mauritius: Ministry of Education.
- Lewin, K. (2009). *Access to education in sub-Saharan Africa: patterns, problems and possibilities*. *Comparative Education*, 45(2), 151-174.
- Mugenda, A., & Mugenda, O. (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Acts Press. Nairobi, Kenya.
- Musili, M. E. (2013). *Factors Influencing Disbursement of Constituency Bursary Funds In Secondary Schools In Mutomo District, Kitui County, Kenya*.
- Njau, R. (2013). *Effect of Secondary Education Bursary Fund on Access and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools in Juja Constituency*.
- Njoroge J. G. (2020) *How Mobile Banking Technology Affects Kenyan Performance: A Case of Mobile Phone Companies in Kenya*. *The International Journal of Business & Management* 8(5). Retrieved from [www.theijbm.com](http://www.theijbm.com).
- Onuko, J.A. (2012). *Impact of bursary schemes on retention of students in Public secondary schools in gem district, Kenya*.
- Onyango, P. (2015). *Factors affecting Effective Distribution of Secondary School Bursary Fund in Nandi County, Kenya*.
- Seronei, S (2015). *Factors Influencing Effectiveness of Constituency Bursary Fund in Enhancing Access and Retention of Needy Students in Public Boarding Secondary Schools in Eldoret East Constituency, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya*.
- Rukwaro, M. (2015). *Contribution of constituency development fund to students' access secondary education in Githunguri, Kiambu County, Kenya*.