
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING PUPILS' ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS: A CASE OF KIBERA, NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The major thrust of this study was to analyze selected critical socio-economic factors influencing pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study was premised on the Classical Liberal Theory of Equal Opportunity and Social Darwinism proposed by Charles Darwin. A descriptive survey research design using a sample of 114 respondents comprising 6 head teachers, 48 teachers and 60 parents was used to execute the study. The main tools for data collection were questionnaires for head teachers and teachers plus personal interview schedules for parents. The quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics while the qualitative data from interviews was managed through thematic techniques. The major findings were that, first, the physical and other critical instructional resources were grossly inadequate and/or in pathetic condition and not conducive to education provision. Secondly, there was a positive and significant correlation between the level of formal education of parents and pupils access to education($r = .987, p = .002$) at $\alpha = .05$ statistical confidence level. Third, there was a strong non-significant negative correlation between the occupation of parents and ability to finance education($r = -.740, p = .260$) at $\alpha = .05$ statistical confidence level. It was concluded that parental level of education was a facilitating factor while the low ability to finance education by parents coupled with the poor status of physical and instructional resources were inhibiting factors to pupils' access to education in the study locale. It was therefore recommended that the government should strengthen the collaboration between key education development partners to mobilize physical teaching/learning resources and strengthen education in the Kibera informal settlement. Secondly, adult education initiatives in the study locale should be intensified to enable parents to further their education levels. Finally, families from Kibera informal settlement should accorded logistical support to enable them venture into income generating activities with a view to enhancing their financial base required to meaningfully finance the education of their children in the study locale (327 words).

Key words: Socio-economic factors, access to education, poor households, informal settlements, Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In 2003, the Government of Kenya, following the 2002 election campaign pledge, introduced the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy in order to universalize access to primary education and increase educational attainment in the country (Oketch & Ngware, 2012, Republic of Kenya, 2005a, 2005b). This policy was followed later with the Free Day secondary Education (FDSE) policy in 2008 which equally was aimed at accelerating enrollment and quality of secondary education in the country (Odhiambo, 2010). These policies had international backing and credibility, as these were part of the universally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and other internationally agreed protocols (Orodho, 2013). This broad Vision of education and the holistic approach to sector development was fully embraced by Kenya as a critical vehicle for realizing Vision 2030, the road map for development (Odhiambo, 2010; Gikondi et al., 2010; Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012). The Constitution of Kenya 2010 unequivocally promises all Kenyans unprecedented opportunity to capitalize on the progress made thus far in order to exploit the full potential of education for each and every child, youth and adult in the nation (Republic of Kenya, 2010, 2012). In addition, the Basic Education Act 2013 reiterates the fact that basic education which has been made free and compulsory in Kenya should be operationalized through the legal framework enshrined in the Act (Republic of Kenya, 2012a). Both the Constitution 2010 and Basic Education Act 2013 guarantees and provides legal mechanisms of ensuring that every Kenyan citizen gets access to basic education and other economic and social rights that hinge upon the citizens access to, and performance in, education, as much as on the application of knowledge, attitude and skills gained through the educational experience (Republic of Kenya, 2010a, 2010b, Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012; UNESCO, 2012; World Bank, 2012; Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Household characteristics are important determinants of schooling decisions and outcomes (Dryden-Peterson & Sarah, 2011; Brookings Institute, 2013; Ngware, Oketch, Ezech & Mudege, 2008; Ngware, Oketch, Ezech, & Mudenge, 2009;). The household production function approach developed by Baker (1965) is often used to by researchers in economics of education to show that household characteristics such as income and levels of parental education determine whether a child enrolls in school, stays in school, learns and makes progress to higher levels of education (Oketch & Ngware, 2012). It is also used in economics of education to model other household schooling decisions such as the type of school that a child attends (Kingdom, 2007, Ngware, et al., 2012). In Africa, studies that use the household production function approach usually differentiate between rural and urban households. Rural households are often portrayed as disadvantaged in terms of having lower income and lower levels of education and therefore being associated with disadvantaged schooling decisions and outcomes compared with urban areas (Jones, 2005, McMahon, 2005, Mugisha, 2006; Walque, 2005).

Oketch and Ngware (2012) have documented that several reasons explain the rapid urbanization in developing countries. These include rapid urbanization as a response to increasing poverty, falling infrastructure and social services, and more generally, weak and abdicating government service delivery systems in rural areas (Tostensen, Tvedten & Vaa, 2001). Nairobi County typifies the urban population boom in Africa and its negative consequences (Oketch & Ngware, 2012). One of the negative consequences of population boom is low access to education (Orodho, 2013). To illustrate the poor situation of education services in Nairobi city, a study by Magadi and Ezech (2002) found that at each age cohort, enrollment rates are much lower in Nairobi slums than in any

other parts of Kenya. According to the study, about 40 percent of the 15-17 year old adolescent males in the slums were attending school compared with 74 percent of male adolescents aged 15-17 in Kenya and 89 percent in the entire Nairobi city(Oketch &Ngware,2012). The results for females reported by the same study are even more revealing. It is estimated that 22 percent of the 15-17 year old females in the slums were enrolled in school compared to 68 percent nationally and 73 percent in rural Kenya. Another aspect of education reported by Magadi and Ezeh (2002) is the high dropout rate and non-attendance (Oketch Ngware, 2012). It is against this background that this study made an attempt to assess the critical socio-economic factors influencing pupils' access to education in informal settlements in Kibera, Nairobi County, Kenya.

Literature Review

There is a plethora of literature which indicates that efforts to enhance access and participation in education is thwarted by multifarious and intertwined factors including the school based variables(Orodho,2013). In January 2003, the Kenyan Government introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) and with it, an extra 1.3 million children enrolled in public schools, raising the figure from 5.9 million children in 2002 to 7.2 million in 2003 and 8.6 million in 2010 (Republic of Kenya,2012a). Despite this increase, statistics available at the ministry of education indicate that more than one million children are still out of school in Kenya, and this is attributed to various socio-economic and cultural factors that are yet to be tackled(Orodho,2013). Kariga (2009) and Orodho (2013) established that provision and access to education in some Kenyan communities continues to be undermined by social, political and economic factors. From the analysis of enrollment across all the mainstream levels of education the factors included: poverty, high cost of education at the house levels, insecurity and gender bias. Another study by Daraja Civic Initiative (2007) reported that, since the re-introduction of FPE in 2003, the challenges to the availability and quality of free education have been compounded by lack of adequate physical facilities, learning equipment, overcrowding and insufficient teaching staff, among others. The report continues to assert that 2.4 million children have joined primary school, 23 %, or about 1.6 million children are not in schools. Of these children, some of the most vulnerable are those who live in Kenya's informal settlements where almost no public schools have been built for the past 15 years. To try and fill in the gaps left by the inability of public schools in absorbing all school going children, the non-formal schools sprung up in the earnest. These schools are mainly located in the informal urban settlements, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) areas poverty in high potential areas across the country (Republic of Kenya, 2005b). Uwezo (2010) in a nationwide survey in Kenya comprising 100,000 students in over 2,000 schools found out that although FPE increased enrollment, students learning still remains inadequate. A research by Reche N, Bundi T, Ringu J, and Mbugua Z (2012), found out that since the introduction of FPE in 2003, enrollments in public schools increased significantly from 5 million in 2002 to 6.9 million in 2003 there was an increase of 17% represented a Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) of 99%.

Cross-country studies on school participation show the demand for schooling is an important factor in overall schooling outcomes (Griffins, 2010; McMahan, 2005; Oketch & Ngware, 2012; United Nations, 2013). A study in rural Peru found that mothers' education has a bearing on their children's school attendance, particularly in low-income households (Behrman& Rosennzweig, 2002; Reche, Riunguet.al, 2012). This finding is replicated in Africa (Sibanda, 2004, Onsomu, Kosimbei & Ngware, 2006, Walque, 2005). The studies by Ngware et.al.(2012) and Wright (2009) demonstrated that school attendance for low income and for female children is more strongly

affected by changes in school fees. In Kenya, this is notable that Nairobi Province, with 60 percent of its population living in informal settlements, has the second lowest primary school enrollment rate out of eight provinces (Republic of Kenya; 2012; Warrah, 2008; Wasanga, Ogle & Wambua, 2011a, 2011b).

In South Africa, Sibanda (2004) found that both individual and household level attributes are important determinants of dropping out of primary and secondary school. The study by Sibanda indicates that ethnicity, household size, female household headship and the household heads level of education are school predictors of school withdrawal. The selection process for staying in primary or secondary school seems to favour children from upper income groups compared to their low income counterparts in Kenya and South Africa (Njeru & Orodho, 2003; OECD, 2013; Oketch & Ngware, 2012; Sibanda, 2004). In Rwanda, following the genocide during which many children were orphaned, a study controlling for the schooling of biological parents and the child's relationship to the head of the an adoptive household found that education of the most educate female adult in the new household had a positive and significant influence on the schooling of the adopted child (Kinyanjui, 2011; Walque, 2005). The magnitude of the effect was similar to the effect on a biological mother-child relationship. For the most educated adult male in the adopting household, the effect was smaller to the effect on a biological father-child relationship, but remained positive and significant. Walque (2005) concluded that the nurture component of the intergenerational transmission of human capital is important with respect to both parents. This is contrary to literature that indicates mothers education have no environmental (nurture) impact on child's schooling (Plug, 2004; Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012). According to Walque (2005), mothers' education matters more for girls and fathers' education is more important for boys (Wang & Yang, 2010; UNESCO, 2013).

Statement of the problem

Despite of these interventions, many school-age children in informal settlements, among the rural and urban poor, and ASAL areas are still unable to access education, mainly due to socio-economic factors. Kibera informal settlement in Nairobi County, Kenya, is an example of such areas where pupils' access to education is still a mirage as compounded by several socio-economic factors. Despite the introduction of FPE and other interventions, concerns have been raised over pupils' accessibility to education in Kibera which has been persistently and alarmingly low. For example a survey conducted by Daraja Civic Initiatives Forum in Kibera and Korogocho informal settlements indicate that up to 48 % of school age children are out of schools (Daraja, 2006). This was corroborated by the Ministry of Education facility based Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS) in 2006 which indicated that up to 59.9 % of school age children in Nairobi informal settlements are not enrolled in school (MOE, 2006). The low pupil access to education is a cause of worries and concerns to many stakeholders in Kibera and other parts of informal settlements as it is likely to impact on the implementation and achievement of Universal Primary Education. Therefore this study sought to establish the socio-economic factors that contribute to this low pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement in Nairobi County, Kenya, despite the advent of FPE by the government.

The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

Based on the above statement of problem, the purpose of this study was to establish the socio-economic factors affecting pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement, Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives were:

1. To find out how physical facilities and learning resources influence enrollment in schools in Kibera informal settlement.
2. To determine the influence of parents' educational level on pupils' schooling in Kibera informal settlement.
3. To find out the influence of family income level on education financing in Kibera informal settlement.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study was guided by the Classical Liberation Theory of Equal Opportunity and Social Darwinism as proposed by Charles Darwin in an attempt to find out some of the socio-economic factors that affected pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement of Nairobi County, Kenya. According to this theory, an individual's Socio-Economic Status (SES) is a product of environment they live in thus nature and nurture have a bearing on an individual's destiny. Equal opportunity is a stipulation that all people should be treated similarly, unhampered by artificial barriers or prejudices except when a particular distinctions can be explicitly justified. Informal settlements are areas that are neglected by the central governments in terms of equal opportunities leading to exclusion in terms of social and economic development and this impact negatively on education. Socio-economic factors such as family income level, parents' level of education, adequacy of learning and teaching materials or resources and occupation, all influence the quality and availability of education as well as the ability of education to improve life circumstances. Low SES and its correlates, such as lower education, poverty, and unemployment, ultimately affect a society as a whole. Inequalities in wealth distribution and quality of life are increasing in the informal settlements. The study therefore attempted the extent to which the Classical Liberal Theory of Equal Opportunity and Social Darwinism can effectively be linked to socio-economic factors that influence pupils' access to education in informal settlements where inequalities of education provisions are severe on equity and deficiency grounds.

II Research Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used. The survey is the most frequently used method for collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits, or any of the variety of education or social science issues(Brooking,2013; Orodho,2009,2012) The target population for the study was 6,540 respondents consisting of 60 head teachers, 480 teachers and 6,000 parents. Purposive sampling was used to select the head teachers, while simple random sampling was used to select teachers and parents as respondents. The sample size was 114 respondents comprising 6 head teachers, 48 teachers and 60 parents as displayed in Table1.

Table 1 Sample and Sampling techniques matrix table

| Description | Population | Sample size | Percentage | Sampling procedure |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------------------|
| Head teachers | 60 | 6 | 5.3 | Purposive sampling |
| Teachers | 480 | 48 | 42.1 | Simple random sampling |
| Parents | 6,000 | 60 | 52.6 | Simple random sampling |
| Total | 6,540 | 114 | 100 | |

The main tools for data collection were questionnaires for head teachers and teachers plus personal interview schedules for parents. Descriptive data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, averages, ranges, frequencies, tables and totals). Quantitative data requires the use of a computer sheet and therefore Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) technique was used to analyze inferential statistics to test the influence of socio-economic factors on pupils' access to education. The information from some open-ended items which was difficult to categorize was included in the study in a narrative form as observed by (Brook, 2013; Orodho, 2012).

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Physical facilities and pupils' enrollment in education

The first objective of this study was to find out how physical facilities and learning resources influence pupils' enrollment in schools in Kibera informal settlement. Head teachers were requested to indicate the status of physical and T/L resources in relation to pupils' enrollment in education in Kibera informal settlement. The results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2 Enrollment growth rate in the sampled schools

| Years | Enrollment | Rate in % |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 740 | 0.0 |
| 2008 | 906 | 18.23 |
| 2009 | 1014 | 10.56 |
| 2010 | 1127 | 0.10 |
| 2011 | 1144 | 0.01 |
| 2012 | 1240 | 0.08 |
| Average | Average in 6 years | 5.80 |

Results in Table 2 indicate that the average enrollment growth rate in the schools in Kibera informal settlement was 5.80%. This low enrollment rate of pupils in the schools was attributed to several factors including : insufficient physical facilities and space, inadequate finances, ignorant parents, social vices like insecurity and child labor which leads to increased dropout rate. It was also apparent that the yearly enrollment rate was erratic in contrary to the expectations of the Government of Kenya in its aim to meet the Universal Primary Education (UPE) through free primary education program. This finding corroborates the findings of Magadi et.al.(2002) as well as the Sessional paper No. 1 of 2005 on a Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research of the Republic of Kenya (2005), which opined that among the many challenges which threaten the sustenance of a robust educational regime in Kenya is low enrollment, retention and access rates.

Allocation of physical resource materials was also found to be impeding the admission of pupils to schools in Kibera. To determine the state of physical facilities in the schools, the head teachers were asked to rate the adequacy of facilities in their schools and indicate if these were commensurate with the total number of pupils enrolled. A summary of the responses is contained in Table 3.

Table 3 : Availability of physical and T/L resources in the sampled schools

| Facility Percentage | Adequacy | Percentage | Inadequacy |
|------------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| Classrooms | 35 | 71.43 | 14 |
| Desks | 42 | 77.78 | 12 |
| Sanitary units | 8 | 25.0 | 24 |
| Chairs | 21 | 38.18 | 34 |
| Chalk boards | 34 | 75.6 | 11 |
| Libraries | 2 | 33.3 | 4 |

The findings in Table 3 show a shortfall in the number of classrooms, desks, sanitary units, chairs, and libraries. The data revealed that there was inadequacy of teaching and learning materials like classrooms, toilets, libraries, playgrounds and chairs/desks in the schools. For instance, the findings on classrooms indicated that there was a deficit of 7 to 4 classrooms per school, chairs/desks had a shortfall of 61.82%, and libraries were rated as inadequate at 66.7%. Most of the schools had overcrowded classes as a result of overstretched physical facilities. This meant that the overcrowded classroom environment were unfavorable for learning. This is supported by Orodho (2013) who indicated that head teachers faced increasing administrative difficulties which include inadequate and constructed buildings; shortage of books and equipment; lack of proper school furniture particularly desks; overcrowded classrooms; and poor communication structures. Where the classrooms existed, most of them were very small with iron sheet roofs and earthen floors. In a nutshell, the condition of basic physical and instructional resources was in a sorry state.

Approximately 83% of the schools had not fulfilled the guidelines of the Ministry of Education (2003) on sanitary facilities of the ratio 1:30 for boys and 1:25 for girls. The ratio of pupils per latrine in the schools ranged from 1:27 to 1:111 with an average ratio of 1:37. This dismal availability of sanitary facilities kept away children from accessing education in Kibera informal settlement. This finding was corroborated by a study carried out in Ruiru Division of Thika by Ng'ethe (2004), which found out that 74% of the schools experienced a shortage of latrines, which interfered with pupil access to education. The study also found out that 97% of the schools had no adequate playgrounds for pupils' play and infrastructural expansion. The fact that the residential settlements are unplanned and the available open spaces continue to shrink against the ever-growing population, only narrow paths are left to serve to provide access to the schools. The lack of the open spaces and dumping sites has further left these narrow paths as the only places where the majority of the residents' can dump their waste and act as playgrounds for the pupils in schools. Nyawira (2007) concurs with this study when she opines that lack of facilities is a major constraint in majority of schools in Kenya and this leads to dropout rates as sufficiency of physical facilities are a vital consideration when head teachers are admitting children. From the foregoing, it can be inferred that the schools in informal settlements in Kenya are facing inadequacies in physical facilities and T/L thanks to the low socio-economic underpinnings in their quest of providing education to the masses.

Level of Education of Parents and pupils' schooling

The second objective was to assess the influence of parental educational level on pupils' schooling in Kibera informal settlement. The parents' level of education was looked at in terms of highest

level of education which was divided into: none, below primary, primary, secondary and post secondary. The results are displayed in Figure 1.

Majority of the parents (57.50) had primary education while approximately 23% had education below primary; 10% had never gone to school. A big chunk of children who were out of school were from families of parents who had Primary education and those who did not have any formal education (Figure 1).

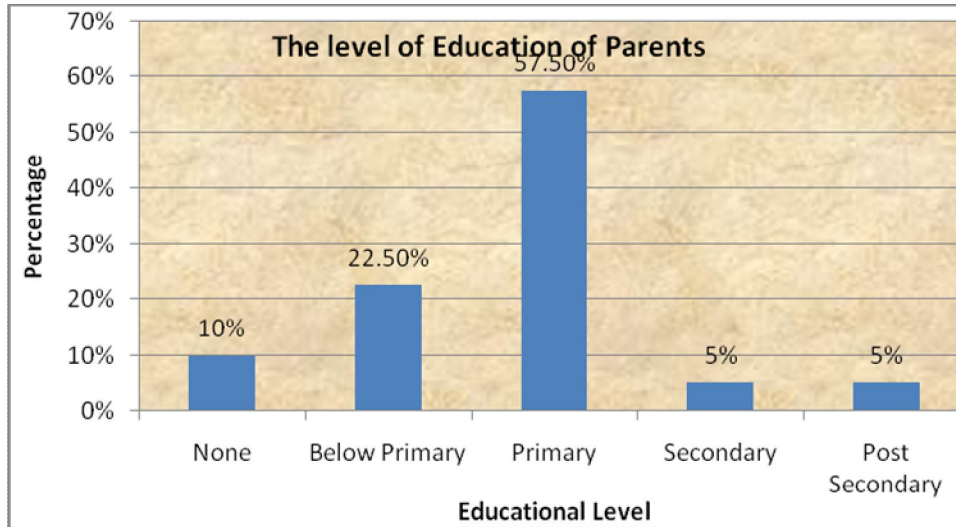


Figure 1: The percentage of Level of Education of parents

Analysis of results carried in Figure1 indicates that the total number of children enrolled in schools was approximately 77% and approximately 23% were out of school. Post secondary parents recorded the highest number of pupils being enrolled in school as compared to those parents with Primary education who recorded most of the children out of school (29%). Those who had not attained any education followed at 17%. The inferences made from the study is that majority of children who were out of school were from families of parents who had Primary education and those who did not have any formal education.

To test whether level of parents' education has an influence on schooling, the two numerical indices (educated and schooling) were correlated by the researcher using Pearson's Moment Correlation Co-efficient as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4 Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient for level of education of parents and schooling

| | | Schooling level | Parents education level |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Schooling level | Pearson correlation | 1 | .987(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .002 |
| | Frequency | 6 | 5 |
| Parents education level | Pearson correlation | .987(**) | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 | |
| | Frequency | 5 | 6 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

There is a strong positive and significant correlations between education levels of parents and students access to school($r = .987$, $p=.002$) at $\alpha =.05$ level of statistical significance. From the foregoing, it was clear that the higher the minimum level of formal schooling of parents, the more they sent their children to schools in the study locale.

The findings of this study relating increase in schooling with high levels of parental education is in agreement with the findings of Orodho (2013) who reported that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones and this plays a significant role in access to and retention of children in education. This study revealed that educated parents are able to assist their children progress in education both materially and personal involvement. The study showed that those children whose parents had received formal education enrolled more children in school than those whose parents had not gone to school at all. This was consistent in a study by Noor (2001) that there was a direct relationship between parental level of education and children's enrollment and retention in school and that educated parents with high incomes were able to provide their children with a conducive home environment, provide all the necessities of school and meet the financial obligation, hence encouraging access and retention of children in education as they understand the value of education and its benefits to the child.

3.3 Family's income level and education financing

The third objective was to find out the influence of family's income level on education financing in Kibera informal settlement. Table 5 contains data regarding the occupational status of parents of pupils who participated in the study.

Table 5 : Occupation Status of parents

| Occupation | No. of parents | Percentage |
|---------------|----------------|------------|
| Salaried | 4 | 12.2 |
| Self employed | 7 | 21.2 |
| Casual worker | 14 | 42.4 |
| Unemployed | 8 | 24.2 |
| Total | 33 | 100 |

Results in Table 5 revealed that the majority of the parents, approximately 42% worked as casual laborers with an average monthly income of Kshs.6, 000 which was not adequate to finance the education of their children while approximately 24% of them were unemployed. The Standard deviation for family's income level was 1.98 with a range of 6. From the foregoing discussion, it was evident that the income of the parents influenced children's access to and participation in education. The income of the parents was determined by their occupation. When the parents have no salaried occupations, their income is bound to be low. This low income cannot make them sustain or afford to take their children to school. These findings concurred with a report by the Republic of Kenya (2002) that family income determines who goes to school and who does not. High rate of poverty at household level in Kibera informal settlement have made poor households either not to enroll their children in schools, or fail to sustain an uninterrupted participation of those children who are enrolled due to inability to meet various financial costs requirements. Consequently from the interview schedules, 100% of the parents were never satisfied with their

monthly income. They further contended that the income was not adequate to meet the latent financial requirements of their children even for those in public primary schools under the FPE programme.

The headteachers in the study locale revealed that schools in Kibera depended on fees from parents as their main source of finances. This was because they received minimal financial support from the government of Kenya through its agencies. Opportunity cost was therefore found out to be an important constraint to families sending children to school in Kibera informal settlement which in turn results to low pupils access to education.

Table 6 contains the Pearson Moment Correlation results of family's income level and parents level of financing education at $\alpha = .05$ level of confidence. It is assumed that the level of financing of education by parents is directly related to pupils' access to education.

Table 6 : Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient for family's income level and education financing

| | | Family's occupation | Education financing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Family's occupation | Pearson correlation | 1 | -.740(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .260 |
| | Frequency | 4 | 4 |
| Education financing | Pearson correlation | -.740(**) | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .260 | |
| | Frequency | 4 | 6 |

****Correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)**

The results in Table 6 indicate that there is a strong negative and non-significant correlation between the occupational status of parents and ability to finance education ($r = -.740$, $p = .260$) at $\alpha = .05$ level of confidence. This finding indicates that there is an inverse relationship between the occupation of parents and their ability to finance the education of their children. This is not a surprising result since most of the parents in the informal settlement of Kibera are in casual employment with income levels that can hardly sustain children's education.

This finding is consistent with that of Orodho (2013) and Syombua (2007) who found out that family's income level actually influences pupils' access to education. That the demand for education was governed by a number of socio-economic factors within the family which included occupation and income levels.

Unlike in public primary schools, education in primary schools in Kibera informal settlement was not free as majority of the parents, (100%) were expected to pay hidden school levies that ranged between KShs. 500 – 1,000 as school fees for their children per term. The main reason for this being that schools in this area were largely non-formal and not factored in the Government's Free Primary Education (FPE) program as re-introduced in the year 2003. Despite this little amount, teachers revealed that they experienced problems in collecting the fees. The study revealed that the schools experienced enormous financial constraints and huge fee arrears at the end of every year brought about by parents failing in their financial obligation which are eventually never recovered. This showed that cost of education was a leading factor that propels low access rates to education in Kibera informal settlement, largely attributed to the low socio-economic level of most households in the informal settlement.

From the foregoing results, it was clear that the cost of education hinders access to and participation of children to education in Kibera informal settlement. The findings concurred with a report by World Bank (2004) that the high cost of education affects access and participation in education. Orodho and Njeru (2003) found out that at the national level, the most critical factors hindering student enrollment and participation in education was the high cost of education and other related levies. Therefore the researcher noted that improving pupil access to education in Kibera primary requires immediate alleviation of these opportunity costs.

IV CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the findings of this study, it is concluded that socio-economic factors that affect access of pupils' to education seem to adversely affect children in the informal settlements. It was established that factors such as inadequacy of infrastructural and teaching /learning facilities like classrooms, toilets, playgrounds and libraries, Parents' income level (poverty of parents) and Parents' education level (ignorance of parents) posed a real threat to the gains made by FPE. Consequently, despite education being recognized as a fundamental basic human right, not all children especially those in the slum areas had equitable access to it. However, if appropriate strategies of improving access, retention, equity and achievement in schools in the informal settlement were put in place, the EFA objective can be achieved. The strategies must also address the issue of quality of education offered to children in the informal areas. As stated earlier in the background of the study, all the lofty goals of FPE, EFA, UPE, MDGS on education cannot be realized unless and until concerted efforts were put in place to enhance access, equity, retention, transition rate, completion, equality and achievement in education. One of these ways was through invigorating the FPE program as re-advocated by the NARC Government in 2003.

Secondly, it can be concluded that shortage of these resources compromised the access of children to education. In some schools, there were no physical classrooms in place but rather learning took part in open-air classes. This negated the intentions of the Free Primary Education program by the government of Kenya in her bid to enhance accessible and qualitative universal education in the country. The study also revealed that the government gave limited support to the instructions in terms of finance and instructional materials. This affected participation and enrollment hence led to dismal enrollment rate as sufficiency of school facilities are a vital consideration to take into account when head teachers are admitting pupil. It was also at variance with the provisions of the national policy on education for an equitable distribution of educational facilities to schools by the government.

Finally, it was concluded that pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement was influenced by parents' level of education, family's income level and physical teaching /learning facilities as socio-economic factors.

The practical and policy recommendations emanating from the findings of the study based on the objectives were as follows:

(i) From objective one it is recommended that the government, as a policy intervention, should review the funding of FPE program by fully extending the support to all non-formal schools in informal settlements rather than through capitation for training and provision of teaching/learning materials as it is currently practiced on pilot basis. Public schools should also be set-up in Kibera

informal settlement by the government. This will bring a meaningful children access to education in the area.

(ii) Secondly, from objective two, the researcher recommends that programs of adult education and other literacy programs should be rolled out by the government and other stakeholders in Kibera informal settlement. For this will aid in enhancing attitudinal change among illiterate and ignorant parents in favor of child education. The schools in this area should also immediately initiate income generating projects to subsidize parents' fees in the running of the schools.

(iii) Lastly, from objective three, the study has identified opportunity cost as an important constraint to sending children to school in the informal settlements. Families in these areas should be empowered to have sustainable means of dealing with their poverty through credit facilities that would enable them to engage in some form of income generating activities at household levels. For this will enable them enroll their children to schools and schooling will eventually redeem them from their poor plight.

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations for further research are presented;

- i. The study did not exhaust all the socio-economic factors affecting pupils' access to education in Kibera informal settlement, other factors like parents ignorance of education matters and delayed wages emanated from the study that require further investigation.
- ii. More comprehensive studies should be undertaken to include a large population and a variety of informal settlements in order to ascertain whether or not the problem of low pupil access to education as a result of socio-economic factors transcends other informal settlements as this study only covered one informal settlement in Nairobi County.

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