

THE RATIONALE BEHIND HIGH DROP OUT RATE OF STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOLS IN KARURI ZONE, KIAMBAA SUBCOUNTY, KIAMBU COUNTY.

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ABSTRACT

The government decree in 2003 which gave birth to FPE resulted to an increase in enrolment rates in public primary schools. The implementation of FPE saw the transition rates of both boys and girls to secondary schools in Karuri Zone, Kiambaa sub-county increase, however the number of students who complete form four is low meaning that a critical number of students drop out . The purpose of this study will be to unravel the rationale behind this high drop-out rate of students in secondary schools in Kiambaa sub-county despite the fact that the government has introduced free secondary education in day secondary schools and subsidized boarding secondary schools. The study intended to investigate family, community and school aspects that were responsible for the high drop-out rates of students in high school. The study was significant in that it yielded significant empirical data and information on drop-out rates that can guide educational policy formulators to develop strategies to curb the high dropout rates. The study was guided by the input-output theory as advanced by Jencks (1972) and was conducted using descriptive survey design .The sample size was 417 respondents. The information was collected using questionnaires, interviews, and survey as a way of gaining insight to factors responsible for the high drop out. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed. Qualitative data was organized to sets of observations and presented according to study objectives. The findings indicated that most learners in secondary schools dropout due to poverty, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, early marriages corporal punishment as well as demotivation from parents who had low education yet were doing well economically. The leading cause of dropout among boys was drug abuse while teenage pregnancy took the lead in contributing to the dropout of girls. The findings also found out that learners had low education aspiration and lacked role models in the society who had succeeded in life as a direct result of acquiring higher education. The findings also revealed that the community contributed to a greater extent to the dropout by having a materialistic approach to life instead of education; It provided illiterate and semi illiterate role models and glorified economic gains a the expense of education ,it has diverse economic activities that do not require education. The study recommends social change to enhance and strengthen the understanding among families of the indispensable value and role of education in the society