

**BURSARY SCHEME AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL
PARTICIPATION BY LEARNERS FROM POOR HOUSEHOLDS IN HOMA BAY
COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I confirm that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for consideration of any certification. This research thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited using APA 7th edition system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my beloved Kasuku Family whose understanding and encouragement has inspired me to date. I also dedicate it to my late parents the late Mzee Eliakim Ojwang and Mama Flora Guya whose inspiration was the foundation and spring that watered my family's education pursuits.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
BOG	Board of Governors
BOM	Board of Management
CBC	Constituency Bursary Committee
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBF	Constituency Bursary Fund
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
EFA	Education For All
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FSE	Free Secondary Education
GoK	Government of Kenya
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KESSP	Kenya Education Sector Support Program
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOES&T	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MP	Member of Parliament
NG-CDF	National Government Constituency Development Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSFAF	Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund
PA	Parents Association

SEBF	Secondary Education Bursary Fund
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

ABSTRACT

The study investigated bursary scheme and its influence on participation in educational activities by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Despite the government's systematic release of bursary funds to constituencies, there were questions on whether the bursary scheme facilitated participation of needy learners in secondary school education. Homa Bay County had climatic conditions unfavourable for agriculture, was dominated by low rewarding economic activities like small scale fishing and the HIV and AIDS scourge had impoverished the residents of the county, necessitating bursary intervention. The objectives of the study were: to establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County, to find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County, to establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County, to determine the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County and to identify the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County. The study was guided by the Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman and Wood that stressed on each child being given opportunity to develop their naturally given capacities and talents without barriers so as to promote the individual's socio-economic mobility. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Purposive sampling was used to pick 16 schools out of 51 for the study. 900 respondents participated in the study. A pilot study was done to determine the feasibility of the study and test-retest method was used to assess reliability of instruments. The first and second test scores were correlated using Pearson Correlation Coefficient which gave a result $r=0.98$ indicating a strong correlation and therefore a reliable instrument. Content validity of instruments was done by the researcher and other professionals. . Questionnaires, interview schedules, focused group discussions and document analysis were used to collect data. Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were employed. Analysis was done using IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0 and results presented in frequency distribution tables, line charts and bar charts. Information obtained through emergent themes was analyzed qualitatively while the rest were subjected to quantitative analysis. The greatest success of the bursary scheme was found out to be subsidized school fees while the greatest challenge was political manipulation. The study revealed that fairness was not adequately observed in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards. Suggested recommendations included people of high integrity be put in CBC, bursary be given only to needy students, sufficient amounts be awarded, transparency and accountability be enhanced, bursary policies be followed, disbursement be done in time, CBC to get correct data on needy students from schools and government to enhance monitoring of the disbursement process.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a background to the problem of bursary and its influence on secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County in Kenya. The chapter also includes statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, assumptions of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework, definition of operational terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Bursary is one of the education financing options that has been used globally to pay the cost of education at different levels. It has been used to reduce the fee burden from parents and guardians in order to facilitate effective participation by learners in education. In advanced countries in the western world, tuition vouchers, cash transfers, grants and scholarships have been widely used to pay education costs. Western countries such as United Kingdom used tuition vouchers and cash transfers to assist the needy students (Andrew & Baxter, 2005). The U.K. strived to eliminate the socio-economic gap between the rich and the poor through education while in Singapore 'Edusave' was a financial intervention meant to assist students from poor households and retain them in school. Since 1960s, India had a system in which brilliant students were identified and assisted to complete their education programmes. The beneficiaries were selected very strictly and competitively among the rural poor. However, China since 1994 has targeted areas where there were a majority of needy learners for financial assistance, while Mexico targeted provision

of text books and other educational material. Other countries that had rigorous and competitive systems of identifying needy learners to be assisted financially included Paraguay and Chile (Ahmed et al., 2007).

The main purpose of bursary has been to facilitate access, retention, participation and completion of educational programmes, to enhance high quality of secondary education and to provide equal opportunities to learners (Onuko, 2012). Bursary provides opportunity to learners who would otherwise miss benefits of education. Provision of this assistance has always been perceived as necessary and relevant. There is a link between bursary scheme and learners' participation in educational activities. In order to obtain the desired outcome of education financing through bursary, there has to be effective administration of the scheme and fund adequacy. Such outcomes include learners participating and development of talents, capacities, skills and knowledge. The effectiveness of learner participation is closely linked to an environment that is safe and conducive for progressive participation. If participation was active and effective in Homa Bay County, it would validate the important role bursary scheme played in enabling learners from the poor households to successfully participate in educational activities.

The historical perspective of bursary was influenced by the 1990s international conferences that asserted that the demand for education was urgent and a responsibility of every country because education was a basic human right. The Dakar Conference of 2000 saw developing countries reaffirm their commitment to attain the Education For All (EFA) goal under time-bound schedules (Lewin & Coillods, 2001). The third world countries realized a majority of their children

hailed from poor households and therefore their governments planned on how to offer education opportunities to their citizens. Secondary education in Africa started mainly in urban areas while the rural areas were inaccessible. Participation in secondary education remained low and the costs were unsustainable. Countries in the west carried out aggressive expansion of their secondary education paving way for change in education concepts in Africa. Exploration of secondary education became urgent irrespective of education financing difficulties. Participation still remained low but education costs increased (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2001).

Kenya on her part implemented the Free Primary Education (FPE) by 2003 as a fulfillment of the resolutions of the Dakar Conference. Meanwhile, secondary school education lagged behind in most of Sub-Saharan Africa. Secondary education provided a special and privileged position between the primary education level and tertiary institution, and also prepared the individual for the job market through academics, talent, sports and other opportunities. It as well prepared the individual for middle class colleges and higher education in universities. The cost of education became too expensive thus the government through the education sector had to take steps aimed at assisting the needy and vulnerable groups of students against adverse impacts of poverty (Njeru & Orodho, 2003).

Since independence, Kenya has spent large sums of money on education. According to estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the 2020/2021 Financial Year by the Parliamentary Service Commission, Parliamentary Budget Office, the education docket was allocated the biggest share of the budget at 28%, Energy, Infrastructure and ICT came second at 23%, followed by governance, justice, law and order 11%,

health sector 10%, national security 9%, parliament 2%, judiciary 1% and finally other sectors were allocated 20%. The budgetary allocations to the education ministry reveal how much the government has invested in this very important cause. However, the increasing number of needy children in the community became a concern. The cost sharing policy of 1988 known as Kamunge Report introduced through Sectional Paper Number 6 made education burdensome, with 30% to 40% of parents' subsistence income apportioned to education. The net effect was that community impoverishment increased, coupled with the fact that Kenyans already lived below poverty line. The cost sharing policy of 1988 led to low enrolment and high drop-out of school-going children (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

The Kenyan government had to find measures on how to handle the crisis in light of the rising costs of education, measures to promote access, participation and completion by providing bursary funds. The Secondary Education Bursary Fund (SEBF) was introduced in the 1993/1994 financial year to cushion the poor and vulnerable children against adverse effects of poverty (Njeru & Orodho, 2003). Bursary funds were disbursed directly to schools through the Ministry of Education. Disbursement to individual students was done by the school management which by then was called the Board of Governors. However, the management of bursary funds was transferred from schools to constituencies in the 2003/2004 financial year by an act of Parliament through the policy of decentralization. The concern over the bursary fund that was formerly disbursed to schools was that the schools lacked transparency and accountability towards the bursary funds allocated. There were allegations that the head teachers allocated money to those they chose without involving the board of governors. The government bursary scheme targeted

vulnerable children from poor households, children from arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) and girls affected by the effects of HIV and AIDS. Constituency Development Fund was a community based project whose patron was the local Member of Parliament (MP) and was aimed at poverty alleviation.

Several challenges formed hurdles for the scheme in Homa Bay County. There were no clear guidelines on how to handle bursaries. The fact that the Members of Parliament controlled bursary among other CDF projects made the scheme open for political manipulation and porous to vices like clanism and favouritism. Studies have revealed several weaknesses that rendered the purposes and practices of the bursary scheme ineffective in enabling the poor and vulnerable students to access, be retained and complete the secondary education cycle. It also led to inefficiency in the bursary award system (Obiero, 2014, Njeru & Orodho, 2003).

In Homa Bay County, the poverty situation was not only heightened by the geographical and harsh climatic conditions but also the high HIV prevalence in the county, increasing the need for education financing for effective learner participation. The number of needy students increased steadily in Homa Bay County due to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS which had claimed the lives of many parents and disabled many others with prolonged illnesses. This impoverished the county's population especially along the shores of Lake Victoria, rendering most households unable to afford secondary school fees for their children. The situation needed a systematic but faster intervention.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Kenya government had spent heavily on financing education of students; an example of such expenditure being the bursary scheme that was purposely created to assist learners from low economic background get equal opportunities as their counterparts from financially able families to participate in educational activities. However, participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County remained low. Education in Homa Bay County was typical of the education system in all resource-poor counties in Kenya; it was characterized by low enrolment levels, high dropout rates and low completion rates (Madowo, 2018).

The main concern of the study was the difficult and harsh climatic conditions coupled with effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that impacted on the community economically and rendered the county poor, resulting into low economic capacity for parents and guardians who were responsible for fee payment for secondary school students. A big portion of the study site encountered flooding and human displacement especially when the Sondu Miriu and Awach rivers burst their banks. Seasonal migration and allocation of government relief food and other materials was an annual event in some parts of the county. The wet season was followed by extremely dry spell in which no meaningful economic activity could occur. According to the Homa Bay County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017, rural development, employment being part of it, faced some challenges including frequent drought amongst other factors such as high poverty levels and low soil fertility.

Furthermore, in the previous 20 years, Homa Bay County had remained one of the leading counties in HIV/AIDS prevalence. According to HIV Estimates Report

Kenya 2018 produced by the National AIDS Control Council, there was an estimated 1,388,169 adults living with HIV in 2017. The distribution was highly skewed, resulting in only eight counties contributing to more than 50% of the people who lived with HIV. These counties were Nairobi (with 182,856 HIV positive cases), Homa Bay (128,199), Kisumu (112,862), Siaya (113,605), Migori (79,146), Kiambu (56,622), Kakamega (48,752) and Mombasa (38,548).

According to Kenya HIV Counties Profiles 2016 by the National AIDS Control Council, the counties which led in new HIV infections were Homa Bay with 9,629 new infections, Kisumu 8,790, Siaya 7,700, Migori 5,093, Kisii 2,072, Nakuru 801, Nairobi 4,719, Turkana 438, Kiambu 4,273 and Nyamira 425. The prevalence of HIV in the county was not the main focus of the study but it had negative effects on the financial capability of the population that had already been impoverished by harsh climatic conditions which had rendered most parts of Homa Bay County agriculturally unproductive. The trail of deaths and sickly parents that resulted from HIV and AIDS had increased poverty and high numbers of needy and vulnerable children in the county.

The above factors exposed the study location to poverty, making financing of secondary school education a great challenge to the local communities, causing reduction in participation in educational activities by learners in the study locale. Consequently, there was high need for financial intervention such as bursary to help increase participation rates of students from poor households for future socio-economic empowerment of the individuals, their communities and the nation at large. The importance of secondary education to the population could not be

underrated as it occupied a very significant role between primary and tertiary education (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

The national government had taken big steps in ensuring bursary scheme funds reached constituencies for distribution to needy students in all counties. Unfortunately, some weaknesses in the bursary practices not only underrated the government's purpose in funding the scheme but also denied needy learners the chance to participate in educational activities, denying the poor households the chance to benefit from socio-economic mobility. There was no clear guideline on how much of the total amount allocated to CDF projects was to be channeled towards secondary school bursary, making it a prerogative of members of parliament. It is believed that this resulted into political manipulation of the scheme, flouted criteria of disbursement and vices such as clanism and favouritism. 1.3 Purpose and objective of the study.

1.3.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence secondary school education bursary scheme had on participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

- a) To establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County.
- b) To find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County.

- c) To establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County.
- d) To determine the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County.
- e) To identify the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County.

1.3.3 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study;

- a) What are the bursary application procedures and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County?
- b) What are the awareness mechanisms used to inform stakeholders on bursary existence in Homa Bay County?
- c) To what extent do learners who deserve bursary interventions get assisted in Homa Bay County?
- d) What is the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County?
- e) What are the challenges facing the secondary schools bursary scheme in Homa Bay County?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study was important in that the findings and recommendations would inform education players on effective education policies that focus on bridging the gap between the privileged and less privileged members of the society in the access to secondary education. The Ministry of Education policy makers would access useful

data from the study that could be used to improve bursary practices for the sake of effective participation in educational activities by learners. The study findings would add value to and increase the size of the already existing literature. Comprehensive data would be documented for further reference and this would be helpful for future research studies related to the study topic. Weaknesses detected in studies related to the research would form a basis for forming knowledge gaps. The study findings would provide ways forward on improved criteria and bursary practices in fund disbursement. The learners in Homa Bay County would get the opportunity to gain knowledge, acquire skills, develop talents and capacities in school environment.

1.5 Limitations and delimitations

1.5.1 Limitations

The first limitation was the possibility of bias respondents given that the bursary scheme was subject to political influence and some respondents could fear political victimization if they portrayed the bursary scheme negatively. To prevent such fears, the researcher assured respondents of total confidentiality in handling the collected data. The participants were also assured that the reason for data collection was purely for academic purposes and nothing else. Furthermore, respondents were instructed not to indicate their names on the questionnaires or interview schedules to ensure their anonymity.

The second limitation was the possibility of respondents giving inaccurate answers. The researcher dealt with this by conducting a pilot study in which test retest was done in one school that would not participate in the actual study. Two tests were given using similar questionnaires to the same group of students, at an interval of

one week. This time gap between the two tests helped ward-off respondents' fatigue. Results for the two tests were correlated using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient method to establish the reliability of the research instrument that is, the questionnaire that was going to be used on the sample population. The reliability test adopted gave the coefficient value $r=0.98$, suggesting a strong positive correlation which meant the research instrument was very reliable.

1.5.2 Delimitation

The study would have been conducted in all secondary schools in Kenya to improve its validity. However, this was not possible due to the vast size of the country. The study was therefore limited to a single county with very high HIV and AIDS prevalence that negatively affected the socio-economic situation of the local population and multi-dimensional geographical features such as semi-arid lands with hot climate and seasonal flood plains that led to low agricultural productivity. The prevalence of the HIV/AIDS and its effects on the economic ability of residents of the county and education of secondary school students may not have reflected the situation in other counties. The geographical features and climatic situation of Homa Bay County may also not have been replicated in other counties for instance the immediate neighbouring Kisii County which had good climate that favours bountiful agricultural productivity. Wamalwa (2017) in his study on adoption of climate smart agricultural practices among small scale farmers of Kitutu and Nyaribari Chache in Kisii County, Kenya admits that soils are generally 75% red volcanic loam (nitosols) and therefore good for agriculture.

Education participation of learners in the study site could have been influenced by many other factors apart from geographical and climatic conditions that were not favourable to agriculture and effects of the HIV/AIDS scourge. Such factors could have been included pursuit of quick money by learners engaging in child labour and premature pregnancy. Therefore, the results of the research may not conclusively explain all the reasons why learners do not participate fully in secondary school education.

Education participation is a concern of a huge number of stakeholders but the study was limited to seeking the opinions of only a section of school principals, teachers, students, constituency bursary committee and Sub-county Education Officer. This means the views of a huge population of education stakeholders was not captured.

1.6 Research assumptions

The following were the assumptions of the study:

- (a) The researcher assumed that the study respondents were aware of the inherent values in participation of learners in education and would voluntarily give accurate information about the bursary scheme. However, the researcher applied logistical and ethical techniques to appeal for respondents' cooperation and willingly give honest and accurate responses. This involved assuring them of confidentiality of information, maintaining anonymity and explaining the purpose and importance of the research.
- (b) There was an assumption that all the head teachers received bursaries in their respective schools. This was confirmed by the researcher during her study as

all principals in the sampled schools admitted having received bursary funds allocated to their students.

- (c) The researcher assumed that all learners from poor households in Homa Bay County received bursary awards for their education participation. However, research findings revealed that as much as many students got bursary in Homa Bay County, 44.5% of learners who applied for bursary did not get the awards, an indicator that only a section of needy students benefitted from the bursary scheme.
- (d) The researcher assumed that CBC officers carried out their work according to laid down procedures. However, the findings revealed that the constituency bursary committee members got involved in various malpractices which gave room to vices such as favouritism and lack of transparency on bursary disbursement procedures.
- (e) It was assumed that the government had the required mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the constituency bursary scheme at the constituency and national levels. The findings revealed a lapse and failure by the government to ensure that the purpose of the scheme was honoured through proper monitoring of the disbursement process.
- (f) That the return rate of questionnaires would be adequate for analysis of data by the researcher. This assumption was ascertained since the study achieved a questionnaire return rate of 98.28% which was considered satisfactory since a response rate of 75% is considered excellent and representative of the population (Nyanjom, 2013).

1.7 Theoretical and conceptual framework

1.7.1 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by a sociological theory, the Classical Liberal Theory of Equal Opportunity. The theory, which was proposed by Sherman & Wood (1982), emphasized on equal opportunity to individuals. The proponents drew some views from one of the philosophers (Dewey, 1899), who expressed that there should be equal or similar treatments of people in all areas of life including provision of education. The theorists expressed their views under the following tenets:

Individually given opportunities: That an individual is born with innate capacities that could be enhanced through availing opportunities such as education. Education should therefore be designed with the view of removing barriers of any kind be it social, economic, gender or geographical. The individuals would then take advantage of the availed opportunities for socio-economic promotion.

Equality of economic opportunities: Individuals should get chance of going through all levels of education to allow for development of skills and talents. Education would provide opportunity for economic mobility where all classes, races and gender would benefit economically from excellent academic performance (Sherman & Wood, 1982).

Equal opportunity for social mobility: According to the theory that guided the study, social mobility would be promoted by providing opportunity for all citizens through education that accelerates one to higher socio-economic status.

As an adaptation to the theory, the study viewed education institutions as relevant in providing the opportunities for knowledge gains, development and expansion of talents and capacities through providing space for educational activities, admission

of learners, attendance of school by learners, provision of conducive atmosphere for learners and full exploitation of opportunities under the guidance of teachers.

The theory suits the study because the bursary scheme like the Constituency Development Fund and the county government bursaries, together with the free secondary education grant, had significant impact on the participation of learners in educational activities. Such interactions between independent variable (the bursaries) and the dependent variable (learners' participation) would help the individual to access the job market and enhance their socio-economic mobility as they would be useful for community and national development. The important concepts here included a student from a poor household getting a chance to learn together with others from different socio-economic backgrounds with each of them exploiting their full potential. Education being a human right and an empowerment strategy that should be exploited by the government to lead the citizens to social promotion, enhancing participation of students from poor families in education through payment of their school fees would ensure learners participate in educational activities. Equity would be reflected in students from different socio-economic backgrounds sharing the same teachers and learning activities. Therefore, if implementation of the bursary scheme was effective, the participation rates by learners from poor households in educational activities would be higher.

1.7.2 Conceptual framework

The concern of the study was to investigate the bursary scheme and how it influenced secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Secondary education was not only crucial in bridging the

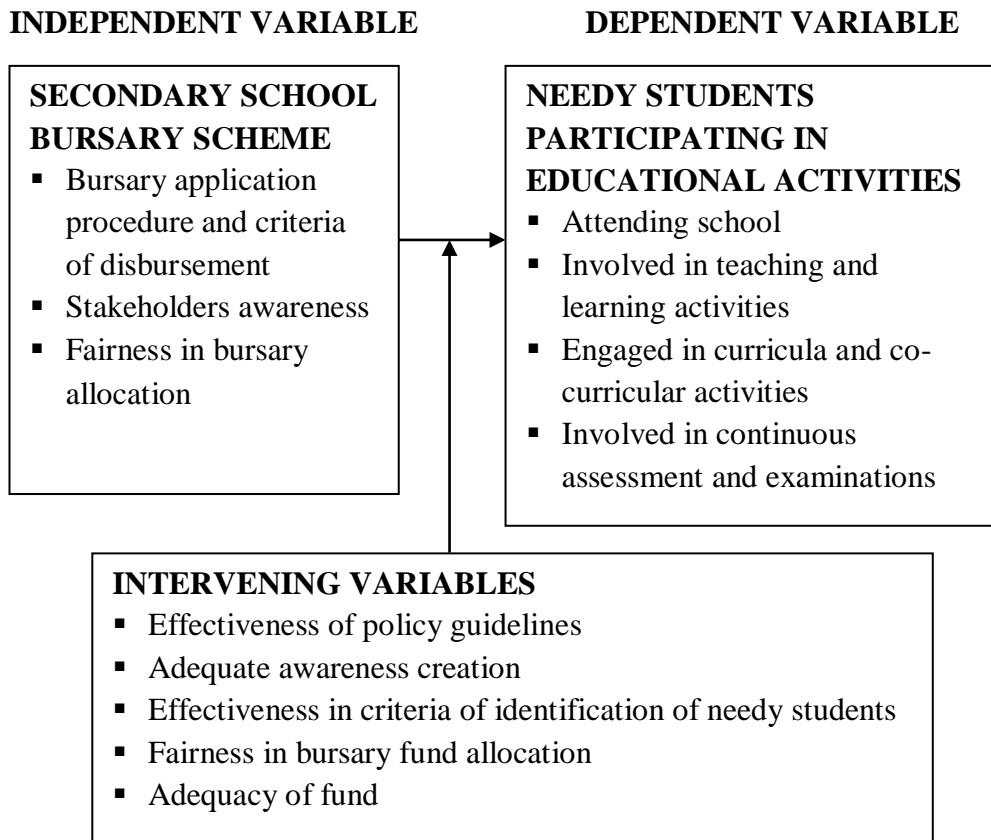
gap between primary level of education and tertiary institutions, but also provided a unique and privileged opportunity for individual enhancement, socio-economic mobility and national development. However, the cost of education remained high and unsustainable for parents thus the Kenyan government adopted ways of financing education of its citizens.

It is important to explore the history of bursary because it informs the study on the purpose of the scheme. The bursary awards helped in payment of school fees and feeding programmes. This study used the Classical Liberal Theory advanced by Sherman and Wood in 1982; availing opportunity to learners by those in position provides an enabling environment for the learners to acquire knowledge and skills, and develop their capacities to the fullest within an enabling school environment, with teachers and required facilities for learners' participation in educational activities. The idea of equal opportunity in education advanced by Sherman and Wood can be seen in the government's funding of education that gives the learners in the study locale an opportunity to develop talents, exhaust innate capacities, acquire knowledge, values for further learning and job market.

The theoretical framework provided an excellent basis in terms of implementation of the scheme to assist the needy through bursary awards, steps that would lead to self promotion of each individual learner and help him or her reap national benefits from a working population. The conceptual framework below underscored factors of implementation of bursaries as crucial in the way the needy learners benefit from the scheme. The schematic figure provides a summary of the conceptual framework and

explains the relationship that existed between the independent variables, dependent variables and intervening variables.

Fig 1.1 Conceptual framework



The interaction between the three categories of variables brought out both positive and negative outcomes. The independent variable was the secondary school bursary which was used to pay school fees and catered for feeding programmes for learners. The students would thus have improved school attendance and the opportunity to participate in curricula educational activities including teaching, learning, continuous assessment tests and examinations, and co-curricular activities like games, drama, science congress, debates among others. Effective participation of learners would therefore depend on availability of funds to facilitate the relationship. The intervening variables would change the direction of interaction between the independent and dependent variables, for instance, if bursary disbursement was not

monitored, it would give room to malpractices like political manipulation of the scheme, favouritism and clanism in bursary awards. Such occurrences would deny many needy learners the chance to benefit from bursary and attain their aspired goals. If implementation was well monitored, the weaknesses would be limited or eliminated so that needy learners would fully gain knowledge, utilize their skills, and develop their talents and capacities to the fullest giving them a chance to pursue higher education, have opportunity in the job market and experience socio-economic empowerment. By extension, the community and nation would also reap these benefits. If persons of integrity were appointed to the constituency bursary committees, vices such as clanism, favouritism, embezzlement of funds and manipulated criteria of selecting bursary beneficiaries would not occur hence needy learners would benefit from bursary awards, participate fully in educational activities and gain social and economic mobility.

1.8 Operational definition of terms

Bursary

This refers to the government grant that is awarded to a student whose school fee cannot be paid due to a situation of poverty at home. The term has been used in this thesis to refer to the National Government Constituency Development Fund and the Homa Bay County financial grants that are awarded to students to cushion parents from the financial burden of school fees and to enable secondary school students to participate in educational activities without financial barriers.

Bursary Scheme:

A bursary scheme is a large-scale systematic grant awarded to students to study in a learning institution, in most cases a secondary school, college or university. The

term has been used in this work to refer to a scheme that the Kenya Government launched in the 1993/1994 financial year as part of her educational development strategy to include and assist learners who missed out of education due to poverty situation in their families. The money was sent directly to school accounts to be disbursed by the principal in consultation with the board of governors. In the 2003/2004 financial year, the government again rolled out the Constituency Bursary Scheme which was administered at the constituency level to make it more effective at the grassroots. The adoption of the 2010 Constitution also ushered in the creation of county governments and the subsequent launch of the County Bursaries.

Equality

Refers to the provision of the right of all learners to access and participate in education. This asserts to the aspect of fairness and adhering to the children's rights. The term has been used in this work to refer to participation in education by all students including those from poor economic background.

Family Status:

The term has been used in the thesis to refer to the state of being a total orphan, partial orphan or having both parents.

Influence

This is the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something. It is used in this work to refer to the effect bursary scheme has on participation in educational activities by students from poor households in Homa Bay County.

Needy Student

This is a student who lacks or has very minimal basic requirements, reason being that he or she hails from a poor economic background. In this work, the term has

been used to refer to inability to pay school fee due to reasons such as coming from a poor financial background, hailing from a HIV and AIDS affected family, being an orphan, being a child in the custody of ageing grandparents who are not economically productive, lack basic essentials for survival and inability to pay school fee consistently.

Participation:

This is the action of taking part in something. In this thesis, the term refers to getting involved in educational activities by students in Homa Bay County regardless of the socio-economic status of the families they hail from.

1.9 Organization of the study

This study was organized into five chapters with Chapter One, the introduction, providing highlights on background to the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, limitation and delimitation, basic assumptions, theoretical and conceptual framework, and definition of operational terms as used in the study.

Chapter Two provided a review of literature related to the study by identifying study gaps to be filled by the study. It showed the work of various writers who had conducted research and gave their views on bursary scheme. It consisted of approaches used in implementation of the education bursary scheme, awareness creation over the existence of bursary scheme, effects of bursaries on learner participation, recommendations from related studies on bursary scheme and their influence on participation of learners in education and conclusion on the literature reviewed.

Chapter Three gave methodological orientation of the study by giving details on the research design, the location of the study, the target population, sample selection and sample size, the sampling procedure, data collection instruments and procedure, details of the pilot study, reliability of the research instruments, validity of the data collected, data collection and analysis methods, and the logical and ethical considerations that the researcher took into account.

Chapter Four provided analysis, presentations and discussions of findings of the study according to the objectives that guided the study which were to establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County, to find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County, to establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County, to determine the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County and to identify the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County.

Chapter Five presented a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations, and finally suggestions for further research on bursary funding in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, literature related to the study was reviewed under the following sub-themes: bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria, awareness creation mechanisms on availability of bursary funds, impacts of bursary scheme on participation of learners from poor households, fairness in distribution of bursary awards, challenges facing education bursary schemes and summary of literature review.

2.1 Bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria

2.1.1 Bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in developed countries

Several studies have been conducted at global levels on education financing through bursaries. The studies have shown that countries apply various approaches in dealing with financing of education. Apart from most states sponsoring education for students within certain age brackets and class, what seems to be shared in common is the aspect of sponsoring education for the sake of individual and national development. Jenzabar, a Boston-based organization that partners with higher education institutions worldwide, carried out a study in California and Latin America on education financing and revealed that the tuition voucher system and cash transfers were dominant and targeted university and college students. The basic education school levels were sponsored by the governments such that bursary intervention mostly captured private institutions and career-oriented areas. The voucher system was created in Latin America and targeted learners from low income

backgrounds since 1991. They revealed that twelve states in Columbia used voucher systems and school fees for children in private schools was subsidized in order to reduce the education costs and enable even those from poor families to access and participate in high quality education.

A study by Andrew & Baxter (2005) on bursaries and students' success in education compared the experience of students receiving bursaries and those without bursaries in the United Kingdom and found out that students with bursary awards were most likely to be retained in schools than those without such subsidy. The study also found out that the students with bursary awards are more stable in terms of attendance, continuity and completion of education programmes as compared to those without bursaries. The study realized a significant role played by the bursary provision to the needy students. The study recommended that education bursary providers should consider the timing of bursary disbursements with school calendars. However, there was need to seek more information on the financial intervention sources and the adequacy of the funds in addressing the needs of the vulnerable groups of students.

In Britain, education is fully financed up to secondary level by the government and cost-sharing exists at higher education level (Moon & Mayes, 1994) while in Mexico financial subsidy programmes focus on the most disadvantaged states. A study finding by Gitau et al. (1993) informed that bursary applications in western countries were mostly received online and responses communicated adequately. However, what was not captured was whether the awards given were adequate to steer education participation in terms of the consistency, timing and sustainability of

education programmes. If focus was put on consistency of bursary fund allocations and proper timing of disbursement then bursary would be more effective.

2.1.2 Bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in developing countries

In Namibia, the bursary scheme was referred to as Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF). It replaced the previous bursary docket which were perceived to be inadequate and outdated as it specifically targeted future civil servants. The new scheme was in three components: grant scheme, loans and full bursary only granted to exceptional cases. Every regional quota of the country came up with its own criteria of bursary disbursement. Namibia also gave 'Eduloan' that aimed to unlock the students' potential. Develop Africa, a non-profit organization that was founded with the aim of facilitating meaningful and sustainable development in Africa, supported children in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Tanzania by purchasing books and other learning materials. Furthermore South Africa also enjoyed National Students Finance Aid Scheme which only targeted the poor but with a condition that the poor students must be bright. What was not clear was how students who were poor in academics and talents were treated. In Rwanda, where genocide had occurred, bursaries were mainly directed to orphans while in Botswana, both bursaries and scholarships were issued under the bursary scheme, according to critical areas of need for manpower, choice of course for higher education students and academic performance at the senior school level. Bursaries targeted specific fields of study where the society benefitted most (World Bank, 2008). There was need to expand on the extent to which financial intervention to the vulnerable like cash transfers and voucher system assisted in learner participation by

students from poor households and also highlight on challenges faced by those bursary systems.

2.1.3 Bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Kenya

In line with the African Charter drawn and signed by several states to offer the child basic education, African countries had strived to carry their responsibilities in offering UPE as a basic children's right; Poverty had been viewed as a common problem by most countries especially third world countries and therefore the subject of education bursary scheme was relevant from the onset. In the local scene, the government of Kenya had concentrated on several policy-driven programmes and embarked on several strategies to enhance education systems in the country. Various local studies had indicated that bursary scheme was necessary to provide egalitarian opportunities to students so as to participate fully in education for the sake of individual and national development. The philosophy behind the current study was derived from the Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman & Wood (1982) that stressed on the child's free development of opportunities, talents and capacity without barriers of any kind. This would eventually lead to upward mobility of learners from poor households.

The government policies in funding education can be traced back to the Gachathy Report (1976) which proposed state-sponsored education up to Class 4 in Kenya. Following the Mackay Report (1982), the system of education changed from 7.4.2.3 to 8.4.4. during which the government increased its financial support mainly to boarding schools that were increasing in number through missionary work, government and 'Harambee' initiatives. The Kamunge Report (1988) initiated the

cost sharing policy and proposed a team spirit between the government, families, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector in sharing education costs (Republic of Kenya, 1988). Meanwhile, the communities contributed funds to procure teaching and learning materials plus students' personal effects. The system became strenuous to poor parents and consequently in the 1993/94 financial year, the Secondary Education Bursary Fund was introduced by the government allocating 548 Million Kenya Shillings while in the 2002/2003 financial year, 770 Million was disbursed. In the 2003/2004, 2005/2006 and 2007/2008 financial years the expenditure on education bursary was at 800 million. While the bursary fund was allocated to learners by boards of governors and the school administrations, education stakeholders lost trust in the fund's management at school level due to claims of lack of transparency and accountability.

The Constituency Development Fund Act of the 2003/2004 financial year revised the bursary system such that the money was now channeled to the Constituency Development Fund. This was done to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the bursary fund. However, the policy did not guide on the amount of bursary to allocate to each student. The decision by parliament led to political manipulation of the scheme which was the source of a number of malpractices including constituency bursary officers creating their own criteria of disbursement that favoured corrupt practices which in turn denied needy students of this worthy aid. The government stepped a notch higher by introducing FSE in 2008, the subject having been widely used as a campaign tool during the 2007 general elections when all presidential candidates in Kenya made a promise of free secondary education; Kshs. 10,265 was allocated to every student in a tuition vote head. This study looked into the inclusion

of the bursary scheme run by the county government, NGOs and CBOs so that those who deserved financial assistance would be properly identified and assisted for increased participation in secondary school education.

Muriuki (2011) recommended that the state to pay fees to all eligible students up to the end of the compulsory years and if possible also provide basic materials like text books so that parents shoulder a lesser load by only catering for meals, co-curricular activities and transport. The study further explained that the 2008 FSE policy was to address illiteracy, low quality of education, low completion rates at secondary school level and community involvement in education funding. Muriuki went on to explain about a committee that was appointed by the NARC government to oversee a 70% transition from primary to secondary in small districts. He further asserted that the Constituency Bursary Committee was charged with the responsibility of evaluating and awarding bursaries to students at the constituency level in line with the stipulated guidelines; issue and receive Form 'A' application form, vet and consider application forms based on Form 'D' criteria, verify and issue bursary cheques to schools, prepare and submit returns to Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education.

The study by Obiero (2014) highlighted the policy targets and guidelines from the years of independence. In the 1960-1970 development plan there was growing need to replace the white expatriates and African history was to practically replace European history (Kenya Education Commission Report, 1964/1965). The same study proceeded to identify historical developments in the education sector that saw improved implementation of primary education and gradual growth of the secondary

school sector. The study also observed that cost sharing policy impacted negatively on the education sector especially the completion rates. This called for a public demand for bursary scheme that could relieve the poor parents from prohibitive costs of education. The study cited Sectional Paper No. 1 of 2005 which indicated a target of 70 percent transition by 2008, a plan the study perceived as too ambitious and one that required a concerted effort to accomplish. The study asserted that the 2003/2004 financial year policy of decentralization was a move to bring development closer to the people. The Secondary Education Bursary Fund which was perceived to have been misused by school authorities was placed under the hands of the Constituency Bursary Fund and Constituency Bursary Committees to assist young Kenyans access education and be sustained in schools. This study also looked into the more aggressive policy of Free Secondary Education that was launched in 2008 to increase education participation in secondary schools by children from humble family backgrounds. These children could therefore access, continue and complete the secondary school education cycle. They would learn without incurring the high costs of boarding schools, extra costs in extra-county and national schools, the target groups being orphans, vulnerable children like girls, students from poor households and Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL) regions of Kenya.

The study by Obiero (2014) was conducted before more aggressive policy directives were issued, like the policy enacted by the government in 2016 on paying examination fees for all candidates, the 2018 policy on extra levy, and the 2018 presidential declaration of 100 percent transition which demanded that government officers in the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government and the

Ministry of Education physically peruse through villages to ensure every student who was called to join secondary school is not hiding anywhere but is in school. The study by Obiero could however not have concentrated on the policy directives beyond its time of study. The current study endeavoured to cover these latter policies for more inclusivity of ideas.

In Kenya, several studies have been able to locate criteria used from the existing government policies for instance, Onuko (2012) studied Impact of Bursary Scheme on Retention of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Gem District. The study observed that with the bursary scheme that was initiated in the 1993/1994 financial year, the funds were distributed to needy students by the boards of governors and teachers. Needy students in national schools were allocated 5% of the total bursary slots; girls from needy areas were also allocated 5%. The criteria were that the student had to be bright, from a poor background and disciplined. The same study revealed that when the bursary docket shifted from BOGs to constituency management, the bursary forms were henceforth issued by the constituency bursary committees. During this process, the committee would award bursary based on factors such as; total orphans, partial orphans, poverty indices and gender. The detailed applications had the input of the area chief, religious leaders and school principal. The general aim was to reduce subjectivity in identifying needy learners. The study by Onuko (2012) also sheds light on the bursary allocation criteria which involved having a bursary committee meeting after the vetting exercise, with two main items on the agenda namely bursary application and bursary allocation. The following factors were then used to select the beneficiaries; affirmative action, family status, discipline of the learner and academic performance. Total orphans

were to get more marks than partial orphans, girls to get more marks than boys, bright students more marks than poor performers, needy students in national schools Kshs. 15,000, provincial schools Kshs. 10,000, district schools (now sub- county) Kshs. 5,000, needy students in a boarding school an extra Kshs. 8,000. The study also stated that the policy required that the list of disbursement and minutes duly signed by chairman and secretary to be submitted to the Sub-county Education Officer for onward submission to the Principal Secretary MOE within the next two weeks.

The study by Onuko (2012) explained the detailed composition of bursary committees, with the CBC Chairman having a minimum qualification of Form Four certificate with no political affiliation; same to the treasurer who was also to be a prudent financial manager. What was not highlighted was how the elaborate procedures impacted on the needy students, and extent to which the processes enhanced participation of learners who needed financial assistance. While it was possible and easy to ascertain academic documents before appointing them into the constituency bursary committees, it was not easy to ascertain their political affiliation if the patron of the committee was the area member of parliament who could be more interested in votes from the catchment area.

Muriuki (2011) also studied CDF bursaries in Meru and found out that students' family status, affirmative action, character of student and gender with a bias towards girls featured prominently during the CBC vetting exercise (MOE Circulars, 2008). However, the study should have also addressed concerns such as who chairs the CBC meetings, who takes the minutes, who is the treasurer, what are the roles of the

area member of parliament as a patron, what were the steps taken by the CBC after allocating the funds and specifically how the bursary awards reach the schools. The additional components this study adds to the realm of related literature is the composition of CBC that included area member of parliament as patron, Sub-county Education Officer as secretary, three representatives of faith-based groups, 2 P.A. members of 2 secondary schools, one county representative, an NGO/CBO representative, teachers unions and 3 co-opted principals of secondary schools of whom one must hail from a girls school. This study also found out that some chairpersons and treasurers of the constituency bursary committee in Homa Bay County were elected from the CDF office and shared political affiliation with area MP who was the patron of the committee. The secretary was the Sub-county Director of Education but occasionally the scheme's operations would be run by ad hoc committees to perform bursary disbursement. While responding to questions on the usefulness of various CBC members, respondents cast doubt on the importance of FBOs, CBOs and NGO representatives. However, it is the researcher's opinion that these individuals' contribution in the bursary scheme was relevant as they had knowledge of needy students in the community. It is also noteworthy that the girl versus the boy criterion in bursary award exercise disadvantaged the male students and was against the spirit of giving equal opportunities that guided this study and education without barriers be it gender or geographical or socio-economic.

Identification of needy students in Homa Bay was handled in categories and strata such as learners from low income families, learners in different categories of schools for instance national, day schools, girls affected by the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. These criteria had some weaknesses highlighted in the study for example

students in national school may not be necessarily needier than their counterparts in sub-county schools. Such trends could have made very needy students to miss out on the very important financial aid. Regrettably, such criteria are still in use to date, a major concern that this study subjected to a discussion and gave recommendations. The previous studies however did not find out the reasons as to why some needy students did not make an effort to apply for bursary. They also never made an effort to find out the relevance of the different members of bursary committees. This study filled these gaps by interrogating the issues as they had the capacity to positively or negatively affect the participation of students in secondary school education and consequently determine the socio-economic development of the individual, the community and the nation at large. The study then came up with recommendations that would ensure more needy students applied for the funds and also shed more light the roles of the different members of the constituency bursary committees, something a number of stakeholders seemed not to understand.

2.2 Awareness creation mechanisms on availability of bursary funds

Studies have been carried out at international levels that give the current study a chance to compare, benchmark, assess the relevance, weaknesses, limitations and identify study gaps. For example, Gitau et al. (1993) observed that western countries always advertise the existence of bursary fund. These funds are awarded in terms of scholarships, loans and grants. The study asserted that guidelines are given on how those who need financial assistance can apply online. Sponsorship opportunities are communicated through the internet. According to the study, awareness on how to go about these applications is fully created over the internet and other media channels. The study observed that awareness depends on how frequently parents and their

children access the internet. It informs that bursaries offered at higher education levels only target professionals or people with careers. However, this method of identification of beneficiaries may carry the risk of leaving out a significant section of the state's population. It is not clear what steps are being taken to ensure a learner participates in a compulsory education programme and also how those who do not proceed to colleges and universities are assisted to proceed in life.

A study by Gitau et al. (1993) observed that in Western countries, information inviting bursary applications were received online; applicants filled the forms and waited for results. There could be learners who missed out due to failure to access the internet. This would have implied that bursary award was a selective exercise that favoured only the population that was conscious of digital issues. This was a gap for there was limited information on where those who fail to access information and those who fail to proceed to university go to.

West (1997) maintained that countries like the United Kingdom, Sweden and Bangladesh were overstretched with pupils in schools due to the voucher system. This study wished to establish the dissemination and awareness mechanisms used to enable this success. The study by West (1997) on tuition voucher system needed to come up with dissemination mechanisms used in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Bangladesh to inform education stakeholders of the existence of funds. Since these are issues of other countries, the gap is a pointer to the present research that awareness mechanisms should be clarified through research in order to facilitate education participation by the target group of students.

While a study by Opon (2007) mentioned a United Kingdom bursary fund that was returned to the treasury in millions of shillings because it was not claimed by deserving beneficiaries, the perplexing question was whether parents and their children were aware of such a fund. This was a significant gap that necessitated pursuit of whether adequate awareness on bursary fund existence had been created. The weakness detected in the study was probably because parents and children were not aware of the existence of the fund. Homa Bay County had indications that it had a financially needy population and there was the possibility that no single cent of the bursary money should be returned to the Kenyan treasury while learner participation is still wanting. The study revealed a series of dissemination techniques used by stakeholders to pass information on bursary such as school notice boards, school assembly, bulk sms, churches, funerals chiefs' camps and other media.

The Davidson fellows of the Davidson Institute in Nevada place application forms online and encourage those in need of bursaries to apply. What was not clear was whether the awareness system captured the attention of all relevant stakeholders like parents and learners. UNESCO (2009) argued that 40% of young adults in Sub-Saharan Africa were illiterate. The parents who were obliged to allow children to attend school were not aware of the accrued benefits of education. However, the study could have gone ahead to find out the effect illiteracy of the parents had on their attitude towards education. This is a gap this study strived to address.

A study conducted by Onuko (2012) informed of a bursary scheme called Edusave in the United Kingdom whereby application forms were relayed through the internet and the filled forms collected and submitted to the constituencies. The same study

informed of the Malawian system of bursary that involved input of head teachers in identifying the needy students and making remarks about them. The Ministry of Education then organized and remitted cheques every academic year. However, in Kenya, there was need to get more information on whether the amount of money remitted was adequate, and whether or not it fulfilled the purpose and objective of financial intervention. This was a gap that needed further attention as 76.4% of the population indicated that the bursary awarded was inadequate.

The study by Muriuki (2011) asserted that the main source of bursary funds in Kenya was the national government which had created adequate awareness about the existence of the bursary funds. The national government prepared national budgets and allocation of bursary fund calculated depending on needs assessment. According to the study, the government has issued clear guidelines on management, disbursement and utilization of bursary fund to all stakeholders. The study also revealed that there was no adequate information over the funds existence and that the students confessed they did not know how to fill the forms or apply for the fund. It identified the negative attitude of the community towards education of the girls whereby 76.7 percent of girls were discouraged from taking up education opportunities. The study displayed sharp contrasts between the ideal situation presented by policy guidelines on bursaries and the study findings that showed that students were not benefitting adequately through the bursary docket. However, the study could have gone ahead to elaborate whether the government acquired accurate data and reliable details on the learners who truly deserved bursary assistance. This is a gap to be looked into by this study in respect to the study site.

A study by Gitau et al. (1993) observed that in European countries, advertisement was done online to access loans, scholarships, grants and bursaries. The bursaries targeted students in higher learning institutions and professional groups. It was not clear if the state-sponsored basic learning had been made compulsory for all children. A gap presented itself on what happened if parents and children do not frequent the internet. This could have given room for needy children to miss out of the available financial assistance.

UNESCO (1999) confirmed that 40% of young adults in Sub-Saharan Africa are illiterate and therefore cannot propel education of their children. The causes of ignorance, illiteracy and indifference about education were however not captured. There was need to suggest possible remedies that could provide positive outcomes towards education participation of students. The exclusion of improved media technology in communication and presenting data will also be discussed to improve the gap in creating awareness.

This theme on awareness mechanisms exhibited several weaknesses and gaps. A study by West (1997) applauded the tuition voucher system for its large impact in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Bangladesh among other countries. However, additional information on how the dissemination occurs that has led to the big success in the voucher system ought to have come out very distinctly. Of more concern was the issue of public funds returned to the United Kingdom treasury because they were unclaimed even though there were needy students who deserved bursary. This was because parents and their children were not aware (Opon, 2007).

The researcher sought clarity on the sensitization procedures through interaction with respondents in the current study site.

2.3 Impacts of bursary scheme on participation of learners from poor households

Unterhalter & Brighouse (2007) and Subrahmanian (2005) highlighted that European and American states mostly sponsor their basic education. The learners, especially those in private schools had the advantage of several other financing programmes like cash transfers, tuition vouchers, scholarships, loans and bursaries at the disposal of those who needed assistance even after basic education is completed. A study by Gitau et al. (1993) also noted that the national governments in western countries, especially in the United Kingdom, enabled a great number of learners to participate in education programmes. The study suggested to the state governments to provide education opportunities for all children irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. Bursaries in Scotland involved direct government funding up to when a student started the first degree. Bursaries in Europe were not difficult to get and bursary applications were done online.

A study by Olendo (2017) on influence of Constituency Development Fund on Access, Equity and Quality of Secondary Education in Public Schools in Kisumu County, Kenya concluded that CDF had a slight influence on access and quality of secondary education and recommended that the government should allocate more funds towards bursary for needy students. Republic of Kenya (2002) revealed information as was observed by the controller of budgets in the 2001/2002 financial year that the MOE officials misappropriated the bursary fund that had been placed in

the budget; that 25% apportioned to ASAL areas, 5% to the needy in national schools and 10% to the needy in other parts of the country. The same study revealed that the bursary docket was under attack both at the ministry level by corrupt officers who apportioned the fund to their affiliates and relatives' children and transparency was questionable when bursary was administered at school level; all at the disadvantage of those who deserved assistance to learn. The study informs of the government's move to decentralize administration of community projects to constituencies of Kenya by 2003, a move that placed the bursary docket into direct management of Constituency Bursary Committees.

Kirigo (2008) observed that schools and CBCs followed laid down procedures and 42 percent of students who applied received bursary awards and 60 percent of them were girls. The study also observed that school bursaries had no impact on retention. 53 percent of those who received the slots were always being sent home for fee because what was given was inadequate and could not sustain the students' financial needs. A study by Ngware et al. (2006) on access to Secondary Education in Kenya discredited the persistent low participation rates by low income households. It assesses the bursary scheme as having insignificant impact on learner participation and adds that the fund was inconsistent and unreliable. The result was continued low participation rates by learners from low income homes. The studies showed that bursaries had little impact in ensuring that deserving students benefited from the scheme; the award was little and could neither support nor sustain a programme. Unfortunately, the government intended purposes for bursary scheme generated ironical impacts, a situation this research study considered inappropriate.

Upgrading studies on bursaries and other government subsidies was necessary because the previous literatures focused on issues of bursaries during the past decades. The free secondary education that was launched in 2008 was a government subsidy grant which assisted all students in the schools in Kenya irrespective of socio-economic background. This was to ensure equity in education and opportunity for all students. It was also to promote access, retention and completion of secondary education. Together with the constituency and county bursaries, the free secondary education was aimed at enabling one hundred percent transition from primary to secondary schools and proper participation of learners in educational activities. The free secondary education grant was launched in January 2008 so that learners would attain equal educational opportunities which would eventually elevate their socio-economic standards and lead to development of their community and the nation.

Apart from the related studies revealing the benefits of bursaries and other education financing interventions in assisting vulnerable students, they have also pointed out a series of shortfalls in bursary scheme in Kenya. These shortfalls include inadequate funding, inefficiency of fund managers, political patronage which in turn leads to corrupt practices like having ghost beneficiaries, clanism and nepotism which are unfair practices that deny thousands of needy students the chance to benefit (Ngware, 2006, Njeru & Orodho, 2003). However, this study not only captured the positive results of the secondary school bursary scheme like increased access, retention and completion of secondary education by students but also revealed additional benefits of the scheme that included bursary money not being refunded and students don't have to do part-time work to pay for their school fees.

There was a glaring lack of institutional checks and balances over the bursary scheme management. The government seems to lack machinery at the grassroots to monitor how funds are being used and whether the laid down regulations are being followed. The fact that it was a challenge getting all the class eight graduands into form one was an indicator that it was not only financial subsidies that kept some students out of school; there were other factors that influenced the participation rates of students in Homa Bay County. This study endeavoured to fill the gap identified in the previous literature by giving appropriate recommendations on effective implementation of the bursary scheme to enable poor students have improved capacities, skills and knowledge which would eventually lead them to enhanced socio-economic mobility.

2.4 Fairness in distribution of bursary awards

Inequalities in the disbursement of bursary funds were expressed by Psacharopoulos & Woodhall (1985). In their research on education for development, an analysis for investment choices, they concluded that there was unfair distribution of bursaries to recipients. Unfairness was also observed in the Zawadi Africa scheme which was meant to fund education of gifted girls from low economic backgrounds in Kenya, Uganda, Ghana and South Africa. It mainly focused on bright needy learners. The National Finance Aid in South Africa targeted poor students but with a condition that they had to perform well academically.

Odebero et al. (2007) observed a lot of inequalities and fairness in allocation of bursary between 1999 and 2002 in Busia District. Their key findings included students from poor households did not meet the levels of discipline and high

academic performance criteria for them to be awarded bursaries. These students were therefore disadvantaged as they were not captured in the list of needy and bursary deserving cases. One would have argued that it was not necessary to spend a lot of money on academically weak students who would not pass examinations and hence become liabilities to the state. However, had this category of students who were left out been supported financially, they would do their households, community and nation proud. The approach of not awarding bursaries based on unfair criteria such as academic performance but instead focusing on the extent of need of the students would validate the government's effort to ensure equal participation for all students in educational activities.

Makali (2015), in his study on Benefit Incidence Analysis of Constituency Development Fund Spending on Education Bursaries in Makueni County, Kenya found out that distribution of CDF education bursaries depended a lot on the nature of engagement of the head of the household. He also highlighted inconsistency in bursary awards to different students. The study recommended that the government as a matter of urgency addresses poor targeting of CDF bursaries through effective profiling of needy students to avoid unfairness in award of bursaries.

Just as school heads and BOGs were not trusted with SEBF, the issue of chiefs and head teachers playing ceremonial rubberstamps, without being honest on the extent of need of the bursary applicants had been raised when assessing the impacts of the scheme. Also noted with concern was the fact that a principal who receives a big cheque for students' bursary was viewed by parents as good and hardworking while behind the scenes there could be a political aspirant pushing the committee so that a

big cheque is apportioned to a specific school. This would be done to impress the parents of the students who are also voters in the locality, especially in the case of day schools, but would be unfair to the genuinely needy students in other schools. The study by Muriuki (2011) found out that the required award criteria were not followed. The system unfairly left out poor households and instead opened room for more inefficiency.

Schemes like Zawadi Africa and The National Finance Aid in South Africa were unfair to the needy but poorly performing students by mainly focusing on academic performance and using it to eliminate some applicants. This is a gap this study endeavoured to address by suggesting appropriate recommendations that would make the poor and deserving students to benefit from such financial aid. This would help ensure that there is fairness in the bursary award process.

2.5 Challenges facing education bursary schemes

Zawadi Africa is a scheme which has benefitted a few people in the African region. The students targeted were the girls who were affected by the prevalence of HIV and Aids and their lives were hindered by difficult challenges and therefore they were given opportunity for socio-economic empowerment. While the western countries offer education opportunity to students as a state routine, the bursaries in Sub-Saharan Africa tend to target only a specific small percentage of students, contributing to low participation of students in education programmes, a situation that needed the attention of stakeholders. This study however revealed a selection procedure which included consideration of school category (boarding or day), family status (orphans or having both parents), gender and discipline of students. In

Kenya, there had been a lot of public grumbling over the procedures followed to award bursary funds which always led to a large population of disappointed students. Maisory (2006) noted that elaborate signing protocols were involved in the application process.

Oketch et al. (2020), in their study on Equitable Allocation and Distribution of Education Bursary Fund in Siaya County, Kenya, established that educational bursary fund benefits majority of the needy students. However, there was inequitable distribution of the bursary fund due to political influence. The study recommends allocation of more funds to reach all needy cases and that it should be more equitably distributed.

Njeru & Orodho (2003) revealed some negative impacts of the government-initiated bursary scheme in Kenya. They observed that the bursaries meant for the needy Kenyan children are handicapped by inadequacies and inefficiencies that lead to a number of ghost beneficiaries. They observed that those students who did not deserve financial assistance were awarded and there was political patronage in the bursary scheme which resulted into political manipulation over bursary practices. These were perceived as negative influences that could have made needy students not to benefit from the scheme resulting into low learner's participation rates. Njeru & Orodho (2003) also raised the following issues; only a few genuine students were being awarded bursaries, there was inclusion of ghost students in the awards scheme, multiple awards were given to those who did not deserve bursaries, and inadequate amounts of bursary were awarded to students. However, studies carried out within that period may have skipped the increased dynamic involvement of the

government in pursuing access, retention and participation of learners to the extents of decentralizing the bursary systems into constituency development plans. The study by Njeru & Orodho (2003) was done before the introduction of FSE subsidy grant which has since then seen massive government expenditure in education with improved disbursement packages sent to schools. Therefore, the above studies could not essentially capture the later improvements done by the government in funding through constituencies, free secondary education and county bursaries.

Mbayachi (2015), in her study of factors influencing disbursement of constituency bursary funds to students in public secondary schools in Vihiga Sub-county, Kenya, found out that many needy students in public secondary schools had not benefitted from the bursary disbursement process while several undeserving students benefitted from the scheme, there was high political influence in the bursary disbursement process, the public information provided was not delivered timely to needy students for applications to be made and application procedures were not clear to many students. The study recommended that the bursary should increase bursary funds allocation to needy students, politicians should not preside over CBF committees, the public should be provided with full and clear information on bursary using and that application procedures should be availed to applicants and that those who cheat and consequently get awarded should pay hefty fines as a deterrent.

Orera (2011), in his study on Challenges in the Disbursement of Constituency Bursary Fund to Public Secondary School Students in Bobasi Constituency, Kenya concluded that the criteria of determining the genuinely needy students had limitations on governance, efficiency, effectiveness and consistence in support. The

fund was not equitably awarded among boys and girls and among schools. There was inadequate funding from the government that could not meet the demands of the high number of needy applicants, political interference, delays by the government to disburse these funds which inconvenienced many needy students and ineffective mechanisms of addressing bursary related complaints. The study recommended an increase in the amount of funds allocated to bursary if the fund is to have any impact on the applicants, establishment of a management framework devoid of political manipulation and criteria for awarding bursary should emphasize on the school teachers' assessment of continuing students' need for financial support.

The above studies revealed unfair selection procedures which included consideration of school category (boarding or day), family status (orphans or having both parents), gender and discipline of students. There was inequitable distribution of the bursary fund due to political influence. However, there are many challenges which were believed to be plaguing the scheme but were not captured by the above studies. This study strived to fill that gap by exhaustively pursuing the challenges facing the scheme and suggesting the appropriate recommendations directed to specific stakeholders in the education bursary scheme so that poor students could be helped to realize their dream of completing their secondary education and experience socio-economic development at individual, communal and national levels.

2.6 Summary of literature review

Various related studies observed that education financing is done in different parts of the globe through scholarships, loans and bursaries which have assisted the needy students. In Kenya, related studies mainly focused on the unmet financial needs of

students from poor households. The studies revealed that quality of services rendered by bursary officials was negatively affected due to inadequate policy guidelines, lack of authentic awareness mechanisms, flawed criteria of disbursement of funds, all these resulting into small impact of the fund on secondary education participation by learners from poor households. It was also revealed that clear supervision and monitoring mechanisms over the fund were not put in place by the policy makers. Other related literature pointed out shortfalls like obscure and non-emphatic disbursement procedures, inadequate data on the needy students, unfairness to needy students caused by lack of transparency and failure to meet the government objectives of financially assisting the students from poor families.

Several gaps were identified in the previous studies. The previous studies concentrated on the unmet needs of the target group, students from poor backgrounds. Globally, several financing options had been employed including tuition vouchers, direct government funding, cash transfers, scholarships and bursaries. A series of issues emerged in the case of Kenya that affect the relationship between bursary funding and students' participation such as unfair distribution of bursary to students, flouted disbursement criteria and ineffectiveness in practices that should have helped many students benefit from the bursary scheme. In all these studies, various gaps in knowledge emerged, some which were filled by this research while some were not. The study gaps included need for clarity on whether the bursary funding information got through the internet would reach every needy student or household, a gap on what is to be done with academically weak students who cannot get bursaries like in the case of Zawadi Africa which only favours bright

students, lack of a proper database having information on needy students, what to do with learners who perform poorly but are talented, gaps in the criteria of choosing needy students.

The previous studies concentrated on the historical development of bursary scheme like in the 1990s to the period of their studies. There was overemphasis on aspects such as inadequate bursary awards and yet there were progressive attempts by the Kenyan government to provide financial cushions to the needy students as well as remove the fee burden from parents through provision of textbooks, examination fees and funds for infrastructure for schools. There were several other financing scheme that existed during the periods of these related studies and after the 2010 constitutional amendment that targeted the same financially vulnerable groups were in place. This study looked into these gaps by identifying more bursary types and financing options at the disposal of vulnerable groups of students in Homa Bay County and Kenya at large. The present studies not only strived to establish related factors between bursary scheme and student participation in educational affairs but also highlighted additional relevant factors that influence the interactions between the scheme and learners benefitting and participating.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the research procedures and techniques that were used in the study. It explains the research design, study location, target population, sampling techniques and size, data collection instruments and data collection techniques, pre-testing of research instruments and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design and Study Locale

3.1.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used to investigate the influence secondary school bursary scheme had on participation of learners from poor households in Homa Bay County. The rationale of the design included it being a method of collecting data through interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals hence making it suitable for extensive research. This type of survey is concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and reporting conditions that exist. It also gives the study the opportunity to get accurate views or responses to issues as well as test social relationships at both individuals and group levels (Kothari, 1985). (Kerlinger, 1973) argued that this survey method is widely used to obtain data that is useful in evaluating present practices and providing basics for decisions.

The survey method gave space for questions to be asked directly using interviews and for things that could not be observed empirically. The design helped in maintaining high level of confidentiality and also enables faster collection of data. It was used to elicit a wide range of information about the subject of study. The design

was suitable for the study as it enabled the researcher to collect and analyze data on present practices on bursary scheme from a wide range of respondents such as school principals, teachers and constituency bursary committee officials. This was done in order to describe the existing situations in Homa Bay County in relation to the impact bursary scheme had on participation in educational activities by students hailing from poor households. Njeru & Orodho (2003) viewed the design as a means to measure character of a large population. The design suited the study due to its capacity to elicit a large amount of information about the bursary scheme from 900 respondents. It helps maintain a level of confidentiality over issues and facilitate faster data collection in both qualitative and quantitative measures.

Furthermore, Kerlinger (1973) noted that the survey design is able to assist the researcher to effectively collect and analyze data on the present practices in relation to bursary scheme from a wide range of respondents. In this study, school principals, teachers, students, parents and bursary committees and education officers revealed their opinions, beliefs, attitudes and knowledge concerning certain phenomena. Using the design the researcher was able to describe, record, analyze and report conditions related to secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County.

3.1.2 Variables of the study

The independent variable of the study was the secondary school bursary scheme. Its operations would be steered by criteria that the bursary committee would use to identify needy learners and allocate funds, information to stakeholders over the existence of the scheme and procedures of allocating bursaries to beneficiaries.

The dependent variable was needy students participating in educational activities like school attendance, class attendance, engagement in curricula activities which include teaching and learning, subject contests and doing of continuous assessment tests and national examinations. It also involved participating in sports, games activities, drama, music and debate. The student could then use academic and co-curricula certificates for socio-economic mobility in the society.

The interaction between the independent and dependent variable was influenced by intervening variables. For instance, if the policies steering the scheme's operations are clear and guidelines adhered to, and follow-ups made to ensure efficiency of the scheme, then the bursary fund administrator would follow guidelines and needy students would benefit from the scheme. If education stakeholders received timely information on bursary scheme, students would apply for bursaries and they would get the awards if they qualify them in a fair process. In case the right criteria were used to select the beneficiaries, then those who are needy would benefit. If amounts given are adequate, there is timely disbursement of bursary and the award sustained to ensure learner participation and completion of the secondary education programme, then participation rates will be enhanced and the government's purpose to cushion the needy students will succeed. The study revealed that many students had been assisted and benefitted from bursaries, the subsidized funding had reduced fee load on parents, there was improved student attendance in Homa Bay County, students had been motivated to participate in school activities and school meals were also catered for. This validated the importance of bursary scheme.

Regrettably, shortfalls had been realized in the secondary school bursary scheme. There had been non-emphatic guidelines which had not been monitored and as such the good intentions of the scheme became outweighed by unprofessionalism and unethical bursary management practices by the constituency bursary committees. Political manipulation had thrived and in turn gave rise to nepotism, clanism, favouritism and corruption. These factors eventually denied many needy students a chance to benefit from the scheme. This study recommended ways in which the weak points could be corrected so that participation of needy students on educational activities could be improved.

3.1.3 Study Locale

Homa Bay County is located in Nyanza region of Western Kenya (see Appendix VIII, Location of Rachuonyo North Subcounty in Homa Bay County). It was chosen out of other counties because a combination of geographical and prevailing health situation in the county that had impoverished the population and posed a threat to effective participation of learners in secondary school educational activities. During heavy rains, the Sondu-Miriu and Awach rivers overflowed and burst their banks; their overflow filled Lake Victoria and led to flooding. A situation of poverty arose as no proper economic activity could be done in such situations of disaster. According to the Homa Bay County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017, one of the major problems facing rural development in Homa Bay County was drought. The county faced frequent drought, high poverty levels and low soil fertility. Relief food and other provisions were sent to these regions and distributed annually by the Kenyan government depicting the poverty and hardship situations in the region. During the dry seasons, some small scale fishing occurred mainly for subsistence

purposes. The sand deposited during the rains was harvested and sold for subsistence purposes but the harvesters, who were mainly harvesting sand in small scale, only waited for occasional sand buyers to emerge from the neighbouring county of Kisii, making this an unreliable economic activity. During the dry seasons, people in the study site suffered poverty and difficulty in raising school fees and other provisions for the children.

Furthermore, for over 20 years that preceded the study, Homa Bay remained a leading county in Kenya in cases of HIV and AIDS infection. HIV Estimates Report Kenya 2018 by the National AIDS Control Council revealed a highly skewed distribution of adults who had HIV in Kenya in 2017 whereby only eight counties contributed to more than 50% of the people living with HIV with Nairobi being at the top of the list with 182,856 victims followed by Homa Bay with 128,199 victims, Kisumu (112,862), Siaya (113,605), Migori (79,146), Kiambu (56,622), Kakamega (48,752) and Mombasa (38,548). The situation in Homa Bay had worsened leaving trails of death, orphans and sickly population of people who would be economically productive, the end result being lack of funds and inability to properly cater for educational needs of the rising number of secondary school students. There was therefore need to financially assist the vulnerable students in the county through bursary scheme.

3.2 Target population

Target population refers to the entire group of individuals for whom a researcher is interested in generalizing the conclusions of a study. The research study targeted 40 public schools. The target population included 4,450 students, 4300 parents, 200

teachers, 10 CBC members and 40 school principals, totaling to 9,000 people. The school principals were targeted as they were the custodians of documentations and detailed records on students' background and identities. They were the ones who facilitated distribution of bursary forms to students, explained the level of the learners' financial needs and they appended their signatures on the forms and receive the cheques for the awardees. Accurate information on students was at their disposal as they knew the students and parents' financial situation, as well as the ones in dire need of financial assistance. The parents were targeted because they were the ones who experienced the consequences and pain of fee payment and so the availability of bursaries would greatly ease their financial burden. Their responses closely interrelated with those of students. The CBCs were the ones who analyzed and vetted the level of students' needs then awarded the bursaries. They provided clarity on how bursaries are attained.

3.3 Sampling techniques and sample size

Sampling is a process of selecting a subset of cases from which to draw conclusion about an entire set (Orodho, 2005). This section describes the size of the sample and techniques that were used to select the sample.

Table 3.1: Sampling frame

Category of respondents	Sample Size
Students	640
Teachers	80
Principals	16
Parents	160
CBC members	4
Total no of respondents	900

Source: Fieldwork (2021)

3.3.1 Sample size

Sample size is a group of subjects selected from the general population and is considered representative of the true population for the specific study. The ever increasing need for a representative statistical sample in research has created the demand for an effective method of determining sample size. Using the Andrew Fisher's Formula as indicated by Kibuacha (2021), a sample size of about 385 will give you a sufficient sample size to draw assumptions of nearly any population size at the 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error.

Table 3.2 Z-scores for most of the interval levels

Confidence level	z-score
80%	1.28
85%	1.44
90%	1.65
95%	1.96
99%	2.58

Source: Kibuacha (2021)

Andrew Fisher's Formula

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{(\text{Z-score})^2 \times \text{StdDev} \times (1 - \text{StdDev})}{(\text{Confidence interval})^2} \quad \text{Kibuacha (2021)}$$

To determine the sample size, the researcher chose to work with a confidence level of 95%, a standard deviation of 0.5 and a confidence interval (margin of error) of $\pm 5\%$.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5(0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size} &= \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} \\ &= 384.16 \end{aligned}$$

The ideal sample size was found out to be 385.

From the results above, the target population of this study which was 9,000 would require a sample size of at least 385. Being that larger samples yield smaller margins of error and are more representative, the researcher's choice of 900 key informants, which is 10% of the target population, was adequately representative. The study therefore considered 16 schools to arrive at a sample size of 640 students, 16 school principals, 80 school teachers, 160 parents and 4 CBC members to arrive at 900 respondents as illustrated in Table 3.1.

3.3.2 Sampling Techniques

The specific sample techniques that were used in the study were purposive sampling, simple random sampling and systematic sampling. Using purposive sampling, the researcher consciously decides on whom to include in the sample. He or she consciously and deliberately selects a sample based on knowledge about the study locale and the population in the area. Simple random sampling gives an even chance and likelihood of being selected. It is a sampling technique which is easier to use and gives accurate representation. Systematic sampling involves random sampling of members from a larger population but with a fixed periodic interval for example, picking every three items in a population. It is simple and more straightforward and was the most suitable method for the large study site.

Selection of schools

A total of 16 schools were selected for the research study using simple random sampling in order to gather data on the practices involved in the administration of the secondary school bursary scheme and how it influenced participation of students from poor households in educational activities. Purposive sampling was also used to select the secondary schools to include girls, boys and mixed schools. Consideration of school sponsorship was done for inclusivity and getting a rich blend of varied ideas, opinions and interests.

Selection of key informants

Key informants for the study included all groups of people that were involved in one way or another involved in the secondary education bursary scheme for instance the constituency bursary committee members, school principals, teachers, students and parents. The wide range of informants provided relevant data on the influence the bursary scheme had on participation of students from poor households in educational activities.

i. The Students

Students were key informants as they were the ones who needed the bursaries so that they participate effectively in educational activities and provided a primary source of information. They provided factual information on their experience in the application and award of bursaries. Purposive sampling was used to arrive at 10 Form Two students, 10 Form Three students and 20 Form Four Students per school resulting into a total of 640 students. Form Ones were left out because they did not have much experience on the bursary system while more Form Fours were selected because they had more experience in the bursary award process. The students were

the main target group as they were the ones who benefitted from the bursary; all the other respondents were involved in the process for the benefit of the students.

ii. The Teachers

Teachers were selected because they got first hand information about students through class registers, guidance and counseling sessions and interaction with parents during class meetings and education days in schools. Purposive sampling was used to select 5 teachers per school based on their seniority and capacity to provide data on students' socio-economic background, class attendance and establish each learner's degree of financial need.

iii. The Principals

Systematic sampling was also applied to select school principals whose schools were included in the study sample. The school principals were the custodians of students' documents and detailed records on background information to the learners. They facilitated distribution of bursary forms to students, explained the students' level of financial need to the constituency bursary committees and appended their signatures on bursary application forms. The principal was the one who received bursary cheques on behalf of awardees, received the money as income to the school after which he or she issued receipt to every bursary beneficiary and one block-receipt to the CDF. He or she then placed all details of received money in the vote head for bursaries. They were to give accurate information to the research through interviews and documented records.

iv. The parents

The parents are the ones who experienced the burden of payment of fee and other school expenditure and so the availability of bursary fund for their children was a sweet relief from the financial burden. The researcher, with the help of the

principals, used purposive sampling to select parents who are pro-active in school activities for the focused group discussions.

v. The constituency bursary committee members

The CBC members were selected through simple random sampling. This group of informants issued bursary application forms at the constituency development fund offices. These forms were filled and returned to the offices. The CBC then scheduled a meeting to vet the applications then awarded bursary to those who qualified. They wrote a cheque for the sum of money awarded to students in each school accompanied with a list of all the awarded students.

3.4 Research instruments

The study employed two types of data collection tools namely: questionnaires and interview schedules. Two data collection methods, focused group discussions (FGD) and document analysis, were also used. For all the data collection points for instance schools and the constituency bursary offices, there was an introductory letter showing the importance of the respondents' contribution to the study and an assurance that the information would be handled ethically (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

3.4.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a set of written questions devised for purposes of survey or study. Questionnaires were applied on students so as to elicit information from a large number of respondents. According to Kiess & Bloomquist (1985) questionnaires are easy to administer and are suitable for a large group of respondents. The researcher was able to acquire a large amount of information within a short span of time. Some questions were open-ended while some were closed-ended. The questions were

organized into sections, some intended to extract specific information on demographic character of respondents while some were objective-based questions on bursary application procedure and criteria, awareness creation mechanisms, benefits to needy learners, fairness in distribution of bursary awards and challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County. The instrument was mainly used to collect quantitative data, but open-ended questions were also used to collect qualitative data.

3.4.2 Interview schedules

An interview schedule is a list of structured questions that has been prepared to guide the researcher in collecting information on specific issues. This instrument was used to gather data on bursary which included disbursement criteria, awareness creation, benefits, fairness in the distribution of the awards and challenges the scheme faces in Homa Bay County. The respondents targeted were school principals, constituency bursary committee officials and teachers. Interview schedules supplemented information obtained using other data collection tools like questionnaires and data collection methods like focused group discussions and document analysis. During interviews, probing was a technique that was used to generate additional information and in-depth data not common in other instruments. More information was captured through explanation on various issues by respondents. Kiess & Bloomquist (1985) stated that more information can be got through probing during interview.

Interview schedules were mainly used to collect qualitative data. They enabled the researcher to gather the informants' thoughts, values, perceptions, prejudices and

dislikes on the extent to which bursary scheme influences learner participation in secondary schools in Homa Bay County. Respondents such as school principals also gave additional information on previous trends in bursary funding as they had experienced during their leadership in the schools. This type of interview was more flexible and generated more information for the researcher. Through this method, professionals and administrators like school principals gave information on bursary financing. Information was also extracted about unique cases such as child-led families and families led by very old grandparents and even abandoned children. Such emerging cases were noted separately to provide a rich blend during data analysis.

3.4.3 Focused Group Discussions (FGD)

This is a qualitative data collection method where respondents from similar backgrounds or experience are asked questions directly on a specific topic of interest. The researcher used this method to get the parents' perception, beliefs, opinions and ideas on the bursary scheme. The method was used to gather information on students' participation in secondary school from parents. Such information included bursary application procedures, financial capacities of parents and their comments on bursary award process. The researcher organized with the principles to invite the parents and guardians on specific days for the focused group discussions. The respondents were mostly parents or guardians from the schools' catchment areas. Putting respondents in groups gave them a sense of freedom and security in a relaxed atmosphere as suggested by Wellington (2000). This method led to a more participatory and interactive session that generated substantial pieces of information. Focused group discussions provided a lot more valuable insights

than other collection methods like Document Analysis. It enabled the parents to express their collective opinions, perceptions, likes and dislikes in regard to bursary scheme and its impacts on participation of their children in secondary education.

3.4.4 Document analysis

Document analysis was used to collect qualitative data and involved interpretation of documents by the researcher to give voice and meaning to the assessment topic. The researcher analyzed copies of the bursary cheques released to the schools by the NG-CDF, the letters written to the NG-CDF by the schools acknowledging receipt of the cheques, receipts written by schools for the received cheques and lists of bursary beneficiaries so as to derive information on bursary scheme practices. Document analysis complemented information gathered through focused group discussions and instruments like interview schedules and questionnaires. Document analysis is considered a reliable documented source of information. Students' attendance registers provided information on learners' school and class attendance, students' drop-out or extended absenteeism. Records of students who applied for bursary funds and records of awarded learners were analyzed as they provided information on the impact of bursary fund on participation of students in secondary education in Homa Bay County. Information on amount of money allocated each student was analyzed as it informed on adequacy or inadequacy of bursary.

3.5 Piloting of the study

A pilot study is a mini version of the full-scale study. It pretests a particular research instrument like the questionnaire or interview schedule. It is a crucial element of a good study design and is used to guide the methodology. The researcher used

convenient sampling to settle on the pilot study school since the school was near the road and the most easily accessible of the schools in the sample. The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire in a mixed school in the study locale in order to ascertain the reliability and validity of the instrument. The same questions were given to the same group of students twice, the second test a week after the first one. This assisted the researcher to do corrections on any type of ambiguities in the questionnaire. The instrument was piloted in one of the secondary schools within Homa Bay County. The school where the pilot study was carried out was not included in the study sample. The questionnaire was exclusively applied because the other instrument and data collection method, interviews and focused group discussions, were verbal instruments which could change content and therefore were not supposed to be piloted. It would have been equally difficult to pilot document analysis since it is a tool that does not seek people's opinions.

The pilot study was used as a basis to establish the reliability and validity of the instrument. Since the pilot study was a rehearsal in preparation for the actual study, the researcher was able to detect small challenges the actual study would encounter for example, the abbreviation CBC which stands for Constituency Bursary Committee was misinterpreted by a few individuals as Competency Based Curriculum. The researcher therefore polished the research questions to ensure that every term used was clear to the respondents. The pilot study also helped to determine the feasibility of the study so that time and resources were not wasted.

3.5.1 Reliability of the instrument

Reliability is the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Orodho (2005) described reliability as the degree to which a measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials. In the current study, test-retest technique was used to assess reliability of the research instrument. It involved administering the instrument twice to the same group of respondents; the second test was administered to the same students after a lapse of one week. Two tests were given using similar questionnaires to the same group of students, at an interval of one week. Results for the two tests were correlated to establish reliability and validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire that was going to be used for the sample population. The reliability test adopted was Pearson Correlation Coefficient which is calculated as shown below.

$$r = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where

$\sum X^2$ = the sum of scores in X distribution

$\sum X^2$ = the sum of the squared scores in X distribution

$\sum XY$ = the sum of the product of paired X and Y scores

N = The number of paired X and Y scores

r = Coefficient of reliability (Best & Khan, 2006)

A result of between ± 0.7 to ± 1.0 is considered a strong correlation, ± 0.3 to ± 0.7 is considered a moderate correlation while 0 to ± 0.3 is considered a weak correlation.

In a case where a coefficient of 0.5 or more is attained, the instrument was considered reliable enough for adoption for the research. The test gave the value

$r=0.98$, suggesting a strong positive correlation which meant the instrument was well designed.

3.5.2 Validity of the instrument

According to Mbweza (2006) validity represents the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. A research instrument is valid when the data collected through it accurately represents the respondents' opinions (Amin, 2005). Validity of the research instruments for the current study was ascertained by conducting a pilot study. This ensured that instructions were clear and all possible responses were captured. Content validity of a measuring instrument is the extent to which it provides adequate coverage of the investigative questions that guides the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In order to improve the quality of the instruments, content validity was carried out whereby the researcher together with university supervisors and lecturers in the Department of Education Foundations checked every question in the questionnaire to ensure that they addressed the research objectives. The questionnaire employed in this study was validated through content validity in which the researcher and other professionals judged the content as suggested by Gay (1981).

3.6 Data collection procedure

The field work was carried out using a systematic procedure to enable the collection of data within the available time frame. The steps involved were as follows:

- The University gave the researcher the permission to proceed to the Ministry of Education for Authorization.

- A research permit was sought from MOEST to allow the researcher access the field of study.
- The County Director of Education and the County Commissioner of Homa Bay County were requested and gave the researcher an authority letter that was used to get permission to conduct research from the school principals and constituency bursary offices.
- A literature search was done by the researcher to gain familiarization with fieldwork activities before carrying out data collection.
- The research instruments were prepared.
- The instruments were reviewed by the researcher's fellow peers to correct sections that were likely to cause problems.
- The research instruments were piloted in Rachuonyo North Sub-county for purposes of pointing out any ambiguities and improperly constructed questions.
- The results of the two tests were correlated to ascertain the reliability of the instruments and necessary corrections done on it.
- Interviewing of the constituency bursary committee respondents was done in the CDF premises while the principals were interviewed in their offices. The principals organized special rooms in their schools for interviewing of the students and the teachers. The researcher also requested some of the principals to avail bursary records and documents which were used in data analysis.
- When requesting for information, the researcher ensured the respondents appreciated the relevance of the study. The researcher ensured the respondents clearly understood the type of information needed and the

purpose it would serve. The participants were assured of confidentiality of the collected information and that it would be used for research purposes only. Names of respondents were excluded from the research instruments since the exercise deserved anonymity of respondents and confidentiality. The respondents were also informed of the possible impacts the study would have on them.

- The fieldwork for the research study took a period of six months. Collection of qualitative and quantitative data went on simultaneously with some of the qualitative data posting gaps to be filled during the process.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is a systematic search and arrangement of field findings in readiness for presentation (Bogdam & Bilken, 1992). Activities involved at this stage are: organizing data, breaking data into categories, searching for trends and patterns and reporting. The study generated qualitative and quantitative data for the analysis process. Analysis sought to fulfill the research objectives and provide answers to research questions. Data cleaning was done in order to ensure data quality.

Qualitative analysis

- The researcher went through all the data and numbered them in a chronological order.
- The responses were then read to establish their similarities and differences and also to establish emerging patterns, guided by the objectives of the study.
- The words and phrases that represent the topics were written down and categories were created for instance using words or phrases that were repeated many times.

- The research findings generated notable patterns. These patterns were related and the terms used were explained. This gave room for the researcher to draw conclusions in conformity with the study objectives.

Quantitative analysis

- Quantitative analysis was as well done by use of appropriate descriptive statistical tools like percentages and frequency distribution and results presented in easy to understand graphs.
- All these were done by employing the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0) which is a set of software programmes merged into a single package and used to analyze scientific data related to social sciences. SPSS is ideal for inferential statistics where a statistical mean ;can be used to say something about a population and the information was generalized on the following aspects:
 - Extent of awareness creation was used as a yardstick for sensitization over the bursary scheme.
 - Family status was used as a measure of the extent of need of students.
 - Education level of teachers was used to measure competence and experience to provide accurate answers.
 - The criteria of bursary disbursement was used to address issues on the integrity of CBC, to establish whether fairness was practiced and to ensure learners with diverse levels of need were catered for.
 - Adequacy of bursary funds was used to find out the level to which bursary fund assisted the needy students in Homa Bay County.

- Challenges facing the bursary scheme were used to measure the extent to which shortfalls jeopardize the bursary scheme and lead to low participation rates by students in educational activities.
- The extent to which needy learners benefitted was used to measure whether interaction between bursary scheme and participation of needy students was helpful and fruitful to poor students in Homa Bay County.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study as discussed in line with the objectives of the study. The findings were obtained through an interactive process of data collection and analysis that engaged both quantitative and qualitative methods. The objectives of the study were to establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County, to find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County, to establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County, to determine the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County and to identify the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County. The data collected was presented according to these objectives. This chapter begins by presenting the response rate and demographics of the participants then delves into the findings of the study.

4.1 Response rate

The researcher went to the field and administered questionnaires to the students who were the main respondents by virtue of being beneficiaries of bursaries and participants in effective implementation of the scheme. Therefore their objective views and responses were expected on the variables under study. A total of 640 questionnaires were administered to students. 629 of the 640 students responded, representing a response rate of 98.28%. All the 100 (80 teachers, 16 principles and 4 CBC officers), whose opinions were supposed to be probed using interview schedules turned up, representing a response rate of 100%. The response rate was

considered satisfactory since Nyanjom (2013) observed that a response rate of 75% is considered excellent and representative of the population. The success rate was attributed to the self administration of the questionnaires by the researcher and her two assistants and earlier booking of appointment with the respondents.

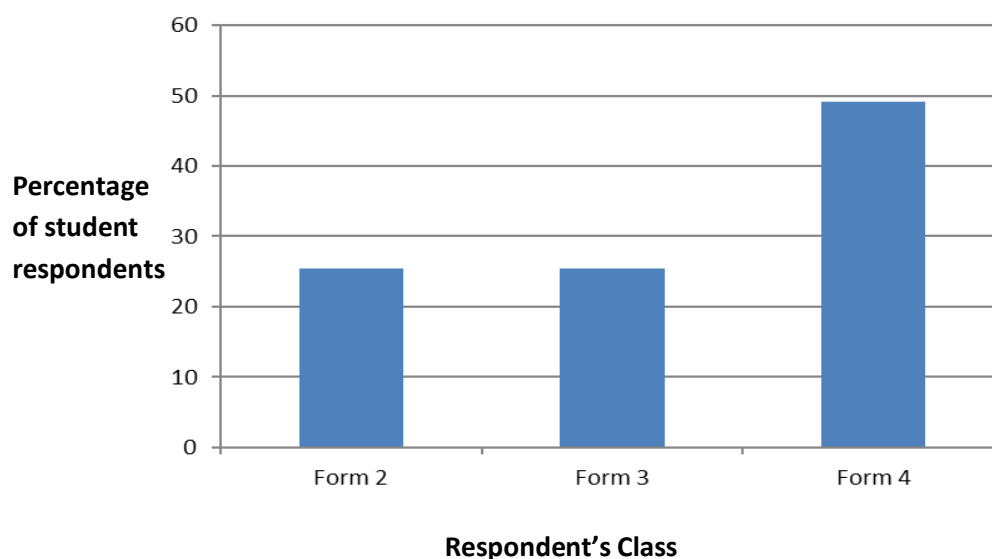
4.2 Demographic information of respondents

This section contains the demographic information of the respondents which included age, class, gender, family status, teaching and headship experience, educational levels and socioeconomic abilities. These social attributes were useful since they provided a broad understanding of the different characteristics of the population and enabled the respondents to provide information that was reliable and relevant to the study.

4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by class

The 640 students were asked to indicate their respective classes. Analysis was done on the collected data and the results obtained displayed in Figure 4.1 below.

Fig 4.1 Distribution of respondents by class

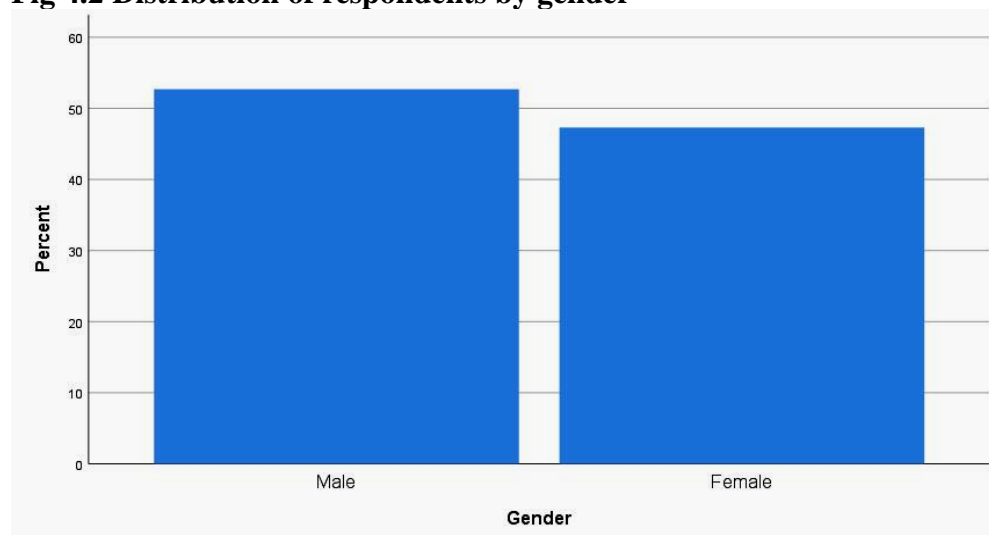


From the study findings, 629 students (98.28%) responded to the question. 160 students (25.44%) indicated that they were in Form Two, another 160 students (25.44%) indicated that they were in Form Three while 309 students (49.13%) indicated that they were in Form Four. The selection of the three classes for this study was strategic because they were the ones who had stayed longer in school and are more likely to have benefitted from bursary unlike the Form Ones. These upper classes were therefore more likely to give accurate information to the research study. Despite the form one students being left out of the sample, raising the required number of students for the sample was not a problem since in Homa Bay County, most schools were two streamed or three streamed by the time of the research study which implied that the number of students in each school was sufficient for the research.

4.2.2 Distribution of respondents by gender

The 640 students were asked to specify their gender. 100% of the participants responded to this question. Analysis was done on the collected data and the results presented in Figure 4.2 below.

Fig 4.2 Distribution of respondents by gender

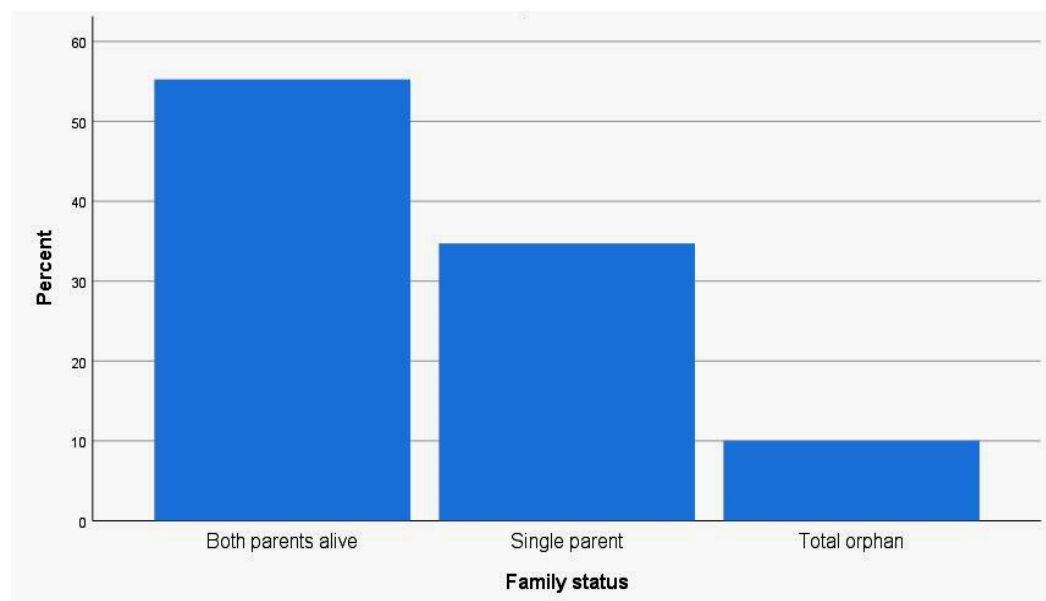


From the study findings, 319 respondents (50.7%) indicated that they were male while 310 respondents (49.3%) indicated that they were female. The number of female students was almost similar to that of males. One tenet of the Classical Liberal Theory was that educational activities should be carried out without barriers, one of such barriers being gender biasness. Despite the traditional belief that girls in Kenya were more vulnerable than boys when it came to access to opportunities such as education, the near parity gender representation was an indicator that both boys and girls were given equal opportunity to access secondary education in Homa Bay County.

4.2.3 Family status of students

The 640 students were asked to indicate whether they were total orphans, partial orphans or have both parents. This is usually a requirement in the bursary application form. Analysis was done and the findings captured in Figure 4.3 below.

Fig 4.3 Family status of students

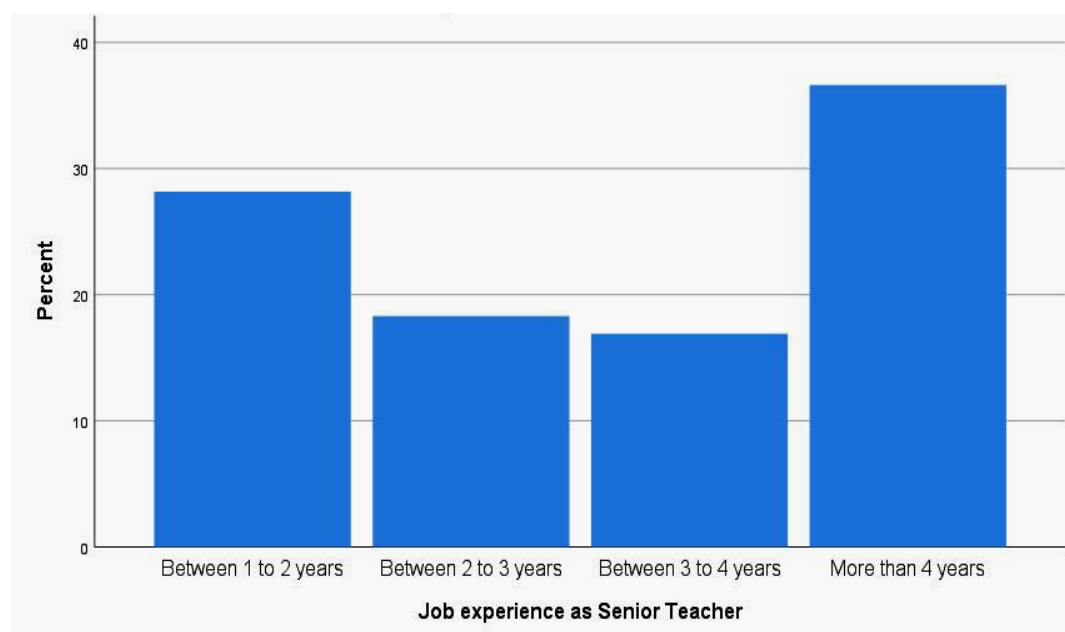


From the study findings, 619 students (96.72%) responded to the question while 10 did not. 342 students (55.3%) indicated that they had both parents, 215 students (34.7%) indicated that they had a single parent while 62 students (10%) indicated that they were total orphans. More than half of the students had both parents, many had single parents while a few were total orphans.

This information was important to the study as it would help determine the vulnerability of students to financial difficulties that would interfere with their secondary education and necessitate provision of bursary to them. Though it was indicated on the CDF bursary forms that total orphans were given priority over partial orphans and students with both parents, it was the researcher's opinion that being an orphan did not necessarily make a student needy. His or her education could be well catered for by organizations such as insurance companies and people of good will.

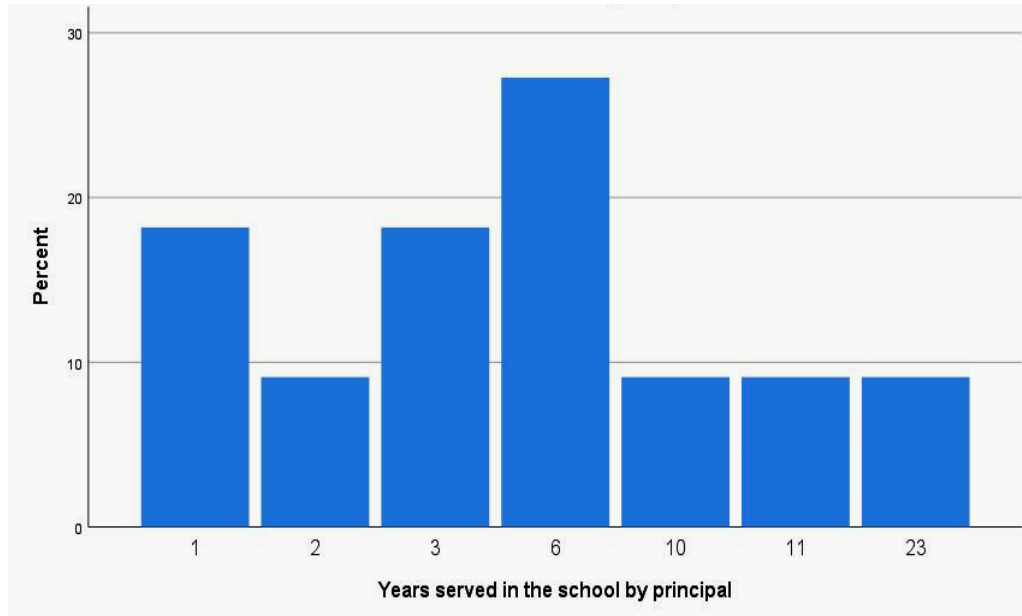
4.2.4 Teaching and headship experience

The teachers and principals were asked about their experience in their current positions. The collected data was analyzed and results presented in Figure 4.4 below and Figure 4.5 next page.

Fig 4.4 Job experience as a Senior Teacher

From the study findings in Figure 4.4 above, 71 of the 80 teachers (88.75%) responded; 20 teachers (28.2%) indicated that they have served as senior teachers between 1 to 2 years, 13 teachers (18.3%) indicated that they have served as senior teachers between 2 to 3 years, 12 teachers (16.9%) indicated that they have served as senior teachers between 3 to 4 years while 26 teachers (36.6%) indicated that they have served as senior teachers for more than 4 years. Most of the teachers had served as senior teachers for 1 to 4 years while more than a quarter had done so for more than 4 years.

This information was important because the seniority of the teacher helped elicit correct information about the students. The senior teachers had been in school longer and they had received details of students through class registers, interactions with parents and students, they already knew why some students suffered frequent or occasional absenteeism. The information they gave was considered relevant and accurate.

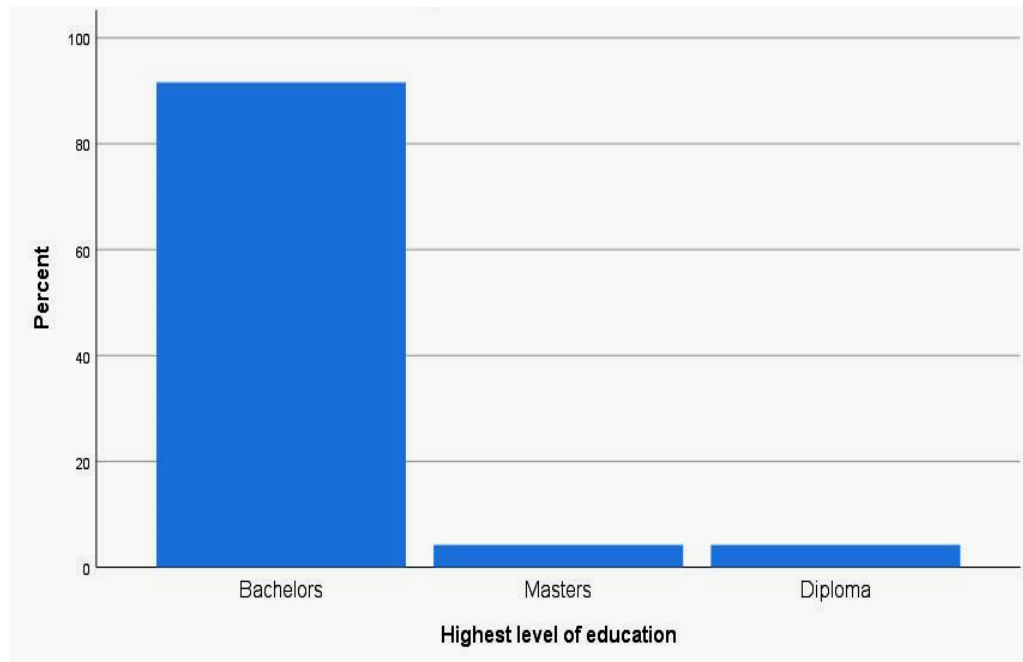
Fig 4.5: Years served in the school by principal

From the study findings in Figure 4.5 above, of the 16 principals, 11 (68.75%) responded; 2 principals (18.2%) indicated that they have served as principal in their respective schools for 1 year, 1 principal (9.1%) indicated that he or she had served as principal for 2 years, 2 principals (18.2%) indicated that they have served as principal for 3 years, 3 principals (27.3%) indicated that they have served as principal for 6 years, 1 principal (9.1%) indicated that he or she had served as principal for 10 years, 1 principal (9.1%) indicated that he or she had served as principal for 11 years while another 1 principal (9.1%) indicated that he or she had served as principal for 23 years. The length of the principals' service in their stations at the time of this research ranged between one to twenty three years with about a fifth of them having served for a year, a tenth for two years, a fifth for three years, a third of them for six years, a tenth for ten years, a tenth for eleven years and a tenth for over twenty three years.

The years served by the principals captured in Figure 4.5 indicated that the principals had served long enough and therefore were well equipped with knowledge on bursary matters and were therefore more likely to give accurate and relevant information to the research. The principals were in control of all activities in the school including finances and the process of bursary application by students and had accurate and detailed information on students at their fingertips. The principals played a pivotal role as the link between national government offices, county offices, parents and the community in bursary disbursement process. However, effectiveness of a principal in his or her duties goes beyond the length of time one has stayed in a school, it includes the shrewdness and efficiency with which the person articulates his or her duties. There are also many operations that require the integrity of the principal. Furthermore, a principal does not need much experience to be able to perform his or her duties. The administrative work and coordination of school activities begins at the principals' handing over taking over ceremony when all school details, records and responsibilities are handed over to the officer.

4.2.5 Education level of respondents

The researcher sought to investigate the education levels of the teachers and principals. Analysis was done on the availed data and results presented in Figure 4.6 next page.

Fig 4.6 Education levels of teachers and principals

From the collected information, 95 participants (98.96%) responded to this question. 87 participants (91.6%) indicated that their highest education qualification was a bachelor's degree, 4 participants (4.2%) indicated theirs was a masters degree while another 4 participants (4.2%) indicated that they are diploma holders. There was a high response rate of teachers most of whom held bachelor's degrees. There were also a few Masters and Diploma holders.

The results were a good indication that the respondents were well learned and understood the tasks expected of them in the survey and therefore were more likely to answer all the questions asked correctly. It shed light on the relevance and qualitative content of educational activities learners undertake in school under the supervision of trained and experienced teachers. The fact that the teachers and principals with whom they entrusted their children's education were well trained

gave them more confidence to search for more funds and invest in their children's education.

4.3 Bursary application procedure and criteria of disbursement in Homa Bay County

This section contains an inquiry into whether the students applied for bursary or not, why some did not apply, an inquiry into the amount of bursary allocated to students, whether those who applied succeeded to get bursary and whether the bursary was enough. A further analysis was done on the distribution of those who got bursary across different family status and gender. The section also contains findings on whether CBC prioritized certain student categories when awarding bursaries, how principals determined needy students in their schools, the criteria used by the CBC to select students who deserved bursary award and a question on who the most important CBC members were.

4.3.1 An inquiry into whether the students applied for bursary or not

The 640 students were asked to indicate whether they applied for bursary or not. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Students who applied for bursary

		Frequency	Percent
Students who applied for bursary	Yes	483	77
	No	144	23
	Total	627	100

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the results in Table 4.1, 627 of 640 students (97.97%) responded to the question. 483 students (77%) indicated that they applied for bursary while 144 students (23%) indicated that they did not. Over a third of the students indicated they applied for bursary while only about a quarter of the students did not.

The big proportion of students who applied for bursary is an indicator of how significant bursary funding was to needy students in Homa Bay County. The study also revealed that the bursary was of paramount significance to parents. A female parent from Homa Bay County (2020) stated as follows during a focused group discussion;

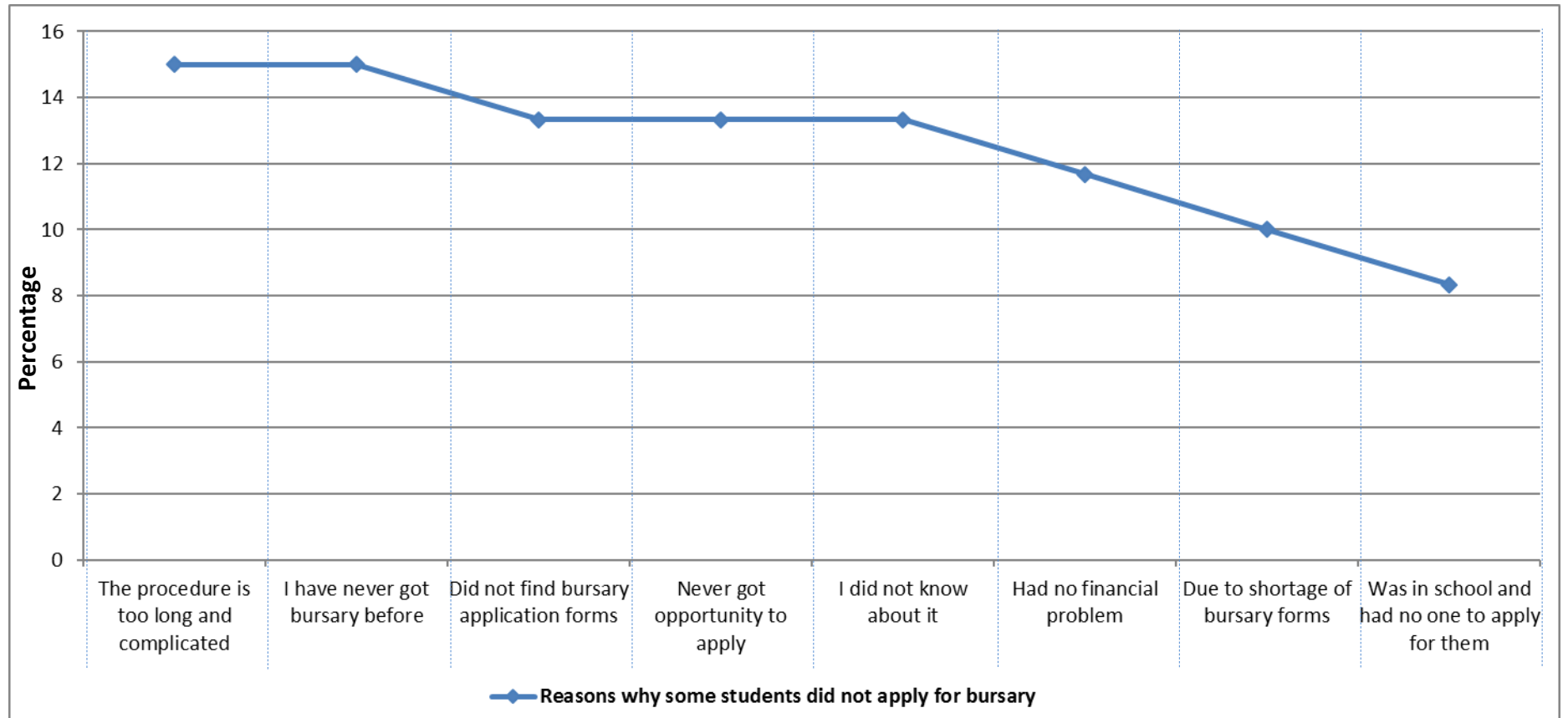
“Even if I am in the shamba (garden) and I get information that application for bursary funding is ongoing, I put my jembe (hoe) down and I go to pursue the said bursary for my child.”

The above findings show how valuable bursary was to both the students and their parents and therefore a lot of effort ought to have been put by the relevant stakeholders to ensure no needy student missed out of bursary funding which would in turn enable them to realize their dream of successfully completing secondary education. This would empower them to pursue greater goals in life. The scheme's launch was a welcome initiative by the government to offer education as a basic human right. It aimed at uplifting the socio-economic status of the learners through educational empowerment. Its launch was in line with the Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman and Wood (1982) which suggested that learners be given equal opportunity to participate in educational activities which would lead to economic empowerment and socio-economic mobility of the individual. The scheme brought a big relief to the parents but some gave up and stopped applying for their kids who

had never benefitted in the previous attempts. The Constituency Bursary Committee members admitted that the fund was inadequate yet the population of needy students continued to rise. There was need for the government to focus on adequacy of funds for the increasing number of needy students.

4.3.2 Why some students did not apply for bursary

Despite the revelation that Homa Bay County was dominated with low-income economic activities, a significant percentage of students in the region, 23% as indicated in Table 4.1, never applied for bursary funding. The researcher went ahead to question why. The 144 students who never applied for bursary were interrogated on their reasons for not submitting their applications. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Figure 4.7 next page.

Fig 4.7 Reasons why some students did not apply for bursary

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Figure 4.7, 60 students (41.67%) who did not apply responded to the question. 9 students (15%) said they never applied for bursary because they have never got bursary before, another 9 students (15%) indicated that the procedure was too long and complicated, 8 students (13.33%) did not find the bursary application forms, 8 students (13.33%) never got opportunity to apply, another 8 (13.33%) indicated they did not know about it, 7 students (11.67%) indicated they did not apply because they had no financial problem, 6 students (10.00%) indicated they did not apply for bursary due to shortage of the forms while 5 students (8.33%) indicated that they were in school and had no one to apply for them. About a tenth of the students skipped the lengthy bursary application procedure while the same proportioned did not apply because they had never succeeded in getting the bursary awards. A significant proportion of students did not get the bursary application forms, did not know about the applications or did not have anybody to help them facilitate the bursary application process.

Some parents and students deliberately did not participate in bursary undertakings because they detested the lengthy application process. Considering that 15% of students indicated that they had not got bursary before, fear of the possibility of more disappointment could have discouraged parents and students from pursuing bursary thus they had resigned from making any more trials. The fact that some students had never got bursary before despite applying for it severally casts doubt on whether there was correct data on needy students in the county in Homa Bay County.

From the above results, there were a number of factors that discouraged parents and students from pursuing bursary assistance. The government ought to have examined the above reasons and taken the appropriate measures so that needy students did not miss out on bursary.

The researcher was of the opinion that parents and students should not have given up in applying for bursary because of having failed to get the awards in the past since the bursary money was a government grant and every student had a right to it. Parents should have withstood the long bursary application procedure and led by example to their children. Parents whose children were in boarding schools had a duty to make follow-ups on application forms even if their children were in school so that the percentage of needy students who did not apply for bursary would have been substantially lowered.

4.3.3 An inquiry into whether those who applied got bursary

The students who applied for bursary were further asked if they were allocated bursary or not. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Whether students who applied for bursary got it or not

		Frequency	Percent
Whether students who applied for bursary got it	Yes	268	55.5
	No	215	44.5
	Total	483	100.0

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Table 4.2, responses were received from 474 (98.14%) out of the 483 students who applied for bursary. 263 students (55.5%) indicated that they

got bursary while 211 students (45.5%) indicated that they did not. The number of needy students who got bursary was almost equal to that of needy students who were not awarded. While those who got were slightly more than half the students who applied for bursary, slightly less than half were not awarded. These results are in agreement with findings by Muigai (2014) which revealed that the CDF bursary scheme played an important role in addressing the needs of children from poor families to access secondary education but there remained a large proportion of needy students who needed the bursary but the funds allocated were not adequate to cater for all the needy students.

The above findings show that many students were still missing out on the said funding and efforts should be made to address this situation so that all needy students could conveniently learn to completion of their secondary education. The number that missed out on bursary was big, a crisis that needed to be solved by assessing the operations of the bursary scheme and addressing the problematic issues that rendered the scheme ineffective, thereby denying almost half the needy students in Homa Bay County the vital awards. Inadequacy of funds was one of the factors that jeopardized the effectiveness of the scheme. These findings are in agreement with Muriuki, M. (2011) who revealed that despite the fact that students applied for bursary funds, not all deserving cases benefited from the funds.

4.3.4 An inquiry into the amount of bursary allocated to students

The researcher sought to know the amount of bursary that was received by each of the beneficiaries of bursary award. The collected data was recoded into four categories (Kshs. 1,000 to 5000, Kshs. 5001 to 10,000, Kshs. 10,001 to 15,000 and

finally Kshs. 15,001 to 20,000). The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Amount of bursary awarded in four categories

Amount of bursary awarded	Frequency	Percent
Kshs. 1,000 to 5,000	220	83.7%
Kshs. 5,001 to 10,000	38	14.4%
Kshs. 10,001 to 15,000	4	1.5%
Kshs. 15,001 to 20,000	1	0.4%
Total	263	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

Of the 268 students who got bursary, 263 (98.13%) responded to this question. 220 students (83.7%) were awarded between Kshs. 1000 to Kshs. 5,000, 38 students (14.4%) were awarded between Kshs. 5,001 and Kshs. 10,000, 4 students (4%) were awarded between Kshs. 10,001 and Kshs. 15,000 while 1 student (0.4%) was awarded between Kshs. 15,001 and Kshs. 20,000.

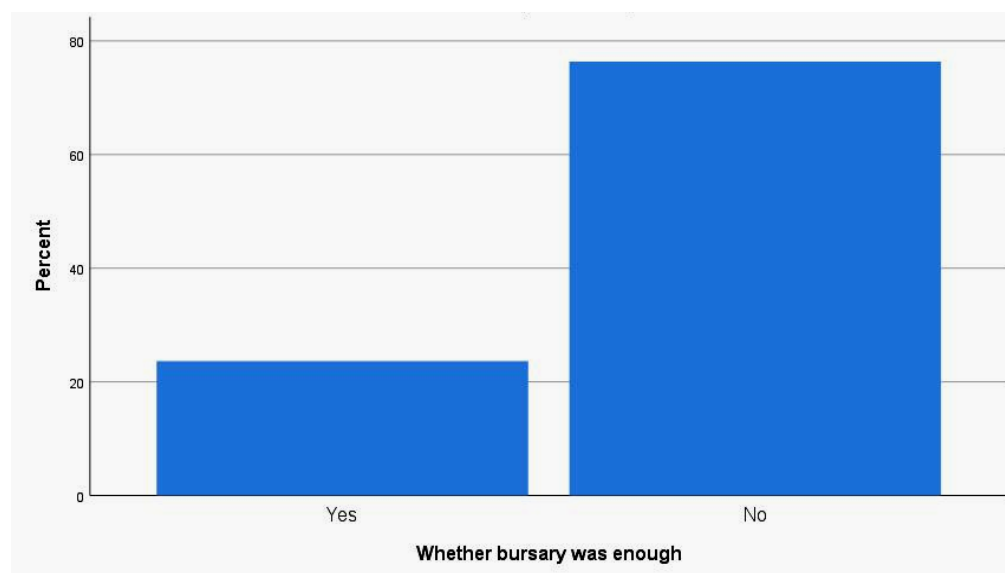
The findings indicate that majority of students who applied for bursaries were awarded between one thousand and five thousand Kenya shillings. Less than a quarter of the beneficiaries got between five thousand and ten thousand while very few managed to get more than ten thousand Kenya shillings. The bursary offices created a criterion of disbursement whereby sub-county schools which are mostly day schools would be allocated up to five thousand Kenya shillings per student, county and extra-county schools were mainly allocated up to ten thousand Kenya shillings while students in national schools received not less than fifteen thousand Kenya shillings. However, it is the researcher's opinion that the type of school may

not conform to the extent of need of a student and therefore should not have been used to determine the amount of bursary awarded to each of them.

4.3.5 An inquiry into whether the bursary allocated was enough

The researcher sought to know from the students who were allocated bursary whether the allocated amounts were adequate. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in the bar chart below.

Fig 4.8 Adequacy of the bursary fund



According to the findings in Figure 4.8 above, of the 268 students who got bursary, 258 students (96.27%) responded to this question. 197 students (76.4%) indicated that the bursary allocated was not enough while only 61 students (23.6%) admitted that it was enough.

About three quarters of the respondents indicated that the amount of bursary awarded to them was inadequate; only about a quarter indicated that it was enough. This means most needy students in Homa Bay County got awards that were not sufficient enough to fund their education expenses.

During a focused group discussion, a female parent in Homa Bay County (2020) expressed herself this way;

“Bursary has helped me but not to a large extent as the amount allocated is sometimes less than expected. You might expect Five Thousand Kenya Shillings only to be allocated Three Thousand Kenya Shillings only.”

This pointed to the inadequacy of the bursary awards to the students and went against the expectations of the parents who expected the bursary scheme to relieve them of the big financial burden of school fees.

A male parent in Homa Bay County (2020) gave the following suggestion;

“The amount of bursary should be increased. For day schools, the amount of bursary should be increased from Kshs. 5,000 to Kshs. 10,000. Boarding school students should be allocated at least Kshs. 20,000 since they have a higher fees burden.”

The parent’s wishful thinking was representative of many other parents. In the researcher’s opinion, parents ought to have taken responsibility of aggressive sourcing for funds from other financial sources rather than putting too much expectation of the bursaries, because its reliability and sustainability to needy students suffered challenges.

The Kenyan government alleviated fee burden from all parents in public secondary schools by sending a capitation grant of Kshs. 22,400 in three phases per year to cater for tuition and operational costs for each student while construction projects were taken over by the Ministry of Education and NG-CDF projects kitty so parents were no longer engaged in meeting the cost of construction in schools. Payment of examination fees was also taken over by the government through the Ministry of Education. Other financiers who intervened in fee payment for students in the county included UN bodies, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, foundations, banks and county governments. Instead of just recommending increase in the amounts of bursary

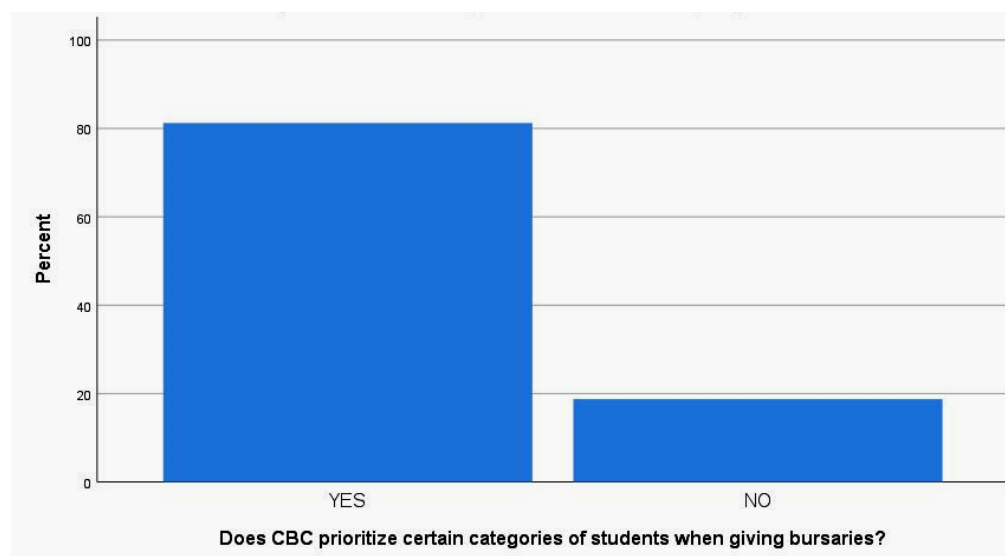
awards, parents in the county ought to have explored the other highlighted education financing options available at their disposal to supplement the CDF bursary aid and assist students complete their secondary school programmes.

However, the study treated the issue of adequacy of funds with caution since different categories of schools were allowed by MOES&T to charge fee according to the government fee guidelines and structures, unlike the private schools. While in boarding schools parents made a substantial contribution in boarding costs, the government controlled the fee guidelines so that the cost was friendly to the parents. Most day schools made agreements with the sub-county education offices on the fees to be charged. In most sub-counties, the yearly fee for day schools ranged from Kshs. 9,000 to 12,000 depending on the agreements. This catered for expenditure such as B.O.M. teachers' salaries and lunch programmes. The learners however still had other expenditure such as school uniform and personal effects to cater for, pointing to the need for the government to raise the amount allocated per student.

Muriuki, M. (2011), in his study on the effectiveness of constituency bursary funds in enhancing retention of students in secondary schools in Manyatta Constituency, Embu West District, revealed that all the students interviewed indicated that the money they received was not enough to cater for their education needs for the whole year and that they still had fee balances after getting the bursary fund.

4.3.6 Prioritization of certain categories of students by CBC

The 16 principals were asked whether CBC prioritizes certain student categories when awarding bursaries. All the 16 of them (100%) responded to the question. The collected data was analyzed and results presented in Figure 4.9 next page.

Fig 4.9 Prioritization of bursary applicants by CBCs

From the study findings, 13 respondents (81.3%) indicated that CBC prioritizes certain student categories during bursary awards while 3 respondents (18.2%) said they do not. It is clear from the findings that the bursary committee used certain criteria to pick on whom to and whom not to award bursary. These findings were important to the study because they helped the researcher inquire on whether the said prioritized categories could be a disadvantage to other applicants who also deserved the bursary funding.

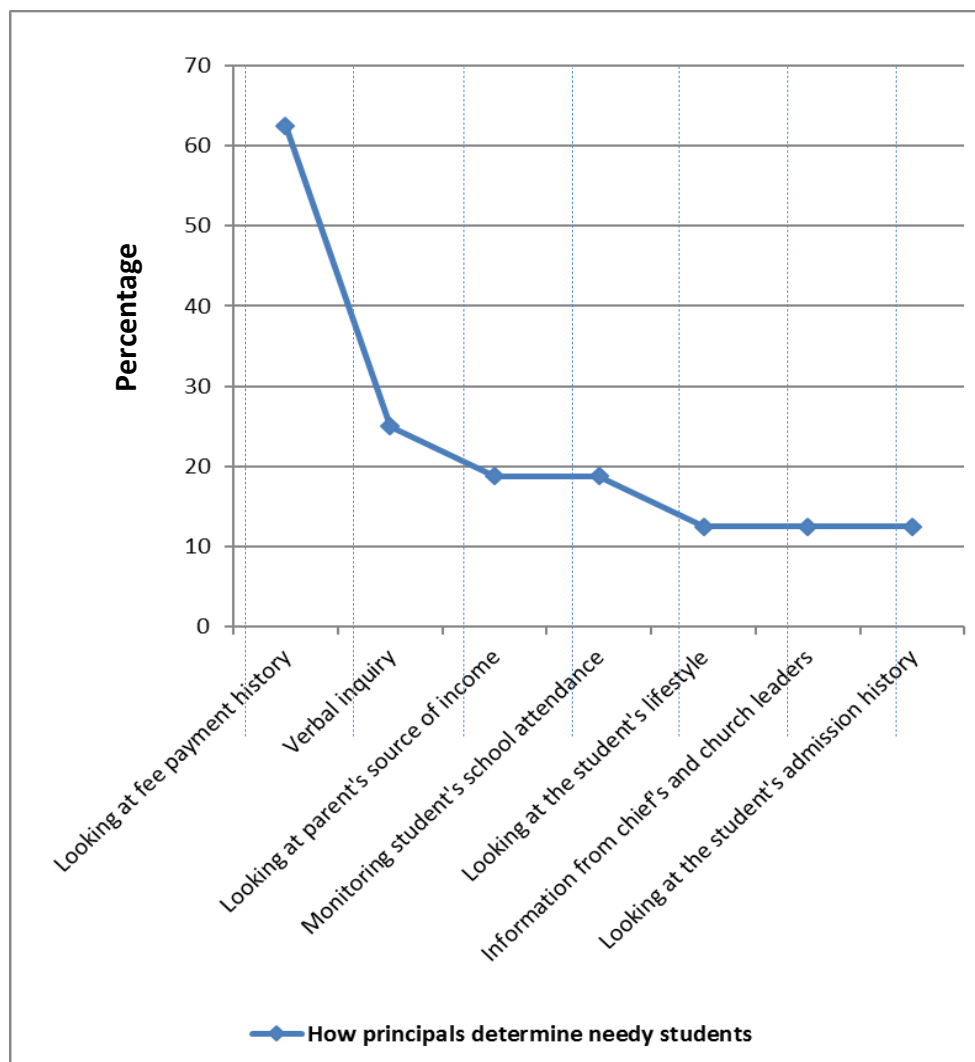
There was a controversial criteria used in Homa Bay County to determine quantity of bursary awarded to students. Students in national schools were given Kshs. 15,000 from the CDF kitty irrespective of whether they were needy or not. Students in extra-county and county schools were given Kshs. 10,000 irrespective of whether they were needy or not while day scholars were each given at most Kshs. 5,000. The researcher was of the opinion that school type was an unsuitable criteria of selecting bursary beneficiaries. The findings point to the fact that needy students could have been left out of the bursary awards in Homa Bay County. A criterion that might have

been more relevant was total orphans versus partial orphans since orphaned students are highly vulnerable to financial challenges like hardship in payment of school fees.

4.3.7 How principals determine needy students in their schools

The 16 principals were asked which methods they use to determine who needy students are in their schools. All the 16 of them (100%) responded to the question.

Fig 4.10 How principals determine needy students in their schools



Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Figure 4.10 above, it was revealed that principals mostly looked at the students' fee payment history to determine needy students as indicated

by 10 respondents (62.50%) followed by verbal inquiry as indicated by 4 respondents (25%), the parent's or guardian's source of income and by monitoring the student's school attendance as indicated by 3 students (18.75%) each, looking at the student's lifestyle and using information from chiefs and church leaders as indicated by 2 respondents (12.50%) each, and finally looking at the student's admission history.

Majority of the principals checked on the students' fee records to determine their extent of financial need while about a quarter indicated they learn about students' financial status during guidance and counseling. There are methods that were explored less by the principals to determine their students' extent of need included looking at the parents' sources of income, school attendance of the students, lifestyle of the students, getting information from chiefs and church leaders and looking at the students' admission history.

From the fee payment history, the principals could easily tell students from financially able families since they paid fee consistently unlike those from families struggling financially whose fee payments were inconsistent. Sometimes they would call the students who had huge fee balances or employ services of the guidance and counseling department to probe them on their families' financial situations. They would then give priority to the financially needy students by signing for them bursary forms and making appropriate comments on the level of need of the students before submission of the forms to the Constituency Bursary Committee for bursary allocation.

Some parents who had difficulties in paying school fee voluntarily shared details about their sources of income and financial situations with the principals so that in case the principles learnt of any financial support like scholarships, their children would be considered and supported. The principals also pointed out that students from financially able families attend school consistently unlike the ones hailing from poor families who sometimes skipped school and did odd jobs to make some wages which they channeled towards school fees, school meals programmes and their families' subsistence needs. Student's lifestyle was indicated as a method for determining the extent of need of students. For instance, in boarding schools where students were permitted to carry food from home during school opening days, students from financially well-off families went to school with a lot of shopping unlike those from poor family backgrounds. The same could be witnessed when parents carried food and shopping for their children during school open days.

Chief's and church leaders sometimes voluntarily passed information to the principals on the very needy students so that the students could be accorded any possible help or treated with patience when students are being sent back home due to fee arrears. Principals would look at the parents' or guardians' source of income as indicated in the student's admission documents to determine how needy a student was. The findings show that principals had a broad way of telling who needy students were and therefore the schools remained one of the best places where the CBCs could source accurate information on needy students. Such information would help the bursary scheme meet the right targets and objectives.

As much as the principals had a lot of details and records on parents and thus a high capacity to give accurate data on needy students, their activities in regards to bursary would have suffered compromises. Some members of parliament could have liaised with principals working in vote-rich parts of their constituencies so that many students in those regions get more awards than other regions. This could have been a strategy to improve the reputation of such politicians in the eyes of the communities around the schools where the students came from. Some parents also compare principals' performance in terms of school examination mean scores, availability of school feeding programmes, the number of teachers in each school and the principal's ability to have big bursary cheques from the Constituency Bursary Funds office and the county government. These factors might have encouraged some malpractices for example some principals could insist that all students disguise themselves as needy students and apply for bursary, locking out the financially struggling students in some parts of the constituencies.

Interview with school principals

The interactive interview with the school principals helped elicit data on how they determined needy students in their schools. Through probing, extra data on how the principals determined needy students was collected as indicated below.

A female principal in a lakeside day school in Homa Bay County (2020) made the following comment,

“I usually make an effort to interact with many people in the school's catchment area. Can you believe a number of those students struggle to raise money doing overnight fishing and in the morning we are with them at the school assembly? They go to class tired with red eyes and sleep to the annoyance of teachers who sometimes end up punishing them, perceiving the students as not disciplined and disrespectful. In many instances, it is the teachers I have to guide and counsel not to take very punitive measures on such students.”

This was a unique example of a principal who went out of her way to discover what goes on behind the school confines and revealed a more accurate picture of how needy some of the students were.

A male school principal in a school in Homa Bay County (2020) gave his observation as follows;

“Despite the fact that only a section of the school’s student population are needy, the truth is that there is no principal who wants to sign forms and wait for a cheque of a small value. These cheques are issued to principals in full sight of parents, politicians and other invited guests in big meetings. What do people think of me if I lead my school in receiving a cheque of Kshs. 60,000 for some 15 students while my neighbouring schools receive a cheque worth Kshs. 900,000 by lobbying for many students in his or her school to get the awards?”

The above excerpt shows that some principals are delighted by big cheques because it would add income to the school. The main push for the big cheque by some principals would not necessarily be to have the needy students aided in paying school fee but to provide more income to school. There is a possibility a school in a region of the constituency where the sitting member of parliament is not popular would be given a big bursary cheque to act as a campaign tool amongst the local community.

Another male principal in Homa Bay County (2020) made the remark below;

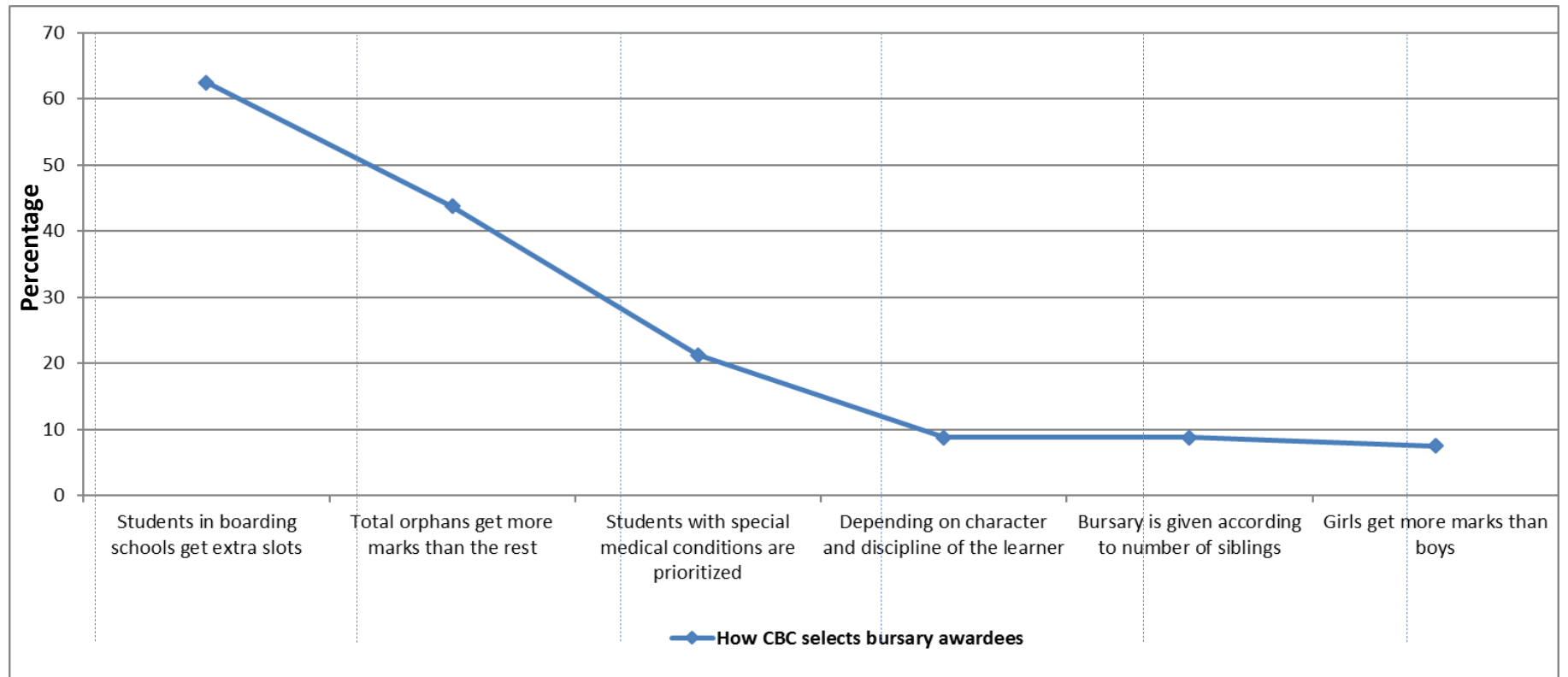
“Parents believe that those principals whose schools receive big cheques are responsible and care for the needs of their children. The parents trust such schools with their students leading to faster growth of such schools.”

The kind of belief exhibited by parents as indicated in the above excerpt from a principal’s contribution to a focused group discussion may not be correct because the school could have got big bursary cheques and therefore experienced a surge in its student population due to a principal’s favourable relationship with a specific political wing.

4.3.8 The criteria used by the CBC to select bursary awardees

The researcher sought to know from the 80 teachers the criteria used by CBC to select bursary beneficiaries. All the 80 teachers (100%) responded to the question. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in the Figure 4.11 next page.

Fig 4.11 Criteria used by CBC to select bursary awardees



Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Figure 4.11, the CBC mainly considered students in boarding schools as indicated by 50 (62.5%) of the respondents, followed by total orphans as indicated by 35 (43.75%) of the respondents. Others aspects considered by the CBC included students with special medical conditions as indicated by 17 (21.25%) of the respondents, character and discipline of the learner as indicated by 7 (8.75%) of the respondents, number of siblings as indicated by 7 (8.75%) of respondents and girls as indicated by 6 (7.5%) of the respondents.

Majority of the respondents, almost half, indicated that learners in boarding schools are given the highest priority during bursary awards while a significantly high number suggested that total orphan are given highest priority. Other criteria used to select bursary awardees included consideration of special medical conditions, girls affected by HIV and AIDS, discipline of the learner, number of siblings and gender. The above findings were in agreement with Stephen et al. (2007) who in their study on equity in the distribution of bursary to secondary school students in Busia District, Kenya, found out that the bursary award criteria were largely not effective in identifying and benefiting the most needy students, especially due to the flawed criteria of selecting beneficiaries. According to the findings, most students in boarding schools, which are mainly national, extra-county and county schools, are given first priority without undergoing rigorous vetting concerning their levels of need.

A study by Orera (2011) on Challenges in the Disbursement of Constituency Bursary Fund (CBF) to Public Secondary School Students in Bobasi Constituency, Kenya concludes that the criteria of determining the genuinely needy students had

limitations on governance, efficiency, effectiveness and consistency in support. This study noted with concern that even though the interviewed CBC members claimed that they gave priority to specific categories of students, the results above did not prove the same. The criteria of selection of beneficiaries ought to have been reviewed since some of these criteria may be unfavourable to the needy students for example being in a boarding school does not make a child needier than the rest and one may have good character but is not in greater need of bursary than the student who is not disciplined. An ideal method of getting accurate data on needy students might be what CBOs and NGOs usually do, because these organizations do practical assessment by visiting the poor households and using their established parameters to judge who is needy before shifting focus to the schools where these students learn.

4.3.9 A question on the relevance of different CBC members

The 16 principals were asked their views on the relevance of the various CBC members. All the 16 principals (100%) responded to the question. The collected data was analyzed and the results displayed in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Relevance of different CBC members

CBC Members	Relevance of various CBC members	
	Frequency	Percentage
MP	5	31.3%
Teachers Union	2	12.5%
Parents Association	4	25.0%
Principals	5	31.3%
Total	16	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the above results in Table 4.4 above, it is evident that the most relevant members of the CBC committee were the MP-Patron and 3 principals at 31.3% each, followed by the P.A. members at 25% each and the Teachers Union Representatives at 12.5%. According to the respondents, the FBO Representatives and NGO/CBO representatives had no relevance at all in the CBC.

From the findings, majority acknowledged the relevance of the area member of parliament who plays the role of the patron of the bursary committee and the school principals who are in charge of the administration of the schools. A number also recognized the relevance of the parents association with the least number of respondents recognizing the role of the teachers union.

The CBC members played different roles and representation of certain categories of population for instance the area member of parliament was the patron of the Constituency Bursary Committee. One of the Constituency Development Fund officials was elected the Chairman. The secretary of the committee was the Sub-County Director of Education who was expected to report the detailed procedures, minutes and disbursement schedules to the Ministry of Education. Other representatives were the faith-based organizations representing churches, mosques and temples and school principals. The parent community had 2 parents to represent the interest of parents in the committee. 3 representatives came from CDF office. The teachers union had 1 representative in the committee.

It was the researcher's view that the position of the member of parliament as a patron might have created a vent for political manipulation. Given the Member of

Parliament's influential position, he could give schools in vote-rich school catchment areas undue advantage in exchange for loyalty of the parents during election. The other CBC officials would follow suit and have their relatives and children of their friends favoured over needy students. The scheme would probably run more objectively without the patronage of the Member of Parliament. The teachers union is usually meant to deal with teachers' welfare for example, charting the course of teachers' salaries therefore their relevance in the CBC was not clear. The significance of the representatives of the faith-based organizations did not come out clearly. The two parents representing the parents' community were very relevant and it is the researcher's opinion that their representation should be increased due to their direct involvement in bursary affairs. There can be parents representing national, extra-county, county and sub-county schools. All interviewed respondents indicated that the CBO and NGO representatives were irrelevant, something the researcher attributes to misconception and lack of enough awareness on the roles of the various CBC members. The researcher considers the CBO and NGO representatives very relevant as they were the ones who had already gone to an extent of establishing data for needy students. Their input in the bursary committee would be rewarding. Members of the CBF committee were tasked with fixing the logistics of CBF operations hence their presence and actions should have been guided by utmost integrity for best bursary practices and for the benefit of needy students.

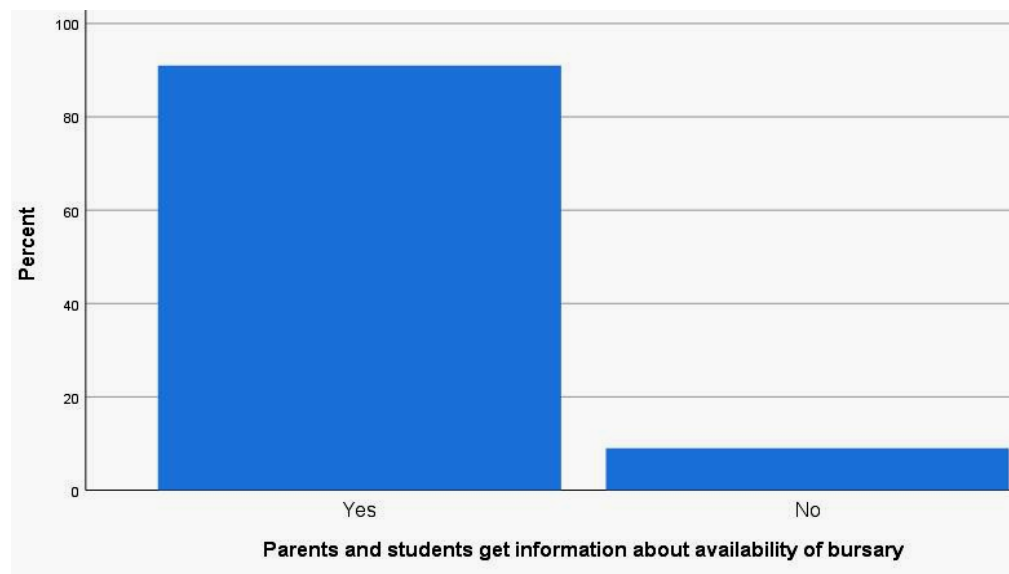
4.4 Awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County

This section covered an inquest into whether students got information about bursary application, how students and parents got information about the bursary scheme and education financing options that were available for students.

4.4.1 Whether students get information about bursary funding

The 640 students were asked whether they get information about bursary funding. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Figure 4.12 below.

Fig 4.12 Availability of information on bursary funding



From the study findings in Figure 4.12 above, 489 students (76.4%) responded to this question. 445 (91%) of the respondents indicated that they got information on bursary funding while 44(9%) indicated that they did not.

Majority of respondents indicated that they get information on availability of bursary. However, around a tenth of parents and students admitted that they never received such information.

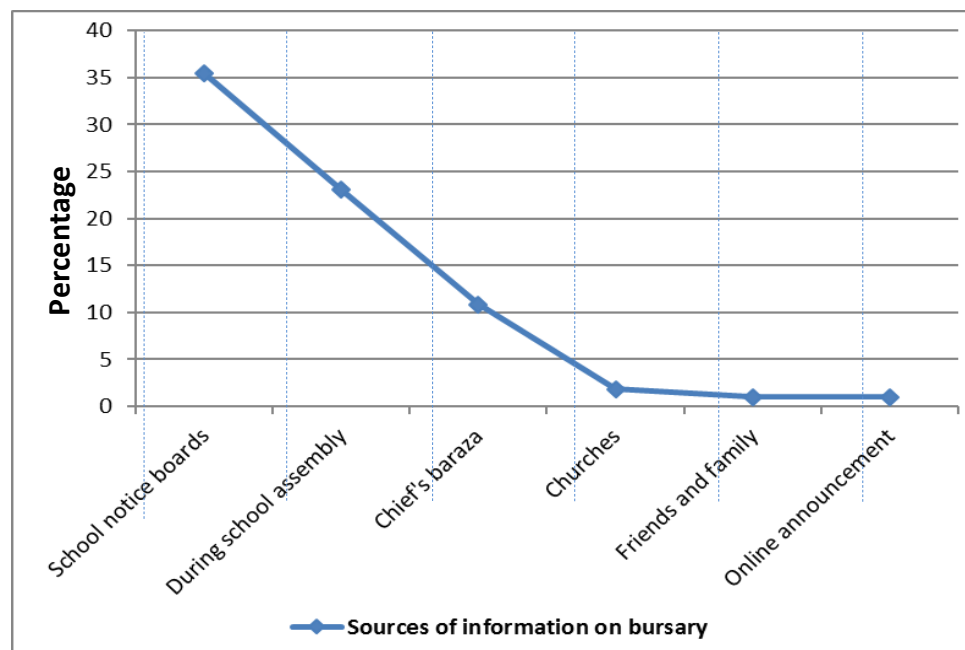
The results were a good sign that the bursary offices in Homa Bay County had already put a lot of effort towards awareness creation. However, one CBC officer observed that information on bursary was released but not all parents and students were lucky to access it. Consequently, some needy students missed out on bursary funding due to lack of information. The CBC ought to have ensured that the gap was bridged and that they created adequate awareness so that no needy student would miss the opportunity to get this very helpful financial aid. It was important that awareness creation was not left to the CBC offices alone otherwise some students could still miss out on this important financial intervention. It would have been important if public alerts on new policies of bursary scheme and how to get the application forms had been sent to stakeholders. School principals ought to have ensured that all students were aware of all necessary information pertaining to the bursary scheme. Adequate information could be passed by principals issuing letters regarding bursary to students to take to parents. The students ought to have been able to carry verbal information to parents especially the illiterate and semi-illiterate ones. It was necessary for CDF officials to meet community members face-to-face through community gatherings to pass information on bursary so that the very important financial intervention does not skip the attention of important stakeholders like parents.

These findings are largely similar to those of Okeyo, P.M. (2015) who in her study on Contribution of Constituency Development Fund Bursary on the provision of secondary education of Ogiek girls in Njoro Sub-county, Kenya, revealed that the Ogiek girls were highly aware of the availability of the education bursary fund provided by the government through the CDF for their education but only a few made use of the funds. These findings reveal that a lot of effort has been put on awareness creation over the secondary schools bursary scheme not only in Homa Bay County and also other parts of the country, a major step towards ensuring no needy learner misses out on education.

4.4.2 How parents and students were informed about bursary funds

The researcher inquired from the 640 students and 80 teachers how students and parents got information on the availability of bursary funding. The collected data was analyzed and results presented in Figure 4.13 below.

Fig 4.13 How students and parents got information on bursary



Source: Fieldwork (2020)

The findings in Figure 4.13 showed that most students and parents got information on bursary funding from school notice boards as indicated by 287 (35.47%) of the respondents, through the principal during school assembly as indicated by 187 (23.11%) respondents and through the chief's baraza as indicated by 88 (10.88%) respondents. Other channels through which students got information about bursary funding but which were not popular included churches as indicated by 15 (1.85%) of the respondents, friends and family as indicated by 8 (0.99%) of the respondents and online announcement as indicated by 8 (0.99%).

Over half of the respondents indicated that information on bursary is passed by the school either through notice boards or by the principal during school assemblies. About a fifth of the respondents got such information from chiefs' barazas while very few, less than a tenth of the respondents, got such information from churches, friends, family and announcements over the internet.

In the researcher's interviews with CBC officers, most of them indicated that they pass information to schools when bursary was available. A majority of parents indicated that they got information about bursary availability from schools, chiefs, ward representatives, village elders and even churches. During the focused group discussion, one male parent in Homa Bay County (2020) said,

“Chiefs target forums like funerals, church gatherings or chief's baraza to spread awareness on bursary funds. They also tell us where to get the application forms.”

A female parent in Homa Bay County (2020) added;

“We are usually informed of the availability of bursary funds; my MP has agents who pass information on bursary around villages so that those who wish to apply can proceed and do so.”

The above two quotes reveal that there existed rigorous methods of disseminating information on availability of bursary funds and calls for applications.

Gitau et al. (1933) reveal that bursary applications in western countries are mostly received online and responses communicated adequately. It was the researchers opinion that the awareness creation mechanisms that were less utilized for example churches and online announcements ought to have been explored more to reach the 9% of the population who indicated that they do not get information on the availability of bursary funding and that the information is diversified promptly in the study locale.

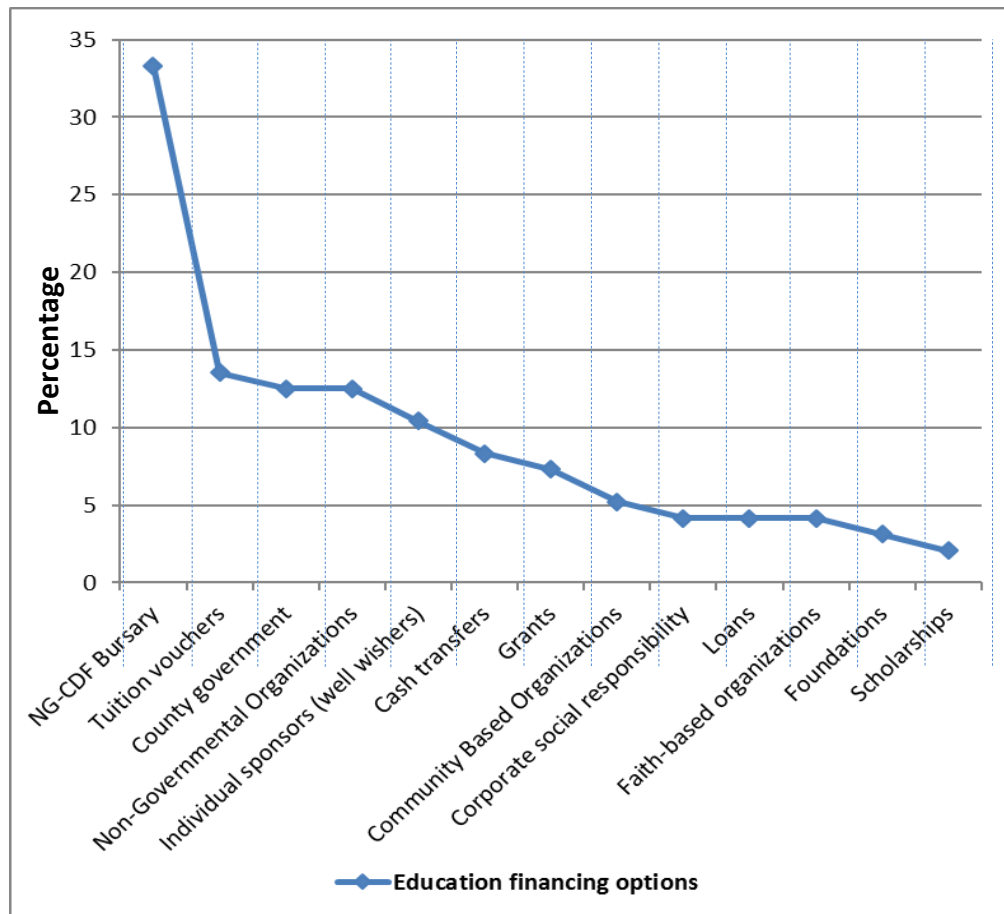
The researcher further learnt from the parents that the CDF officers usually invited a large number of stakeholders, parents included, to witness the issuing of the bursary cheques. The guest of honour was most often the area Member of Parliament who spoke last and issued the cheques to the school principals, with each cheque attached to the list of awardees and against their names were the amounts of money apportioned each student which in most cases was a flat rate. The amount allocated to each student multiplied by the number of students would give the total amount on the cheque. Like all the other monies received by the schools, this money was receipted as a whole then every student who was awarded was issued a receipt with the value equivalent to what he or she was allocated, as indicated in the list. Copies of all cheques were placed in the file for income and expenditure in the vote head of school bursaries in readiness for any audit. The cheque was banked in the school

operational account for use by the school after all details of the bursaries had been explained to the Board of Management. The fee arrears for each bursary beneficiary was reduced by the value of the award given to him or her. Some parents, after checking the list of awardees in the bursary offices and ascertaining that their children's names were present, acquired letters from the offices to request the school administrators that their children be retained in school because bursary cheques would be released soon after; some parents actually got details of the bursaries before the principles did.

The methods used to create awareness in Homa Bay County as indicated in the study findings were more or less similar to those revealed by Mbayachi, B.R. (2015) while conducting a study on factors influencing disbursement of constituency bursary funds to students in public secondary schools in Vihiga Sub-county, Kenya. The study revealed that the most common methods of creating awareness on Constituency Bursary Fund were public notice boards, school teachers, places of worship and other public gatherings.

4.4.3 Available education financing options

The 80 teachers and 16 principals were asked to mention the education financing options that were available for the students in their region. The collected data was analyzed and results presented in Figure 4.14 next page.

Fig 4.14 Available education financing options for students

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Figure 4.14, it can be deduced that apart from the most common way of education financing which is through parents and guardians, the most common education financing option for students in Homa Bay County is National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) as indicated by 32 respondents (33.33%), followed by tuition voucher as indicated by 13 respondents (13.54%), county government and NGOs as indicated by 12 respondents (12.50%) each, individual sponsors (well wishers) as indicated by 10 respondents (10.42%), cash transfers as indicated by 8 respondents (8.33%), cash transfers as indicated by 8 respondents (8.33%), grants as indicated by 7 respondents (7.29%), community based organizations as indicated by 5 respondents (5.21%),

corporate social responsibility, loans and faith based organizations as indicated by 4 respondents (4.17%) each, foundations as indicated by 3 respondents (3.13%) and lastly scholarships as indicated by 2 respondents (2.08%).

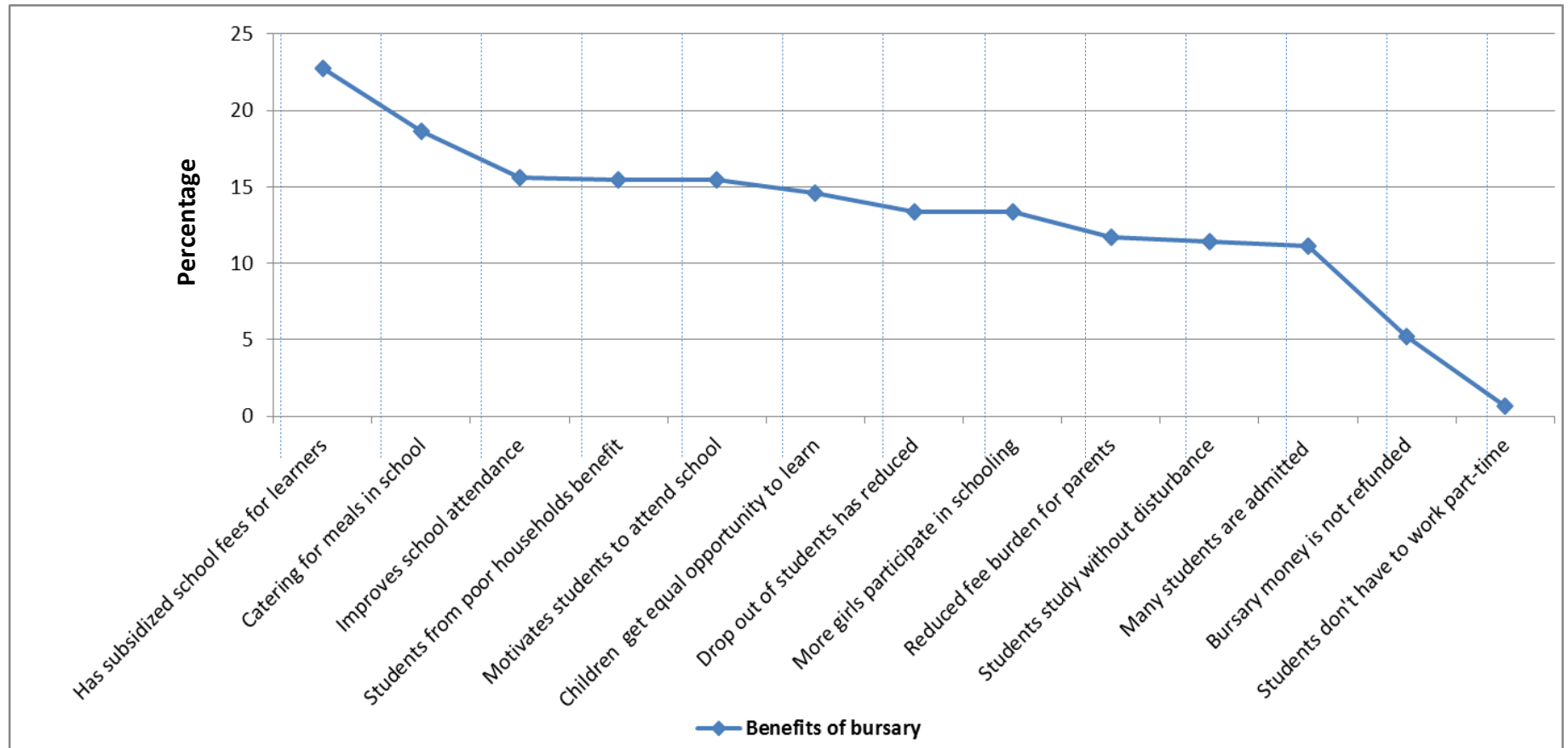
The most popular education financing option in Homa Bay County was the National Government Constituency Development Fund as indicated by around a third of the respondents. Other dominant options included tuition vouchers, the county government, NGOs and well wishers. However, there were other education financing options that were less dominant as seen in the findings above.

The findings reflected inadequate knowledge of the available education financing options. As much as the NG-CDF bursary was very popular, the county governments, Homa Bay included, had maintained distribution to bursary to needy students. Tuition vouchers and cash transfers were gaining momentum in Kenya as NGOs and CBOs proved more steady in identifying vulnerable students and even visiting their homes to establish their levels of need and applying tuition vouchers and cash transfers to the poor households to facilitate education of such students. There were also scholarships given by the banks and development partners to facilitate students' participation in education. These were all avenues that ought to have been explored by parents and students to ensure no needy student missed out on secondary education.

4.5 Extent to which needy learners benefit from the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County

This section contains data on the extent to which the bursary schemes assisted needy learners in Homa Bay County. The 640 students, 80 teachers and 16 principals were asked the extent to which learners who deserve bursary assistance benefit from secondary school participation in Homa Bay County. The collected data was analyzed and findings presented in Figure 4.15 next page.

Fig 4.15 Extent to which needy learners benefit



Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings in Figure 4.15, the highest number of respondents indicated that bursary had subsidized school fees for learners as indicated by 165 respondents (22.76%), 135 (18.62%) of the respondents indicated that bursary helped in providing meals in school, 113 (15.59%) of the respondents indicated that bursary improved school attendance, 112 (15.45%) of the respondents indicated that students from poor households benefitted, another 112 (15.45%) of the respondents indicated that bursary motivated children to attend school, 106 (14.62%) of the respondents indicated that children from different socio-economic backgrounds got equal opportunity to learn, 97 (13.38%) of the respondents indicated that drop-out of students had reduced seriously, another 97 (13.38%) of the respondents indicated that more girls participate in schooling, 85 (11.72%) of the respondents indicated that parents no longer feel the burden of fee payment, 83 (11.45%) of the respondents indicated that students studied without disturbance, 81 (11.17%) of the respondents indicated that many students were admitted due to bursary, 38 (5.24%) indicated that bursary money was not loaned and therefore not to be refunded while 5(0.69%) indicated that students did not have to do part-time jobs to raise money for school fees anymore.

About a fifth of the respondents indicated school fees had been subsidized for learners, with about a sixth of them indicating that bursary money helped cater for meals in school. Other benefits that were highlighted by many of the respondents included improvement of school attendance, aiding of students from poor households, motivating of students to attend school and children getting equal opportunity to learn despite different levels of need. Other benefits of bursary that were revealed included reduced drop-out by students, more girls participating in

schooling, reduced fee burden for parents, students study without disturbance and many students get admission into various secondary schools.

The interviewed CBC members pointed out that students from poor backgrounds attended school without disturbance because of bursary since financial burden on parents and guardians had been reduced. In addition, thousands of students were supported annually out of whom many students had progressed and completed secondary education. Parents, on the other hand, admitted that bursary had been very important to them but it was not enough.

During focused group discussions with parents, a majority of parents admitted that bursary awards had been very important but the amounts allocated per student were inadequate. A female parent from Homa Bay County (2020) said,

“Bursary assistance is very helpful. My husband usually struggles so much and if he does not get it for the child he really gets dejected.”

A male parent in Homa Bay County (2020) observed that

“Parents don’t find it easy to pay fee. Sometimes a parent has 3 children in school, which translates to a heavy fee burden for the household. Sometimes we have to deny ourselves subsistence money so that the children go to school.”

A female parent from Homa Bay County (2020) added,

“Sometimes I expect a harvest of four sacks of maize from my shamba (garden) but I only get 2 sacks. If I take the 2 sacks to school (pay for school fees in kind), I remain with nothing to eat.”

The above views were indications that parents underwent a lot of financial difficulty and the bursary intervention would be highly appreciated. A male parent in Homa Bay County (2020), while contributing to the subject of the benefits drawn from bursary funding, expressed how sometimes schools could refuse to give students

their KCSE certificates until they paid all their fee arrears and that bursary funding helped them avoid such situations. He said,

“Some parents do table banking and count on the little money they borrow out of it to pay school fees. Paying the money borrowed from table banking then becomes a problem. The parents then request the schools and pledge to pay the fee arrears later. If it happens that the student is doing his or her last year, the KCSE certificate is withdrawn and the student is not able to collect the certificate from the school until he or she clears the fee arrears. Bursary funding becomes very handy in alleviating suffering to these parents and students.”

From the findings above, the need for bursary was very strong. This study established a number of positive attributes of the bursary scheme. Upon its establishment, parents across the country received the gesture with gratitude, given that it was not a loan that one had to repay and it served as a big relief from the heavy burden of fee payment. Due to the government takeover of tuition vote head as a fee waiver, school operational costs, infrastructure fee, text books fees and examination fee, the role of bursary became limited to facilitating lunch programmes in day schools and subsidizing boarding costs. In a nutshell, bursary facilitated provision of students' meals, improved school attendance, subsidized fee in boarding schools and motivated students from poor households to attend school and participate in education. School dropout significantly reduced and parents had their lives improved because of reduction of fee burden, which impacted positively in their family savings. While some parents did not take active roles in making follow ups on bursaries and some ignored fresh application attempts due to past frustrations, the bursary committees took the greatest blame for corrupt practices and submitting to political patronage during the bursary disbursement process. This

trend led to malpractices that ended up denying needy learners the bursary awards in favour of relatives and affiliates of constituency bursary committee members.

When School Education Bursary Fund (SEBF) was introduced in the 1993/1994 Financial Year, its main target was needy students. Parents whose children received the awards had high hopes of getting assisted again. It was regrettable that weaknesses in administration of the bursary scheme led to its ineffectiveness. The SEBF left out students who were unknown to board members, forcing the government to change tact; bursary funds together with other constituency development funds were then decentralized to constituencies. It is evident from these findings that even under the Constituency Bursary Fund, there was no adherence to the right criteria and procedure. This gave rise to corruption and favouritism in disbursement of bursary. Some students benefitted as they benefitted but were not sure of getting the bursary again while others made several applications in vain, became disappointed and resigned from further application attempts. It was a situation the government and all relevant stakeholders needed to look into and address so that students from needy households do not miss out on the several benefits of the scheme revealed by this study.

These findings were in agreement with the study by Ndung'u (2016) which states that the secondary education bursary fund was critical source of funds for financing education as majority of parents did not have a stable source of income. The lack of school fees was the major contributing factor to educational wastage that is, drop out of students in public secondary schools.

4.6 Fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County

This section covers the distribution of bursary beneficiaries across different family status that is, students with both parents, those with single parents and total orphans. It also covers the distribution of those who received bursary across different gender.

4.6.1 Distribution of bursary beneficiaries across different family status

The researcher did a cross tabulation of students who applied for bursary versus their family status. The findings were as given in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5 A cross tabulation of bursary beneficiaries versus family status

		Family Status					
		Both parents alive (count)	Both parents alive (%)	Single parent (count)	Single parent (%)	Total orphan (count)	Total orphans (%)
Whether student got bursary	Yes	155	58.1%	85	54.1%	22	48.9%
	No	112	41.9%	72	45.9%	23	51.1%
	Total	267	100%	157	100%	45	100%

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

Of the 483 students who applied for bursary, 469 students (97.1%) responded to this question. From the findings in Table 4.5, the respondents indicated that of the students who have both parents, a majority, 155 students (58.1%) got bursary while a minority, 112 (41.9%) did not get. Of the students who have single parents, a majority, 85 students (54.1%) got bursary while a minority, 72 (45.9%) did not get. In the case of total orphans, a simple minority, 22 (48.9%) was awarded bursaries while a simple majority, 23 (51.1%) was not awarded bursaries.

A majority of students who benefitted had both parents while only a few were orphans who are among the most vulnerable members of the society. The high number of beneficiaries with both parents was also a pointer to the fact that many households were not doing well economically and many students hailed from poor households and would be disadvantaged if deliberate financial interventions were not taken. With a situation of poverty being a serious underlying factor in Homa Bay County, there was need for the NG-CDF management and Homa Bay County government to ensure deliberate and more aggressive measures were taken to increase participation of needy learners through bursary assistance. This would empower the learners to participate in schooling and consequently improve the socio-economic situation of the communities.

In Zambia and Malawi, studies show that close to 70% of secondary school students are entitled to bursary scheme which are supposed to cover 75% tuition fees for most beneficiaries and up to 100% for vulnerable groups such as double orphans (Oketch et al, 2020).

4.6.2 Distribution of those who received bursary across different gender

The researcher then did a cross tabulation of students who got bursary versus their gender. The findings were as given in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 A cross tabulation of bursary beneficiaries versus gender

Gender	Students who got bursary			
	Yes		No	
	Count	%	Count	%
Male	101	38.4%	124	58.8%
Female	162	61.6%	87	41.2%
Total	263	100%	211	100%

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

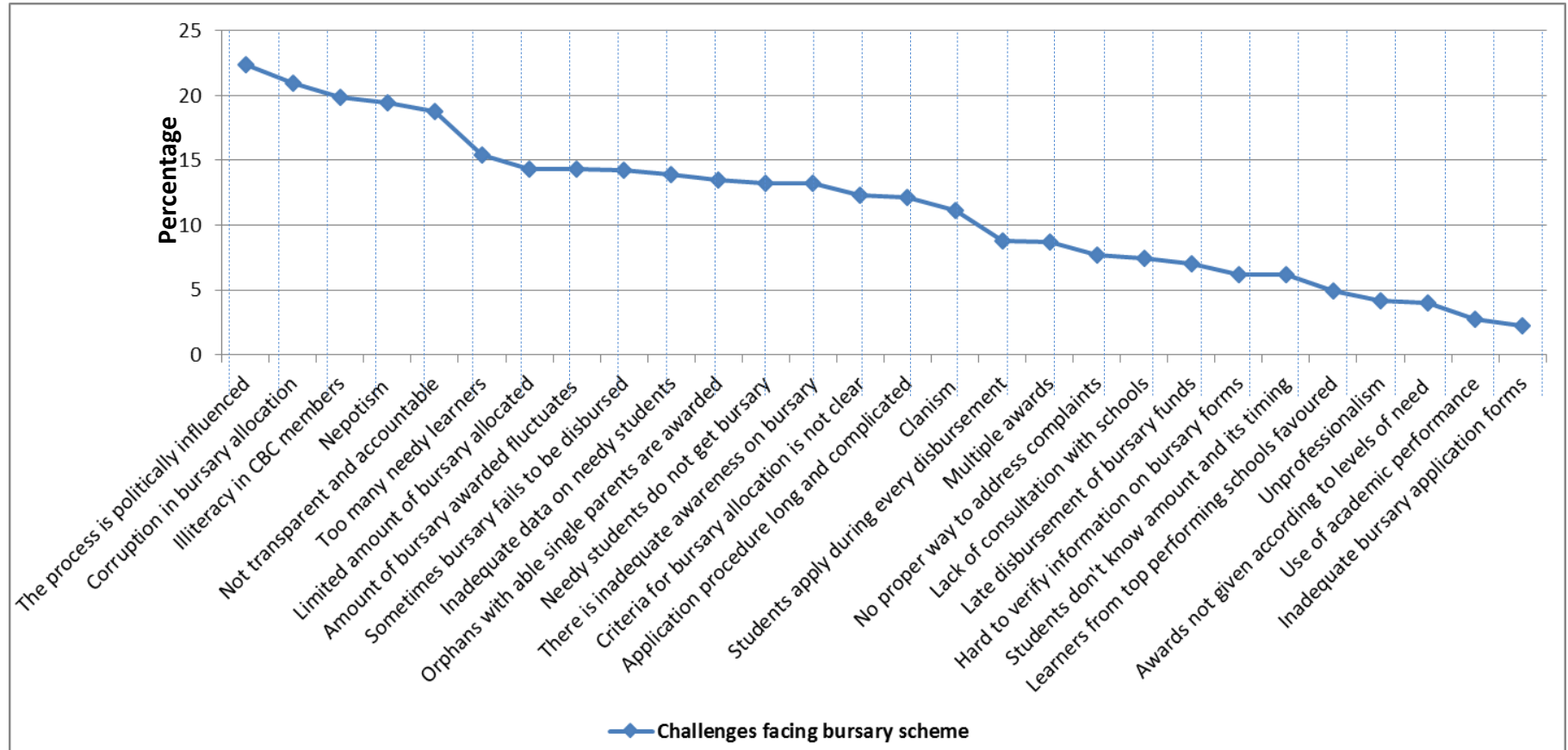
Of the 268 respondents who got bursary, 263 (98.13%) responded to the question. From the findings in Table 4.4, 162 female students (61.6%) indicated that they got bursaries while only 101 male students (38.4%) got. The findings indicate that majority of those who got bursary were girls, their slots being substantially above half of the total number of bursary beneficiaries.

The findings are in agreement with Musee, M.M. (2013) who, in his study of factors influencing allocation of bursaries to students in public secondary schools in Central Division of Machakos District in Machakos County, revealed that girls were given preference to boys in allocation of bursaries. The findings of this study implied that the bursary distribution conformed with the government's purpose to cushion the vulnerable groups of needy students and education of girls to be enhanced though there is some deviation from the guiding theory, the Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman & Wood (1982), which proposed education for equal opportunity without barriers.

4.7 Challenges facing the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County

This section contains a host of challenges that prevented the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County from reaching the right beneficiaries. The 640 students, 80 teachers and 16 principals were asked to list the challenges that face bursary funding. The collected data was analyzed and the results presented in Figure 4.16 next page.

Fig 4.16 Challenges facing the bursary scheme



Source: Fieldwork (2020)

From the findings, the biggest challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme was that the process was politically influenced as indicated by 162 respondents (22.34%), corruption in bursary allocation according to 152 respondents (20.97%), 144 (19.86%) indicated that some bursary committee members were illiterate, 141 (19.45%) indicated that there was nepotism in bursary allocation, 136 respondents (18.76%) indicated that the bursary scheme was not transparent and accountable, 112 respondents (15.45%) indicated that needy learners were too many, 104 indicated that the amount of bursary allocated was limited (14.34%), 104 indicated that the amount of bursary fluctuated during every disbursement (14.34%), 103 (14.21%) indicated that sometimes bursary failed to be disbursed, 101 (13.93%) indicated that there was inadequate data on needy students, 98 (13.52%) indicated that orphans with able single parents or guardians were awarded, 96 (13.24%) indicated that needy students did not get bursary, 96 (13.24%) indicated that there was inadequate awareness on bursary.

Other challenges raised included unclear criteria of bursary funding as indicated by 89 (12.28%) of the respondents, bursary application procedure was long and complicated as indicated by 88 (12.14%) of the respondents, clanism in bursary allocation as indicated by 81 (11.17%) of the respondents, needy students had to apply during every disbursement as indicated by 64 (8.83%) of the respondents, some students were awarded multiple times as indicated by 63 (8.69%) of the respondents.

The research also revealed that there was no proper mechanisms for addressing bursary related complaints as indicated by 56 (7.72%) of the respondents, lack of

consultation with schools over needy students as indicated by 54 (7.45%) of the respondents, late disbursement of funds as indicated by 51 (7.03%) of the respondents, hardship in verifying information given on bursary forms as indicated by 45 (6.21%) of the respondents, students don't know the amount to expect and when to receive it as indicated by 45 (6.21%) of the respondents, learners from top performing schools were favoured as indicated by 36 (4.97%) of the respondents, unprofessionalism amongst CBC officers as indicated by 30 (4.14%) of the respondents, students were allocated same amounts despite different levels of need as indicated by 29 (4.00%) of the respondents, use of academic performance as a criteria disadvantaged the needy as indicated by 20 (2.76%) of the respondents and inadequate bursary application forms as indicated by 16 (2.21%) of the respondents. The number of challenges was numerous, The findings raised issues of corruption and malpractices in the bursary scheme, inadequacy and inconsistency of funds, political patronage and related vices like clanism, incompetence of CBC officials and wrong disbursement criteria such as giving all needy learners flat rate awards. Two interviewed CBC respondents agreed that certain challenges exist in the bursary scheme operations including inadequacy of funds, inconsistency of the awards, political patronage in the fund's administration, existence of corrupt practices, and no clearly stated guidelines, but a third respondent, a male CBC official (2020) had contrary views. His views were captured as follows;

“I cannot deny that some malpractices exist. I also found them and it needs combined effort to look into the issue of clanism during vetting because it happens even though our guidelines do not guide us on how to handle the subject.”

The above quote points to unfair practices that seem to have gotten out of hand and that needed to be checked and corrected.

A male CBC officer from Homa Bay County (2020) commented that

“So long as majority of parents are happy and thousands of needy children are in school, I do not see a problem. Nobody can satisfy the whole county.”

The above quote is a pointer to CBC officers who do not really emphasize on channelling the bursary funds to the needy students in their areas of jurisdiction. Their focus is primarily to impress the masses without focus on the deserving cases. During focused group discussions with parents, a majority indicated that they had never been lucky to secure bursary for their children while some applied two times without their children benefitting and gave up. When asked the possible reasons why their children never got bursary parents claimed there was corruption in the bursary offices, sometimes bursary forms were filled wrongly; not completed or without certain required attachments. During one of the focused group discussions, a parent in Homa Bay County (2020) expressed her views as follows;

“Getting the bursary is sheer luck. If you get, you might take another 2 years before benefitting again. Only people with godfathers get it consistently. It would be better if the bursary system worked such that once a student’s name has been approved for bursary allocation, the student’s name should remain in the system and he or she be awarded consecutive bursaries until he or she finishes secondary education.”

As indicated in the above quote, getting bursary was not authentic due to corruption; priority was given to people with connections to the constituency bursary committee members during award of bursaries. This points at unfair practices that denied needy learners the opportunity to benefit from the bursary docket.

The reliability of the funds was also put into question. One of the female parents in Homa Bay County (2020) expressed her concerns during a focused group discussion as follows;

“CDF Bursary is not always reliable since your child may get a very small allocation or no allocation at all. In order to avoid dissappointments, we don’t

put too much hopes on the said funds. We try to explore alternative ways to source for school fees when schools open.”

From the interactive sessions with the parents, getting bursary award was a student’s luck. It depended on the guardian’s connection with the bursary committee members or politicians. The funding was unreliable and one was not assured of its sustainability and timing. The protocols involved were also tiresome and discouraging hence some parents ignored the idea of pursuing the funds. As much as the findings agreed with the observations of Njeru and Orodho (2003), Okeyo (2015) and Orera (2011) on common problems facing the education bursary scheme which included inadequate funding, deserving students missing the awards, lack of adequate sensitization and corruption, this study revealed that the aspect of ghost beneficiaries was not highlighted in the studies. The perception of bursary scheme influencing participation, access, retention and enhancing of education is in tandem with previous studies on the subject by Njeru & Orodho (2003), Obiero (2014), Ngalu & Bomett (2014), Stephen et al. (2007) and Oyugi et al. (2008). All highlighted on the critical role bursaries played to change the destiny of learners so that they secured social-economic mobility.

Despite dissemination of information on bursary through school notice boards, school assemblies and ward representatives, this study established laxity by the government to supervise and track the activities of the bursary fund management mainly at constituency level, a weakness that created room for widespread corrupt practices especially flouting of the criteria of disbursement of bursaries. In addition, there were indicators that guidelines on bursary application procedures and criteria of disbursement were not being followed. This gave room to the CBCs to create

their own rules at the disadvantage of needy students who deserved the financial intervention.

This study found out that there were guidelines in reference to bursary administration and award process. Unfortunately, there was deviation from the government guidelines making the bursary application process a burden to parents and students. Shortcuts were used by CBCs to award bursaries, resulting into a significant percentage of students who deserve financial assistance being left out. Ironically, some students who could afford to pay school fees were awarded bursaries, an unfair situation that disadvantaged students who deserved financial assistance. Corrupt practices were displayed such as nepotism, clanism and political interference. This was a sorry state that needed an urgent reversal if at all learners from poor households in Homa Bay County were to benefit and enjoy equal educational opportunities with those from affluent families. Furthermore, parents and their children ought to have been more outgoing and interactive to capture the bursary opportunities offered through FBOs, NGOs, CBOs, development partners and other sponsors. No child should be kept at home in this era when people can even seek for financial assistance over the internet and other media.

Parents in the study location expressed several views on the key concerns of the study. A majority observed that a needy student in Homa Bay County was likely to get bursary a maximum of two times within the four years of secondary education.

One female parent in Homa Bay County had this to say;

“You are never sure of bursary. My son only got it two times in four years. I don’t know if they perceived me as rich. I never felt the impact because the financial burden was still heavy, especially the lunch programme.”

The above quote shows that parents considered the issue of students missing bursary awards a challenge barring them from participating continuously in educational activities until they completed their secondary education. There was also a suggestion that a database of needy students be created so that the students could be assisted up to completion of their secondary education. Parents aired their opinion that if corrupt practices were not stemmed out, the end result would be a multitude of ghost beneficiaries. Respondents suggested that needy students be awarded bursaries until they complete their secondary school education so that they get access to the job market and socio-economic mobility.

The challenges that faced bursary scheme in Homa Bay County were weighty. The factors listed could have impacted on secondary school education to different levels, jeopardizing needy learners' chances of progressing with and completing their secondary education successfully. The study suggests that to address the challenges in bursary administration, a multidimensional approach ought to be used so that all relevant stakeholders are brought on board to address these problems.

These study findings are in agreement with the findings of Kioko (2013) whose study on the influence of Constituency Development Fund on students' access to secondary school education in Kilungu District Makueni County, Kenya revealed common challenges faced in the distribution of bursary funds. These were lack of transparency, lack of clear procedures, corruption and that the process was slow and cumbersome since students didn't know the amount to expect and when they would receive it. The results of the study are also in agreement with a study conducted by Odebero (2007) which found out that the amount of bursary funds disbursed to

constituencies from the Ministry of Education was insufficient and could not meet the demands of the high number of the needy applicants.

4.8 Summary of findings

The study findings indicate that there are many students who did not apply for bursary due to a myriad of reasons, an issue that should be urgently addressed. It was noted that some students who applied for bursary did not get any allocations. Out of the total orphans who applied, a minority got bursary while a majority did not, in contrast with their counterparts with both or single parents who seemed to be favoured during the allocations. In terms of gender, more female students got bursary as compared to their female counterparts. Even though the bursary scheme had many positive attributes, most students admitted that the amount of bursary they were allocated was not enough. The study also revealed many challenges facing the education bursary scheme which the government should make all possible efforts to mitigate for the benefit of the students. Many respondents indicated that they got information on bursary funding, but there were still a few who did not get such information, a gap that should have been addressed urgently. The CBCs mainly considered students in boarding schools when awarding bursaries, a questionable criterion since being in boarding school doesn't necessarily make a student needier than his or her counterparts in day schools. It was found out that some members of the bursary committee were irrelevant and therefore the composition of the CBCs ought to have been reviewed for effective administration of the funds. Benefits derived from the secondary education bursary scheme included, but were not limited to subsidized school fees for learners, provision of meals in school, improvement of school attendance, students from poor households benefit, bursary motivates

children to attend school, children from different socio-economic backgrounds get equal opportunity to learn and more girls participate in schooling.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research in conformity with the subject of investigation which was the influence of secondary education bursary scheme on participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County. The chapter has also elaborated on the nature of the problem and other concerns that emerged in the course of the research. The conclusions arrived at are substantive as they are drawn from answering research questions and recommendations were made for the relevant stakeholders to address specific concerns.

The study set out to address the following objectives:

1. To establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County.
2. To find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County.
3. To establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County.
4. To determine the extent of fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County.
5. To identify the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County.

5.1 Summary of the study findings

This summary is guided by the objectives and research questions that guided the study.

5.1.1 Bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County

The study found out that a big percentage of students (77%) applied for bursary. However, a significant 23% did not apply due to various reasons including fear of disappointment after multiple failed attempts to get bursary awards and lengthy application procedures. This sheds light on why the government purpose of using the bursary scheme to assist the vulnerable and low-income was not fully realized.

The study also found out that during vetting of bursary applications, students with both parents got more slots. This indicated that most families, even those with both parents alive, were low income earners and therefore there were many needy students. The fact that more girls got bursary as compared to boys was an indication that the purpose of enhancing education of the girl child was being fulfilled. The Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman and Wood that guided the study stressed on each individual being given opportunity to develop their naturally given capacities and talents without barriers like gender discrimination so as to promote their socio-economic mobility.

The bursary application forms were filled by students, their parents, chiefs and lastly the principals who had readily available information about the student for example fee payment records. The study found out that the constituency bursary committees followed certain criteria to determine the beneficiaries, the greatest priority being

given to students in boarding schools, orphans, students with special medical conditions, discipline of students and lastly girls got more marks than boys. The researcher also sought to know the relevance of the different constituency bursary committee members. The respondents dismissed CBO, NGO and FBO representatives as irrelevant while indicating that the most relevant member was the MP followed by parents and teachers union. The researcher was of the opinion that most respondents had a narrow concept of the roles of the different CBC members, something the researcher attributes to misconception and lack of enough awareness on the roles of the various CBC members since the CBO and NGO representatives had gone to an extent of establishing data for needy students and their input in the bursary committee would be rewarding.

5.1.2 Awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County

The method that was used most often to let stakeholders know about bursary forms' existence was through school communication and chiefs' barazas. As such, stakeholders were well informed on the availability of the bursary forms and the funds. However, information of the bursary scheme and applications ought to have been diversified more by exploring other channels that had been less utilized for example churches, friends and family and lastly online announcements.

In a bid to find out whether stakeholders had information on other education financing options apart from the CDF and county bursaries, this study found out that other than CDF bursary, the most popular alternative financing option was tuition vouchers, followed by county government bursary, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs. The

latter options were less utilized but could provide supplement for education financing purposes.

5.1.3 Extent to which needy learners benefit from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County

According to the study findings, school fees for learners was subsidized, the money catered for meals in school, classroom attendance improved and more students were motivated to attend school. The study also found out that the social and economic disparities in school were reduced by providing equal opportunities in education through bursaries. There was a significant reduction in school drop-out and more girls participated in secondary education, bridging the gender barrier that was there before. Parents also benefitted from the scheme as they no longer shouldered the heavy burden of fee payment.

The researcher seconds a suggestion by parents that the government should increase the funds so as to make the scheme adequately cater for the needy students in the region. They also suggested that a database be established so that one needy student does not apply many times but the records be used to assist the students up to Form Four.

5.1.4 Fairness in the distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County

Majority of students who had both parents were awarded bursaries just like those who had single parents. However, a minority of total orphans received the awards, a pointer to unfairness in the bursary awards since this category of students are among the most vulnerable people in the county and should have been given greater

consideration. The finding that more girls benefitted from the scheme than boys was a pointer to the fact that one of the scheme's major intentions, education of the girl child, had been met. However, it would be considered unfair that the proportion of girls was too high compared to boys who benefitted according to the guiding theory of this study, the Classical Liberal Theory by Sherman & Wood (1982), which proposed education for equal opportunity without barriers like prioritizing a certain gender when giving opportunities that would lead to socio-economic development.

5.1.5 Challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County

The study noted that the bursary awarded per student was insufficient, its timing irregular and not in line with the school calendar. There was no certainty of receiving the award making it difficult to plan for school fees. Other far reaching challenges were revealed including political interference and manipulation, corruption by constituency bursary committee members who also take advantage of political patronage by the members of parliament to practice vices such as clanism and favouritism, denying many needy children a chance to benefit from the scheme. Such malpractices were disadvantageous to students who ought to have benefitted from the scheme.

The research revealed that there was little effort to capture data on needy students apart from the information filled on bursary forms whose accuracy was not easy to verify. Other factors that disadvantaged the needy students and denied them a chance to benefit from the scheme included flat-rate amounts of bursary awards despite students' different levels of need and use of academic performance to

determine who and who not to award. Poor administration was manifested in needy students having to apply for bursary every disbursement season because of lack of proper records.

5.2 Conclusion

The study arrived at the following conclusions based on the study findings:

Based on the first objective of the study which was to establish the bursary application procedure and disbursement criteria in Homa Bay County, there was revelation that CBC officials came up with own rules which led to vices like corruption, nepotism, favouritism and clanism, unfair practices that had capacity to prevent needy students from benefitting from bursary award. The methods of vetting bursary applications were put in the bursary forms but they were rarely followed, because there were corrupt and unfair practices that went against the vetting rules for example clanism, favouritism and multiple awards to the same students. The study observed that the aspect of unfair criteria of awarding bursary influenced the relationship between bursary scheme and participation of students in a negative way. Some of the information filled in bursary application forms were hard to verify thus it became impossible to tell the difference between a needy student who deserves financial help and a child of an influential politician.

Based on the second objective which was to find out the awareness creation mechanisms on existence of bursary in Homa Bay County, the study findings showed that a big portion of the population got information on bursary. This information was majorly on availability of bursary forms and collection points; public sensitization was not done on details of the scheme. Apart from the call for

bursary applications, the public were not informed about any other details concerning the bursary scheme and stakeholders were not given for public participation. This could be a reason why some parents ignored calls to assist their children apply for bursaries.

Based on the third objective which was to establish the extent to which needy learners benefitted from the bursary scheme in Homa Bay County, the study found out that bursary had subsidized school fees for learners, relieving parents of a big financial burden. It had helped in paying for meals especially in day schools. Many students hailing from poor households were motivated to attend school and there school dropout had decreased. More girls had also been encouraged to attend school because of bursary.

Based on the fourth objective which was to determine the extent of fairness in distribution of secondary school bursary awards in Homa Bay County, fairness was not adequately observed as focus was not given to the most vulnerable group of students like orphans so that they get equal opportunity to go through secondary education smoothly and progress in life. One of the scheme's goals was to cushion these vulnerable students against effects of poverty which may include inability to properly pay for their secondary education.

Based on the fifth objective which was to identify the challenges that faced the secondary education bursary scheme in Homa Bay County, the government guidelines were downplayed by the constituency bursary committee who created their own criteria of disbursement of the funds. As much as bursary funding was an

exciting and welcome idea to parents who perceived it as a financial relief, it became negatively affected by corrupt practices and needy students started missing out on the very important financial aid. Political patronage and manipulation created opportunity for the committee members to get involved in corrupt practices which impacted negatively on the noble intention of the scheme's establishment. This led those in charge of the scheme to behave like people in an open market where every person does business to achieve his or her own goals. Quality of service in constituency bursary offices in Homa Bay was significantly compromised by the above practices. The study also found out that an uncountable number of needy students who deserved bursary awards failed to get due to unprofessionalism of the scheme's officers and corrupt practices that rendered the purpose of the scheme ineffective.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were made for the various groups of stakeholders involved in the secondary education bursary scheme.

5.3.1 Policy makers

1. The government should review bursary application guidelines to remove concept ambiguities by placing guidelines which are specific, measurable and time-bound. This step should be followed closely with supervision or monitoring of the bursary scheme process in relevant offices.
2. In-service courses should be held to train those who are directly involved in the vetting and disbursement of awards. Guidelines on their areas of

responsibility should be clearly spelt out with matters of integrity given the emphasis they deserve.

3. The government should address the emerging challenges for instance lack of adequate funding of the bursary scheme by increasing budgetary allocation towards the docket owing to the high number of needy students while at the same time placing strict measures that will ensure bursary money is channeled to the needy students. Measures to deal with errant CBC members should be spelt out even if it means total overhaul of the committee when they perform mistakes.
4. How clear data on needy students is accurately collected should be clearly spelt out such that once a needy student is registered in a data bank then assisting the needy student is done automatically until he or she completes the fourth form without subjecting the learner to recurrent applications every disbursement season.
5. The government should ensure disbursement of bursary runs with the school calendar to prevent uncertainty amongst students and their parents. The government should also come up with modalities of establishing data on needy students without relying on school information alone. Data can be got from practical visits to the homes of needy students.
6. Finally, the government should ensure a review of the membership of constituency bursary committees to ensure effective running of the scheme and that the funds assist the right targets who are the needy students.

5.3.2 Constituency bursary committees

1. The bursary offices at CDF and county levels should conveniently organize joint stakeholders' awareness for several issues such as bursary procedure and data on beneficiaries should be discussed. Stakeholders should also be informed on when to expect the bursaries and the approximate amounts of money to expect. It should be ensured that the less utilized information dissemination methods like the internet and churches supplement the common methods of awareness creation which are schools and chief's camps.
2. Make it clear to stakeholders the criteria used in bursary disbursement; explain what makes a student needier than others and address specific stakeholders like school principals, parents and chiefs on how to answer questions posted in the application forms for bursaries. In addition, let the stakeholders get it clear on whether a needy student has to apply multiple times or once before completing the fourth form.
3. On matters of integrity, it is regrettable that key integrity questions were at the centre of the conduct of the constituency bursary committee members. Issues of various types of corruption, nepotism and clanism were alleged against constituency bursary committee members. Irrelevant members should be removed from the committees to create sanity. It is time to take the task of correcting the deliberate malpractices that have characterized and underrated the government's purpose to offer financial assistance to students from low income households so that they have equal opportunity as their counterparts from financially able families.

4. The bursary offices in Homa Bay County should ensure they allocate bursaries in a more equitable way while ensuring the rightfully needy students are targeted. This can be done by desisting from behaviours such as political patronage and clanism.

5.3.3 Parents

Based on study reports that indicated some parents were upset by previous unsuccessful bursary applications and ignored making any more attempts, an attitude that may have negative consequences on the participation rates of needy students, parents are advised to:

1. Act without exerting pressure on the bursary officers so that they do their work without undue influence.
2. Parents are advised to explore other sources of funding other than bursary. Explore other sources of funding. This study assumed that most parents are aware of other financing options that exist to help their children and they should be exploited for example the NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, foundations like the Safaricom Foundation and development partners like UNICEF and APHIA 2. Parents should make use of them instead of putting many expectations on the bursary scheme alone. The fee burden and a substantive education cost has been lifted off parents through a systematic government initiative by paying capitation grants, examination fees, school projects fees and text books costs for all students in public schools. Let parents continue to work hard in order to supplement students' boarding costs, day schools' lunch programmes and other buying of personal items like school uniforms.

This will support the education programmes and enhance students' participation rates in educational activities.

5.3.4 School principals

1. Based on the study results that indicated that school principals have detailed information on needy students' statuses, the information principals fill in the bursary application forms should be true and accurate so that the needy students in every school can have equal chances to be selected for bursary award.
2. Principals should facilitate the process of application for bursaries by informing parents on how to acquire bursary application forms from specific locations. More sensitization over the form can be discussed during school open days since parents usually attend such forums. The principal should explain to parents the importance of applying for the different bursary types and other education financing options available at their disposal.
3. Based on the study findings, the principals and the schools ranked first in divulging information on bursary existence through verbal assembly messages and school notice boards. Principals are advised to do mass production of bursary forms in school, give the needy students to take home for filling of the necessary details by parents and chiefs after which the principals would fill their part and ensure the whole package is delivered and acknowledged at the bursary offices. The principals can also send bulk sms to all parents over such information.

5.4 Areas for further research

The results of this study only focused on Homa Bay County due to its unique characteristics and features. A topic of general concern like this research topic is likely to generate rich study findings in other regions of the country. Factors related to the poverty situation and need for bursary in Homa Bay County may be different from those in Kiambu or Kirinyaga County which have rich agricultural county. It may therefore be necessary to carry out such research in the other counties to obtain diversified views on bursary scheme and its influence on secondary school participation.

On a similar note, this study revealed different factors that influence the interaction between the bursary scheme and participation of learners in educational activities, factors which are worth being study topics on their own and therefore should be subjected to further research. For instance, a study on political patronage in the bursary scheme and its impact on secondary school education participation by learners from poor households may generate more interesting results.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

I am a PhD student in the Department of Educational Foundations at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a research on secondary schools bursary scheme and its influence on secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County. Kindly respond to the questions freely and as honestly as possible. This information will not be used for any other purpose rather than the research study.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Gender:

- a) Male [] b) Female []

1.3 Job Experience as a teacher:

- 1) Less than 5 years [] 2) Between 6 to 10 years []
 3) Between 11 to 20 years [] 4) More than 20 years []

1.4 Experiences as Senior Teacher:

- 1) Between 1 to 2 years [] 2) Between 2 to 3 years []
 3) Between 3 to 4 years [] 4) More than 4 years []

1.5 Highest level of Education:

- 1) Bachelors [] 2) Masters [] 3) PhD [] 4) Diploma []

1.6 School Type 1:

- 1) County [] 2) Sub County [] 3) Extra County []

1.7 School Type 2:

- 1) Mixed [] 2) Boys [] 3) Boys []

1.8 School Type 3:

- 1) Day [] 2) Boarding [] 3) Day/Boarding []

SECTION B: TO FIND OUT THE CRITERIA USED TO AWARD BURSARIES BY THE BURSARY COMMITTEES TO IDENTIFY BENEFICIARIES

4.1 Which are the criteria used by the Constituency Bursary Committees to select beneficiaries?

SECTION C: TO ESTABLISH THE EXTENT TO WHICH STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC ARE INFORMED OF THE BURSARY SCHEME EXISTENCE

3.1 In your view, which are the most commonly available education financing options for your students?

3.2 Highlight how parents and students are made aware of the secondary education bursary scheme?

SECTION D: TO ESTABLISH THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE LEARNERS WHO DESERVE BURSARY ASSISTANCE BENEFIT SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

In your opinion, what benefits have students gained out of bursary scheme?

SECTION E: TO IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGES FACING THE SECONDARY SCHOOL BURSARY SCHEME

2.1 In your opinion, what challenges hinder effective implementation of the bursary scheme?

SECTION F: TO SUGGEST POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING LEARNERS SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY SITE.

6.1 What recommendations would you give to make bursary scheme better.

APPENDIX II: STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE (SQ)

I am a PhD student in the Department of Educational Foundations at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a research on secondary schools bursary scheme and its influence on secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County. The attached questionnaire is expected to assist the researcher gather data on respondents purely for research purposes. Kindly respond to the questions freely and as honestly as possible. This information will not be used for any other purpose rather than the research study. Do not indicate your name.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Age: _____

1.1 Form:

Form 1 [] Form 2 [] Form 3 [] Form 4 []

1.1 Gender:

1) Male [] 2) Female []

1.2 How many siblings do you have?

1) Male:

2) Female :

1.3 Family status,

1) Both Parents Available []

2) Single Parent []

3) Total Orphan []

1.4 School Type 1:

1) County [] 2) Sub County [] 3) Extra County []

1.5 School Type 2:

1) Mixed [] 2) Boys [] 3) Boys []

1.6 School Type 3:

1) Day [] 2) Boarding [] 3) Day/Boarding []

SECTION B: TO IDENTIFY THE BURSARY APPLICATION PROCEDURE.

2.1 Have you ever applied for bursary?

YES [] NO []

2.2 If NO, why didn't you apply

2.3 If YES, did you succeed to get bursary

2.4 If you succeed to get bursary, how much were you given?

2.5 Was it enough for your fee within the term?

SECTION C: TO ESTABLISH THE EXTENT TO WHICH STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC ARE INFORMED OF THE BURSARY SCHEME EXISTENCE.

3.1 Do you get information about bursary application?

3.2 How do you and your parents get information about the secondary education bursary scheme?

SECTION D: TO ESTABLISH THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE LEARNERS WHO DESERVE BURSARY ASSISTANCE BENEFIT SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN HOMA BAY COUNTY

4.1 What benefits have students gained out of the bursary scheme.

SECTION E: TO FIND OUT THE CHALLENGES FACING THE SECONDARY EDUCATION BURSARY SCHEME

Outline the challenges facing bursary scheme

- PA Members ()
- NGO/CBO ()
- 3 Principals ()

2. Do you think the CBC gives priority to certain student categories when awarding bursaries, for example girls, boarding students or students in national schools? YES () NO ()

Explain the criteria used by CBC to select bursary beneficiaries.

SECTION C: PROBE ON STAKEHOLDERS' PUBLIC SENSITIZATION

1. What are the most commonly available education financing options for your students? _____
2. How does information on bursary scheme reach parents and learners?

3. What advice can you offer to enhance sensitization over the scheme.

SECTION D: PROBE ON THE EXTENTS TO WHICH STUDENTS WHO DESERVE BURSARY ASSISTANCE HAVE BENEFITTED TO ESTABLISH IMPACT OF BURSARY

In your opinion what gains have learners reaped from bursary awards?

SECTION B: PROBE ON CHALLENGES FACING THE BURSARY SCHEME IN HOMA BAY COUNTY

Outline the challenges facing the secondary education bursary scheme?

SECTION F: TO SUGGEST POSSIBLE RESOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING LEARNERS' PARTICIPATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Suggest three ways in which the bursary scheme can serve its purpose better.

APPENDIX IV: FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS

SUB-COUNTY _____
 DIVISION _____
 LOCATION _____
 SCHOOL _____
 DATE _____

Introduction

The main purpose of this discussion is to seek your opinions on concerns over bursary scheme. The study intends to come up with documented recommendations that will assist in making bursary scheme serve you and your children better than it is already doing. That is why I want to request you to freely give your ideas and opinions over a few questions that have been posted here.

1. What is your relationship with the student in the above named school? Tick the correct answer.
 - a) Daughter ()
 - b) Son ()
 - c) Cousin ()
 - d) Grandchild ()
 - e) Any other. Explain

2. What economic activity do you do for a living? (probe on socio-economic status)

What are the specific sources of financial resources that you use to educate the student? Choose from the answers below.

 - a) Farming ()
 - b) Fishing ()
 - c) Market business ()
 - d) Shop business ()
 - e) Salaried employment ()
 - f) Other Explain

3. Which method do you use to pay fee for the student? Tick one.

- a) Cash
- b) Bank
- c) Post Office
- d) In kind

4. Are there challenges you have in paying fee for students?

- a) YES ()
- b) NO ()

5. If the answer to the previous question is YES, explain.

How do you go about the challenges?

Do you apply for educational bursaries?

- a) YES ()
- b) NO ()

6. If your answer to the above question is YES, how do get information that it is time to apply for bursary? _____

How do you go about the application process? _____

Has your child always got the bursary?

- a) YES ()
- b) NO ()

7. If the answer to the previous question is YES, explain what you have always done to ensure your child always gets bursary.

If your answer to Q.11 is NO, explain briefly your experience with bursary application and award processes.

In your opinion why do you think some people get bursaries while others do not? _____

To what extent have you been assisted with bursary to subsidize fee payment since your child was admitted in the school? _____

How best do you think the bursary fund should be used to assist the learners from poor families to participate in secondary education to completion?

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE CBC OFFICIALS

County _____
 Constituency _____

Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to seek your opinion on government-initiated bursary scheme in Homa Bay County. The main aim is for the researcher to do a study on the operations of the scheme and to arrive at recommendations that may be useful in facilitating increased learner participation rates in secondary schools.

County _____
 Sub-county _____
 Constituency _____
 Date _____

SECTION A

1. What is your gender?
 - a) Male ()
 - b) Female ()
2. What are your academic qualifications?
 - a) Certificate ()
 - b) Diploma ()
 - c) Degree ()
 - d) Masters ()
 - e) PhD ()

SECTION B: PROBE ON ISSUES RELATED TO APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA OF DISBURSEMENT

1. How many members compose CBC?
 - a) 10 ()
 - b) 15 ()
 - c) Any other () Explain _____
2. What has changed since the function of bursary administration moved from schools to CBC? Rate the answers below at a scale of 1-5 marks where Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, Strongly Agree (SA) = 5

- i. The policy of disbursement changes ()
 - ii. The applicant is identified at grassroots ()
 - iii. There is greater transparency in operations ()
 - iv. Guidelines for bursary scheme exist ()
 - v. More stakeholders are involved ()
 - vi. Decisions are made at a central location ()
 - vii. There is public discourse ()
 - viii. There is guidance on channels and protocols of application ()
 - ix. Every constituency considers their own needy students ()
 - x. Bursary funds reach deserving beneficiaries through vetting ()
 - xi. More vulnerable learners are assisted ()
3. Do you give priority to total orphans, girls, boarding, bright and disciplined students in bursary disbursement? Explain why they get first priority
- _____
- _____
4. Even after the above criteria have been used to select beneficiaries, issues such as multiple awards to the same students have been reported. Give your judgment of the criteria by ticking the correct options.
- a) Very efficient ()
 - b) Efficient ()
 - c) Inefficient ()
 - d) Very inefficient ()
5. If you are given a chance to make changes on the criteria form 'd', what changes would you make? _____
- _____

SECTION C: PROBE ON PUBLIC SENSITIZATION

1. To what extents do you inform parents, students and the general public about the bursary scheme? _____
- _____
- Are there other bursaries that are received in your constituency apart from the NG-CDF bursary?
- a) YES ()
 - b) NO ()
 - c) If Yes, which ones _____
2. How do you ensure that the bursary you disburse benefits as many vulnerable learners as possible? _____
- _____

3. Do you have a system of informing the needy students who missed in the previous allocation and assuring them that they stand a chance in the next disbursement?
 - a) YES ()
 - b) NO ()
4. If the answer to the previous question is NO, do you therefore see the need to keep accurate data on the learners who need financial assistance?
 - a) YES ()
 - b) NO ()

SECTION D: PROBE ON EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BURSARY FUND ON PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. Would you say bursary funds are disbursed fairly?
 - a) YES ()
 - b) NO ()
2. If the answer is NO, describe the unfairness. _____

3. If your response to (1) above is YES, how is the fairness reflected?

4. Would you say bursary scheme has played an important role in learner participation? YES () NO ()
Explain

SECTION F: PROBE ON POSSIBLE AREAS OF RECOMMENDATION

1. Rate the recommendations by ticking in the appropriate boxes.

Recommendations to improve the scheme	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
County to run a central bureau for bursary administrators			
Devolve all funds to county for easy management			
Disbursement schedule to tally with school calendars			
Give schools a chance to identify the truly needy students			
Others; specify			

2. In a systematic way, make brief comments on how to deal with challenges in the following areas.
 - i. Large population of needy children
 - ii. Inadequate sensitization
 - iii. Less amount of money remitted for CDF bursary
 - iv. Lack of correct data on beneficiaries

v. Need to improve CBC composition

vi. Others; Explain _____

SECTION E: PROBE ON CHALLENGES FACING THE BURSARY SCHEME

1. The following complaints have been widely alleged about bursary fund administration and award. Show whether you Agree or Disagree.

Weaknesses in bursary scheme	Agree	Disagree
Inadequacy of funds/insignificant amounts		
Inconsistency of the awards		
Political patronage influencing fund operations		
Obscure policy guidelines on disbursement		
Corrupt practices like double or triple awards to some students		
No clearly stated guidelines		
Flawed criteria		
No proper monitoring tools for the scheme		
Negligible impact on the needy students		
Injustices caused by lack of transparency		
Inconsistent and unreliable funds		

**APPENDIX VI: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
AND CBC MEMBERS**

Janet Auma Ojwang
Kenyatta University
Department of Educational
Foundations
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Respondent,

I am a PhD student in the Department of Educational Foundations at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a research on secondary schools bursary scheme and its influence on secondary school participation by learners from poor households in Homa Bay County. You have been selected to participate in this study due to the importance attached to the information expected of you.

The attached interview schedule is expected to assist the researcher gather data on respondents purely for research purposes. Kindly respond to the questions freely and as honestly as possible. This information will not be used for any other purpose rather than the research study. Do not indicate your name. This demonstrates the level of confidentiality attached to the information given.

I thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

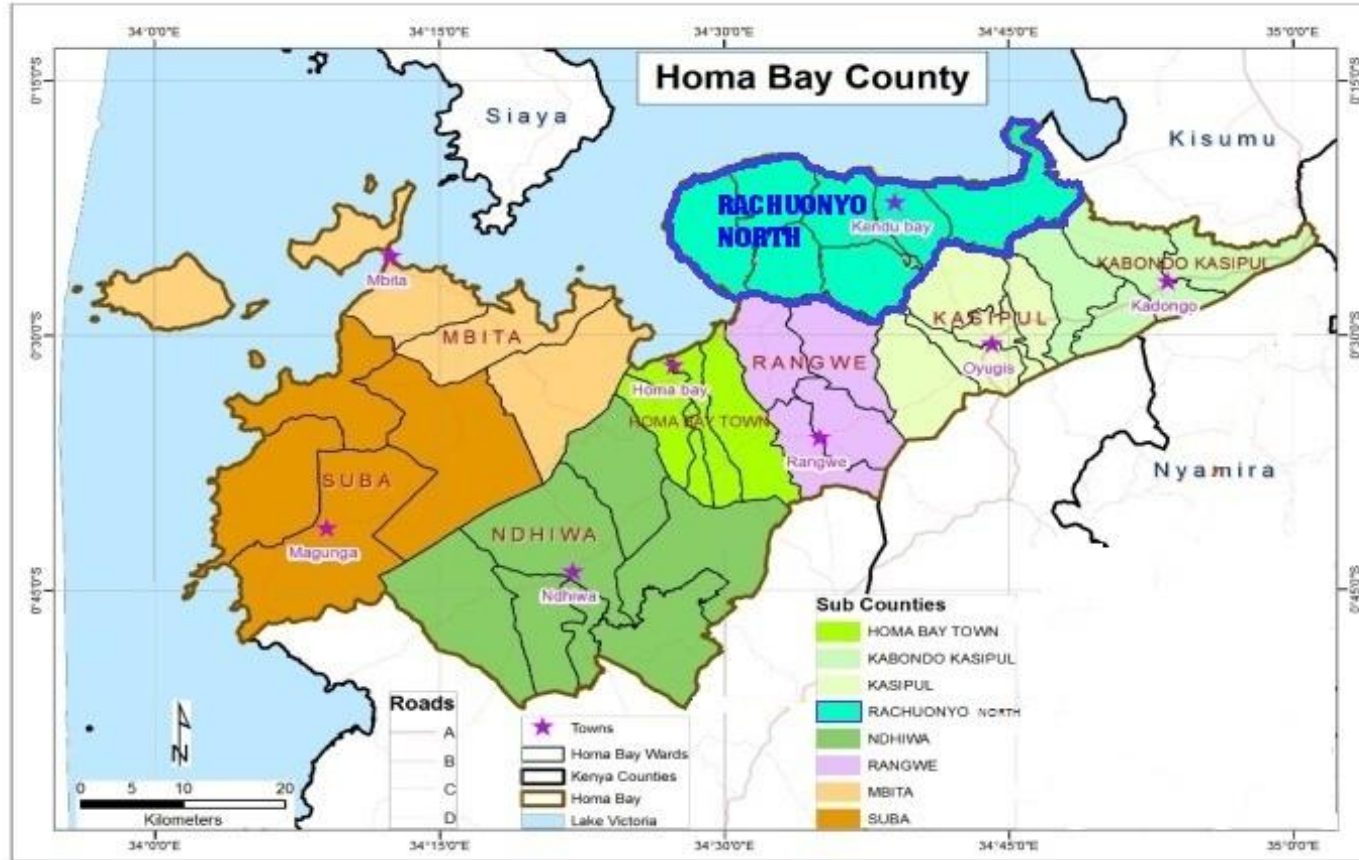
JANET AUMA OJWANG

APPENDIX VII: LOCATION OF HOMA BAY COUNTY IN KENYA



Source: Centre for Economic Governance

APPENDIX VIII: LOCATION OF RACHUONYO NORTH SUB-COUNTY IN HOMA BAY COUNTY



Source: Homa Bay County Integrated Development Plan 2013- 2017.

APPENDIX IX: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 31st October, 2019

TO: Ms. Janet Auma Ojwang
C/o Department of Educational Foundations
Kenyatta University

REF: E83/10567/07

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

We acknowledge the receipt of your revised Research Proposal entitled "Secondary School Bursary Scheme and its Influence on Secondary School Participation by Learners from Poor Households in Homabay County, Kenya" as per recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 2nd October, 2019.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

By copy of this letter, the Registrar (Academic) is hereby requested to grant you substantive registration for your Ph.D. studies.

Thank you

**KEUBEN MURIUKI
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Registrar (Academic) Att. Mrs. Lucy Njenga
Chairman, Department of Educational Foundations


Supervisor


1. Prof. Daniel Sifuna
C/o Department of Educational Foundations
Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Violet Wawire
C/o Department of Educational Foundations
Kenyatta University

RM/cao

Committed to Creativity, Excellence & Self-Reliance


APPENDIX X: LICENSE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **753922** Date of Issue: **22/November/2019**


RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Ms.. JANET OJWANG of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research in Homabay on the topic: SECONDARY SCHOOL BURSARY SCHEME AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION BY LEARNERS FROM POOR HOUSEHOLDS IN HOMABAY COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 22/November/2020.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/19/2956**

753922
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



**NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document,
Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.**

APPENDIX XI: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

MIYUGA MIXED SECONDARY SCHOOL
24 FEB 2020
P.O. Box 75-40301 MAWEGO
SIGN: [Signature]
24/02/2020
Received for action.



PRINCIPAL
KARABONDI BIDII SEC. SCHOOL
P. O. Box 221 - 40301, KENDU BAY
Date: 24/2/2020
Sign: [Signature]

Received for action

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR EARLY LEARNING & BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING" Homa Bay
Telephone +
When replying please quote
cdehomabay@gmail.com

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
HOMA BAY COUNTY
P.O BOX 710
HOMA BAY
DATE: 6TH JANUARY, 2020

REF: MOEST/CDE/HBC/ADM/11/VOL. II/32

MS. JANET OJWANG
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY



Received for action

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "SECONDARY SCHOOL BURSARY SCHEME AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTICIPATION BY LEARNERS FROM POOR HOUSEHOLDS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Homa Bay County for the period ending 22nd November, 2020.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a copy of the final research report to the County Director of Education Office after completion both the soft copy and hard copy.

Thank you in advance.



Received for action
Date: [Signature]

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
HOMA BAY COUNTY
P.O BOX 710-40301, HOMA BAY
Email: cdehomabay@gmail.com

MR. SHEM OMBONYO
FOUR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

County Commissioner
Homa Bay County.



PRINCIPAL
KAMWALA SEC. SCHOOL
P. O. Box 240 KENDU BAY
Date: 24/02/2020

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
GEORGE AGOLA OWUOR
S SECONDARY SCHOOL
P. O. Box 155 - 40301,
KENDU BAY.

PRINCIPAL
ST. ELIZABETH KOTIRO SEC. SCHOOL
P. O. Box 32-40303 RANGWE
Date: 15-3-2020

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
GENDIA HIGH SCHOOL
24 FEB 2020
P.O. Box 14 - 40301, KENDU BAY



6/3/2020