

The attainment of basic literacy and numeracy is fundamental to the achievement of rapid and sustained economic growth. Primary education also provides a fundamental base for all further schooling, training and self-education. Equity considerations have seen increased concern both nationally and internationally and efforts to ensure that opportunities for basic education are available to all citizens without discrimination whatsoever have featured highly in educational policy issues.

The current micro-economic setup has necessitated the governments to cut down their expenditures on social services, hence the introduction of cost sharing (which however is not a new concept in Kenya as evidenced by the Harambee movement). The concern here is that there is additional burden brought about by cost sharing. The implementation of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) has had adverse negative effects on the welfare of the vulnerable groups. Despite the fact that the betterment of the people's welfare through alleviation of illiteracy amid other factors is an explicit and consistently pursued objective of the Kenya Government, the welfare of some people has been comprised. The theme of this study, parental socio-economic status and its influence of class one enrollments' has been chosen for a couple of reasons. First, the low enrolment rates in the district where educational services (school) are available, is a cause of concern if illiteracy is to be eradicated. Second, where the peasant farmer has to choose between the future benefits from investing in education and the immediate (and much needed) benefits of child labor is an issue to be considered if all children of school going age are to be enrolled in school. The study in this respect attempted to highlight the causes of low enrolments in Migori district and the situation of the parents in regard to their ability to meet the educational requirements for their children.

The design of the study causal comparative. Structured and unstructured questionnaires were administered to Headteachers and parents, in the district, spread over the five administrative divisions.

The data collected were analysed using percentage comparisons, standard deviations and means. The results of analysis show that the patterns of educational opportunity are not equitably distributed throughout the district since the opportunity index were varied per division and it is evident that the socio-economic status of the parents and the system of education does not facilitate equal opportunity of schooling to every child. They form a bottleneck especially to the poor, whose children then cannot enter the system.

The study therefore saw a great need for the government to introduce pre-school education to be the mainstream of primary school education to reduce some of the bottlenecks for equal access to primary education. Budgetary allocations should be increased per unit costs in primary education for increased access to school.

Amid other strong recommendations to the policy makers is the increase of awareness to the communities on the significance of education to their children. For Migori, there is also a great need to evaluate the role of the polygamous homes and their attitudes towards education as a major awareness campaign to the provision of education for all.