FACTORS INFLUENCING TRANSITION OF PUPILS FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KALAMA DIVISION, MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Basic Education Act 2013 considers secondary education as a basic education and made it obligatory to all pupils. This Act among other global conventions and state legal documents such; as the constitution of Kenya and vision 2030 champions for rights of children and more particularly on access to education. In spite of the enactment of these rules, transition rates from primary to secondary education in Kenya more especially in Kalama Division is very low. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the factors influencing transition rates from primary to secondary school in Kalama Division, Machakos County. The study was guided by three objectives focusing on, the home based, school based, and society based factors that affect transition rate from primary to secondary. The target population for this study included parents, head-teachers and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. The research adopted a descriptive survey design and also used questionnaires as the primary data collection tools. The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Through data analysis the study established that KCPE performance in Kalama division has been below average as reported by some school head teachers who indicated that their schools scored as low as 195 marks as the school mean grade. The study also established that most of facilities such as classrooms, desks, tables, chairs, staffroom and playfield are not adequate. The inadequacy of such facilities leads to congestion in classes hence affecting pupils' performance in examinations. The findings also show that there are home based factors such as poverty, child labour, gender, parents' perception of education, HIV/AIDS, giving a chance to siblings to continue with education, cultural practices and drug abuse which affect transition rate. Besides the home based factors, there are school based factors like poor performance in KCPE and failure to complete primary school which affect transition rate. Other school based factors include peer influence, scarcity of secondary schools, teenage pregnancy and discouragement by teachers however; these factors have minimal effect on transition from primary to secondary school. The society based factors which affect transition rates in Kalama division are inadequate job opportunities, early marriages, low self-drive and lack of role models in the local community. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended that the government and other educational stakeholders should come up with an elaborate system of identifying the poor and bright students and offer them scholarship to pursue secondary education. It also recommends that the law against child labour should be intensified and pupils together with the parents should be

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informed about the law. On gender disparity, the parents ought to be sensitized on the need to give all children equal opportunity to pursue education. The study also recommends that guidance and counseling departments should be equipped with trained teachers, that is, all teachers handling guidance and counseling should be well educated and equipped with guidance and counseling skills. On the other hand, the graduate teachers who are deployed to teach in primary schools should be given headship in schools for better management of primary schools. As a strategy of improving self-esteem of the pupils, there is need to involve successful people from the community especially those who excelled academically to give a motivational talk to the pupils, this will make them develop a positive attitude towards education. There is also need to improve academic performance by equipping the schools with adequate facilities such as, classrooms, desks and chairs.

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