EFFECT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION BURSARY FUND ON ACCESS AND RETENTION OF
STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN JUJA CONSTITUENCY, KIAMBU
COUNTY

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Despite the implementation of the Secondary Education Bursary Fund (SEBF) to enhance the access and retention of students from poor family background, the country still experiences problems such as low transition rates from primary to secondary schools and rising cases of drop outs (KIPPRA, 2007). This is an indication that despite the government’s continued increase in bursary fund allocation from Kshs. 204.5 million in 1997/1998 financial year to Kshs 800 million in 2006/2007 financial year (IPAR, 2008), a large number of needy students do not access funds. This study therefore assessed the effectiveness of the fund in enhancing access and retention of students in secondary schools in Juja Constituency, Kiambu County. The study used the descriptive survey research design. The target population was all the twenty-two secondary schools in Juja Constituency while the sample size constituted of 400 students and 10 head teachers and three SEBF committee members. This was 45.5% of the target population. Data collection was done using questionnaires and interview schedules while data analysis was done using descriptive statistics. From the study findings, the study concluded that majority of the students come from poor economic backgrounds. The SEBF was a critical source of funds for financing education as majority of parents did not have a stable source of income. The lack of the school fees requirements was a major hindrance on access and retention of students in secondary schools. The level of awareness on SEBF application and qualification criteria was very low in secondary schools in Juja Constituency and therefore the deserving students did not apply for the SEBF. The SEBF allocated was not enough to cater for all the educational costs. The most significant ways of improving SEBF disbursement to needy students were: increasing the SEBF allocations to the needy students, strict adherence to set guidelines, increasing the level of transparency in allocation and increasing the level of awareness to the targeted beneficiaries on the SEBF application procedures. The study recommends that the SEBF management should scale up the amount of cash allocated to each student to ensure the sustainability of their education. The government should review the guidelines on
Allocation Of SEBF To Ensure That The Deserving Students Benefit From The Funds. The SEBF Management Should Conduct A Country-Wide Campaign To Create Awareness On SEBF To Increase The Success Rate Of The Fund.