

Communication Technology-led Development in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa's Education Systems: A Cross-Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

The commitment of the Kenyan government in providing education towards human resource development remains commendable. The government has engaged in several institutional changes and policy pronouncements to ensure that the quality of education improves. Budgetary allocations keep rising year after year, with the education sector selected as one of the prioritized sectors. However, the level of education performance remains unbalanced in the country. Imbalances are also evident in terms of student enrolment in which several schools are yet to achieve communication technology parity. In Chuluni District, communication technology disparity is evident. Education provision for the girl child remains dire in the region. In particular, aspects such as school-based factors, socio-cultural factors, and socio-economic factors remain detrimental to the girl child regarding education attainment in Chuluni district. Such a disparity necessitates a study that would conduct an in-depth examination of some of the content-specific and context-specific factors that shape education attainment for the girl child in Chuluni District. As much as the Kenya government, through the Ministry of Education, is striving towards education provision in regions and human groups with special needs, Chuluni District's education performance remains wanting. The region is yet to approach a full utilization of recommended educational technologies and approaches that enhance communication technology balance in education provision.

Keywords: Budgetary allocations, institutional changes, disparity necessitates.

INTRODUCTION

Parental attitudes towards the sons and daughters differ from one community to another. Whereas daughters may be brought up for female roles, the sons' entire working life may be devoted to career building. The daughters' roles constitute child rearing. In a study by Chapman (2004), it was documented that the demand for education depends on the clients' socio-economic status. The study indicated that affordability poses a significant implication on the guardians' and parental inability to meet the indirect and direct costs of schooling. Such a condition forces the parents and guardians to withdraw their daughters' support in school systems (Chege and Sifuna, 2006). The evolution of structural adjustment programs implies that the direct costs of schooling may increase. Whereas the abolition of school fees or, the subsidization of school fees in countries such as Malawi may seem to relieve parents of the economic burden associated with girl child education, the parents and guardians are not relieved of similar expenses at household level.

Therefore, the assertion implied that there is a direct relationship between the socio-economic status of a family and the extent to which parental support for the girl child's education is achieved. However, the affirmation falters in such a way that findings failed to account for specific analysis of economic statuses of parents in relation to the support or withdrawal from school systems. Instead, the observation made generalizations regarding the correlation between socio-economic statuses of families and parental support of education for the girl child; yet issues such as prevailing social practices and political conditions (in relation to education acquisition for the girl child) remained unaddressed.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a secondary study approach, gaining insights from government and institutional reports to discern trends in and the impact of communication technology-led development on the education sector.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FROM PREVIOUS SCHOLARLY INSIGHTS

The following figures illustrate this study's key findings regarding how communication

technology-led development in Kenya's education sector promises better outcomes at the regional and national levels.

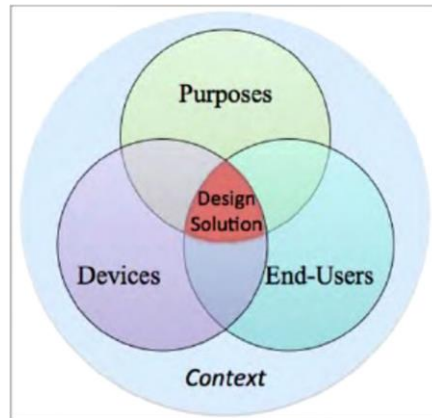


Figure 1: ICT relationship with design solutions and end-user experiences in education

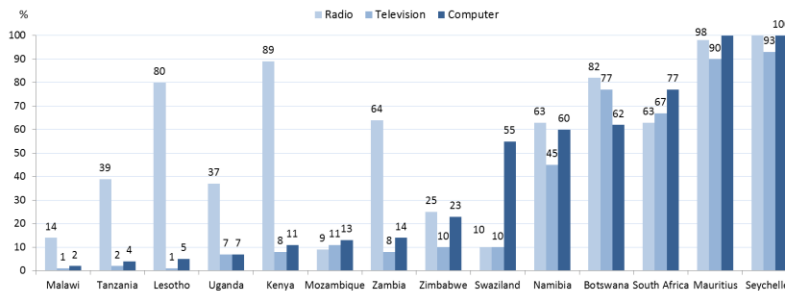


Figure 2: The case of Kenya versus selected African cases on ICT use in education

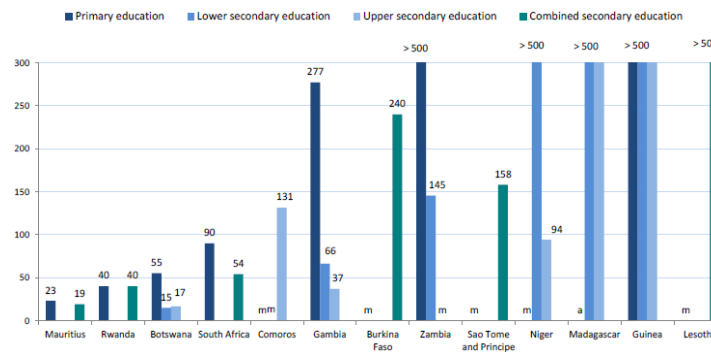


Figure 3: A reflection of the learner-to-computer ratio

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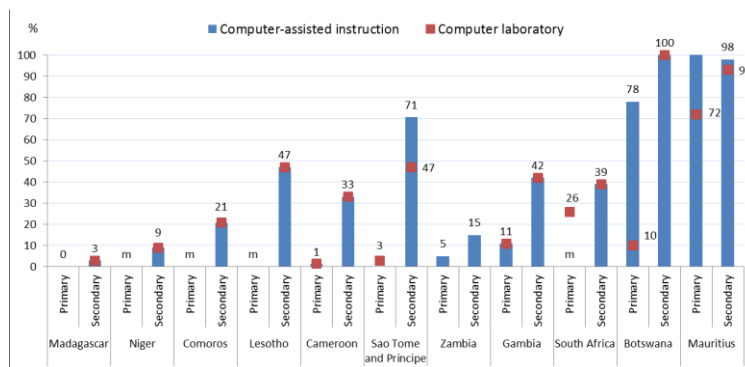


Figure 4: Trends in the use of computer-assisted instruction

Desarrollo (2007) strived to understand the relationship between education provision and perceived benefits accruing from schooling. Findings indicated that parental and child perception of benefits that may accrue from education shapes the decision to enroll and remain in school. In addition, the study indicated that educational performance of girls is shaped by perceived benefits accruing from school attendance. Some of the perceived social and private benefits associated with education for the girl child include poverty reduction and economic development by means of health improvement, communal equipment, and increased labor productivity (Egbuna, 2006). Such an affirmation is critical to the current study in such a way that it accounts for the role of intrinsic motivation, the perceived benefits at parental and child level, in shaping the decision to enroll and remain in education systems; focusing on the girl child. It is also notable that the observation is significant because of the direct relationship established regarding individual perceptions of educational gains in relation to intrinsic motivation towards knowledge acquisition. However, the study failed to account for factors external to parental and the girl child, in relation to school enrolment and pursuance of education.

According to Eshiwani (1993), the rate of school dropout and enrolment is determined by the availability of education institutions (such as schools). In addition, the proximity to education institutions has been documented to affect the rate of school dropout and enrolment (FAWE 2000). In relation to the current study, such documentation is relevant in such a way that it examines the role of infrastructural development in relation to education provision for the girl child. In this case, infrastructural development concerns aspects such as the availability of

classrooms, passable roads, and proximity to learning institutions. Overall, the literature suggests that the nature of institutional proximity and school structures correlates directly with the number of female students enrolled and, the eventual nature of their performance. However, the study fails to account for the role of parental motivation and other socio-cultural practices that may promote or hinder knowledge acquisition for the girl child.

A study by Feinberg (2003) indicated that the school environment plays a significant role in shaping the enrolment and performance of female students. The school community consists of physical structures, human interactions, teachers, managers and other stakeholders. Specifically, factors within the teacher include teaching approaches, teacher behavior, and attitudes. The academic achievement and educational persistence of female learners has been documented to depend on the teachers' factors. Whereas a conducive and effective school environment has been associated with high rates of girl child enrolment and improved performance in schools, poor performance is linked to harsh conditions in which learners experience stress because of non-permissive contexts of learning. The assertion is highly contributory and reliable because it examines the aspect of school factors, which are external to the girl child learner, in determining the level of performance and, the extent to which school enrolment is conducted. However, the affirmation fails to consider aspects such as regional education policies in relation to education provision for the girl child.

According to Galgalo (2002), the health status of learners determines the level of performance and, retention rates. As such, effects of malnutrition and poverty are perceived to be

more detrimental to the girls than boys. Whereas boys may be exposed to preferential feeding, girls pose high chances of being malnourished. In addition, the exposure to heavier domestic workloads accounts for the malnourishment of girls in various regions (FAWE 2002). The dire state of affected girl populations is associated with negative eventualities such as increased rates of dropout and, poor performance. Negative effects in retention rates and performance have also been directed at the girls' statuses such as pregnancy among the adolescent groups. Indeed, the assertion indicates that an individual's state of health affects the level of academic performance and retention rate among education institutions; unexceptional of the girl child (Garikai, 2010). However, subjectivity in such an assumption arises in the sense that aspects such as teacher competency and nature of the learning environment are unaddressed in relation to school attendance among female students. Instead, the observation makes assumption that as long as the female student is health, regardless of the nature of the learning environment and teacher competencies, education performance is likely to be high; coupled with high retention rates.

CONCLUSION

This study examined factors affecting education acquisition for the girl child in Chuluni District. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies should focus on factors responsible for the acquisition of education among girls in other Districts of Kitui County. In addition, future studies should focus on factors affecting education acquisition for the girl child in Chuluni District, with particular focus on a larger sample, projected to reveal detailed outcomes for the formulation of more educational strategies. Lastly, future studies should focus on the role of technological inventions and innovation in shaping school attendance among girls in Chuluni District.

It is also recommended that education stakeholders and managers in Chuluni District engage in transitional leadership. Through transitional leadership, education continuity is likely to be enhanced by ensuring that some of the potential leaders in the current staff teams are trained or prepared to take up future roles. In so doing, education for the girl child is likely to be ensured because individuals who take up

leadership roles in future will be characterized by adequate knowledge of trends in school enrolment for the girl child, trends in academic performance, and trends in the rate of dropout cases. Such adequacy accounts for the effectiveness of future education strategies that will seek to enhanced knowledge acquisition of the girl child in Chuluni District.

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