

**ASSESSMENT OF BURSARY SCHEMES ON STUDENTS' ACCESS AND  
RETENTION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MOUNT ELGON CONSTITUENCY,  
BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The implementation of bursary scheme was aimed at addressing disparities in access to secondary by students from disadvantaged households. Studies on the MOEST bursary fund though limited have raised questions on its effectiveness in addressing students' access to secondary education. The purpose of this study was to conduct an assessment on the bursary schemes effect on students' access to secondary education in Mount Elgon Sub constituency. The objectives of the study were; to determine the available bursary schemes, to find out the criteria used in the award of bursary funds, and to examine the influence of bursary funds on enrolment, retention and completion in secondary schools in Mount Elgon constituency. The study research design was descriptive in nature. The target population comprised of 300 bursary recipients', 30 principals, 180 class teachers, 74 PTA/BOM members, 13 CDF officials and 5 MOE officials. Stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting respondents. The instruments used were structured questionnaires for students, headteachers and teachers and interview guides for PTA/BOM officials, CBF officials and Education officers. The instruments were pre-tested before final administration to the field. Data from interview schedules were analysed using content analysis while data from questionnaires was analysed using descriptive statistic and inferential statistics (Karl Pearson correlation) with the help of SPSS. The analysed data was presented using pie-charts, tables, graphs, narrative forms and bar graphs. The study established that bursary programmes had average influence on students' access to secondary schools. The amount given to students was too little to support their academic fees and this forced them to go back home while others opted to drop out of schools. Cases of repetition were observed and also the completion rate was below 50%. Furthermore, the study found out that there existed significant positive relationship ( $r=0.412$  &  $p=0.412$ ) between bursary fund allocation and student access to secondary education in Mount Elgon. However, the relationship was on average suggesting that increased allocation of CBF would improve access to secondary schools in Mount Elgon constituency. The study recommends that the policy criteria should be followed to the letter by all concerned parties, stakeholders' engagement in the whole process should be encouraged and government should increase CBF funding to enable needy, disabled, bright and orphaned children to access secondary education in Mount Elgon Constituency.