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**INFLUENCE OF CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT BURSARY FUND  
ON RETENTION OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to assess the influence of constituency development bursary fund on retention of students in public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to examine the criteria employed in awarding Constituency Development Bursary Fund in public secondary schools; to find out the level of influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on retention of students in secondary schools; to establish main challenges facing constituency development bursary fund programme and to determine strategies on ways of making Constituency Development Bursary Fund more efficient in secondary schools. The target population of the study was 24 principals, 35 class teachers, 1434 form four students, 5 area chiefs and 1 Sub-county Education Officer (SEO). Saturated sampling was used to select 24 schools, 24 principals, 35 class teachers and 5 chiefs, Sub-county Education Officer (SEO) and simple random sampling to select 143 students. Descriptive survey research design was used to shape the research. Data collection was carried out using questionnaires and interview schedules. To test for reliability, test-retest technique was applied and a correlation coefficient of 0.70 was obtained. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency counts while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. From the study findings, it was found out that the level of awareness on Constituency Development Bursary Fund (CDBF) application and qualification criteria was very low in secondary schools and therefore the deserving students did not apply for the CDBF; the criterion used in awarding bursary fund was family background, academic performance and discipline; the bursary allocated was not enough to cater for all the educational costs. The main challenges facing CDBF were: inadequacy of funds, corruption, political influence and irregular allocation of funds to needy cases. The study concluded that CDBF slightly improved retention of students in secondary schools. The study recommends that the government should review the guidelines on allocation of CDBF to ensure that the deserving students benefit from the funds and bursary funds should be devoid of political interference.

**Keywords:** Constituency Development Bursary, retention, secondary school education

## **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Investment in education is regarded as a key factor in economic growth and development of a country by developing the necessary human capital through training and schooling. This is why governments throughout the world invest huge sums of money in education while at the same time trying to ensure access, retention and equity to those disadvantaged groups in the society.

At the beginning of 1990s several international conferences emphasizing the importance of education were held. Notably was the Jomtien world conference of Education For All (EFA) where most developing countries reaffirmed their commitment to providing to their school age children universal access to the first cycle of education. Following this declaration enrolment expansion at the primary school level throughout the developing world increased. Unfortunately, the Jomtien conference paid little attention to the consequences of enrolment expansion at the primary school level in relation to the resources needed for secondary schools. However, it was clear then that in many developing countries, secondary school participation rates could not grow rapidly without changes in the structure and the nature of funding (Lewin, 2001). That made many government bodies in the world to review how secondary education was going to benefit the poor hence bursaries and scholarships were availed.

In Singapore, the government through the Ministry of education has a bursary scheme in place known as Edusave Merit Bursary that is meant for students whose household income is less than \$4000 a month. They provide \$300 for secondary 1 to 5. Eligibility is for students who are already in secondary school and whose performance is good that is 25% in a stream (MOE, 2012). This goes a long way to retain students who could have otherwise dropped due to lack of school fees.

In UK, a key priority of the Government is to eliminate the gap in attainment between those from poorer and more affluent backgrounds, and to ensure every young person participates in and benefits from a place in 16-19 education and training known as YPLA Bursary Scheme. The Government provides funding to tackle the disadvantaged both through the YPLA's funding formula and through support to help young people meet the costs of participating in education and training post 16-19 (YPLA, 2012). This further helps students to be retained in schools.

In India, the National Scholarship Scheme has been implemented since 1961. The objective of this Scheme is to provide scholarships to the brilliant but poor students so that they can pursue their studies in spite of poverty. The Scholarship Scheme for Talented Children from Rural

Areas for Class VI to XII is an on-going scheme since 1971 with the objective to achieve equalization of educational opportunities, and to ensure development of talent from rural areas by educating talented rural children in good schools. The schemes were implemented as Centrally Sponsored Schemes up to IX Plan. The Department then merged these schemes to form the “National Merit Scholarship Scheme” for implementing within an approved outlay (Ahmed and Khan, 2007). When such schemes are ongoing there is one goal which is the retention of students in schools. In this scheme the parent or guardian has to swear an affidavit to establish that they are genuinely needy.

In Zambia and Malawi, studies show that close to 70% of secondary school students are entitled to bursary schemes which are supposed to cover 75% tuition fees for most beneficiaries and up to 100% for vulnerable groups such as double orphans .Bursary schemes are also favored to improve retention of girls in the schools (World Bank, 2006).Even though bursary schemes are designed to improve retention of students in public secondary schools some students drop out of school because of extreme poverty levels which the scheme does not address like provision of uniform and other personal effects.

In Kenya, the Constituency Development Bursary Fund (CDBF), which was formally referred to as Secondary School Education Bursary Fund (SEBF), was introduced by the government for secondary schools during 1993/1994 financial year, with an initial allocation of Ksh. 25 Million. By the 2002/03 Financial Year total allocation had reached KES 548 million. At the inception of the scheme, funds were disbursed directly to secondary schools from the Ministry of Education (MOE) headquarters, based on the school’s student enrolment. Schools were expected to distribute the bursary funds in accordance with guidelines issued by MOE. The bursary targeted the vulnerable groups namely; orphans, girls, children from slums and the poor in high potential areas and in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) districts (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

The underlying rationale was that no child who qualifies academically for secondary education should be denied access to secondary education because of the inability to pay school fees .This portrays that the government was committed to ensuring that students from less privileged families access and complete their education through the bursary scheme .However, many students from poor families drop out of school even when they have performed exemplarily well in primary school (Odebero, Bosire, Sang, Ngala and Ngware, 2007). The challenge that most parents from poor backgrounds face is the fact that secondary schools are not actually free of charge. This is because the indirect costs of secondary education are enormous and many parents cannot afford owing to the high poverty levels in the country. The government subsidies for secondary education do not cover hidden costs of education such as transport, uniform, lunch and boarding fees. These costs are still high for poor households who may find it difficult to maintain their children in secondary schools.

The objectives of the bursary scheme were to; increase access to secondary school, ensure retention of students in secondary school, promote transition and completion rates, and to reduce disparities and inequalities in the provision of secondary school education. However, a number of complaints were leveled against the manner in which the fund was being administered prior to 2003. These included undeserving students benefiting from the fund, very few beneficiaries being reached, ghost students being awarded bursaries and beneficiaries being awarded insignificant amounts (Republic of Kenya, 2009). In 2003 the Constituency Development Fund Act, 2003 was established (GOK, 2003). The Ministry and other stakeholders decided to modify the scheme in line with government policy on decentralization and to respond to complaints of mismanagement and lack of impact. Instead of sending funds from headquarters directly to schools, the funds were channeled through constituencies (Oyugi , 2010 ).

Despite the government's efforts to improve access and retention of students in secondary schools, evidence shows that access to secondary education is still highly skewed in favour of the rich (Oyaro, 2008). Okoth (2009) also shows that thousands of poor students in Kenya do not benefit from CBF bursary leading to dropout. He further argues that there are loopholes in the allocation of bursaries. There was therefore need to assess the influence of CBF bursary against one of its main objectives "to ensure retention of those who enter secondary schools" in public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County.

One of the key objectives of the Constituency Development Bursary Fund is to ensure retention of those who enter secondary schools. At its inception in 2003, hopes were high in the country that the most deserving students would be rightly identified for financial support. The general thinking was that, the initiative would enhance the participation of students with financial difficulties in secondary education. However, contrary to this expectation there are major concerns about the fund with regard to realizing its objectives. Major concerns revolve around whether needy students benefit from the Constituency Development Bursary Fund, allocation criteria and inadequate finances for the scheme rendering it unable to cater for all the needy cases. Furthermore KSSDP 2008-2012 indicate high dropout rates in secondary schools 30.4% (ROK, 2009).

From the literature reviewed no empirical studies had been documented on the influence of constituency development fund on retention rates in secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. In view of the aforementioned, an empirical study was conceived with a focus on Kisii South Sub-County to assess the influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on retention of students in public secondary schools.

The objectives of the study were to: Examine the criteria employed in awarding Constituency Development Bursary Fund to students in public secondary schools; Find out the level of influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on retention of students in public secondary schools; Establish main challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund

programme in retaining students in public secondary schools and Determine strategies on ways of making administration of CDBF more efficient in retaining students in public secondary schools.

## **RESEARCHERS METHODOLOGY**

This study employed descriptive survey research design because it enabled the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data; enabled the researchers to gather information on opinions, attitudes and beliefs of the sampled population as well as employ research instruments such as questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis for effective data collection and analysis.

### **Study location**

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County in Kenya. The selected due to high dropout rates, familiarity and interest. The Sub-County has 31 public secondary schools of which only 24 have students registered up to form four. The study targeted form four students because they had stayed longer in school and had vast experience on bursary funds.

### **Sample and sampling techniques**

The study used saturated sampling to select class teachers, principals, SEO and chiefs and simple random sampling to select the students. This yielded to 35 class teachers, 24 principals, 5 chiefs, 1 SEO and 143 students. The 143 students were proportionately selected using 10% as suggested by Gay (1992).

### **Research instruments**

The main tools of data collection for this study were questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions was used to collect data from principals, class teachers and students on the influence of constituency development bursary fund on retention of students in secondary schools.

Two structured interview schedules were used to solicit information from the SEO and the chiefs. Interview schedule for the chiefs sought information regarding the economic backgrounds of parents, allocation criteria of the funds to needy students, impact of the funds on retention rates and its effectiveness, challenges facing implementation of CDF bursary and ways of improving CDF bursary programme.

Interview schedule for the SEO had items seeking data concerning allocation criteria of the funds to needy students, impact of the funds on retention rates and its effectiveness, challenges facing disbursement of the funds and ways of improving CDF bursary programme.

### **Validity of the Instruments and Reliability of the instruments**

To enhance reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted in three schools which were not used in the final study. The three schools were used because according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) at least 10 per cent of the target population is ideal for piloting. The schools were randomly selected from the 24 targeted secondary schools. Each school was assigned a number. The numbers were written down on a small piece of paper, folded and put in a container. The researchers then picked at random three pieces of papers from the container representing the schools for piloting. Questionnaires were administered and this was repeated after elapse of one week. Scores obtained from the first and second test were analyzed. From the two responses, a Pearson Product Moment formula for test –retest was used to compute correlation coefficient. A correlation coefficient of 0.70 was obtained and the instruments were accepted as reliable. The formula for computing the correlation coefficient is:

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2)(\sum y^2)}}$$

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Questionnaires were to the class teachers, students and principals. The selected principals were visited in their schools and the questionnaires administered to the respondents. The principals, students and class teachers were given about one week to fill in the questionnaires after which the filled-in questionnaires were collected. Face-to-face interviews were then conducted with the chiefs and SEO.

### **Coding**

In this study coding was done manually to engage the respondents and allow deeper understanding of the process. Numerical values were assigned to responses in closed ended questions. For items with Yes or No responses, Yes was assigned 1 and No was assigned 0. On the other hand responses from Likert scale type of items were assigned numerical values according to their levels. For instance, very effective was assigned 5, effective 4, ineffective 3, very ineffective 2 and not sure 1; strongly agree 5, agree 4, undecided 3, disagree 2 and strongly

disagree 1. Similarly very high was assigned 5, high 4, low 3 very low 2 and not sure 1. Further on items seeking information on academic performance, excellent was assigned 4 good 3, average 2 and poor 1. Answers of respondents were counted straight off the questionnaires to determine the way respondents' answers were distributed across the possible set of responses. With responses from open ended questions, thematic analysis was done.

### **Data Analysis, Findings and Discussions**

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis was done. Simple descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency counts were used to analyze quantitative data. Qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions were analyzed by arranging responses according to themes based on the study objectives and research questions and thereafter, inferences and conclusions were drawn.

### **Criteria Employed in Awarding CDBF to students in Public Secondary Schools**

Principals were asked to indicate the procedure employed in their schools in bursary disbursement.

**Table 1: Principals' responses on Procedures Employed in Bursary**

#### **Disbursement in Schools**

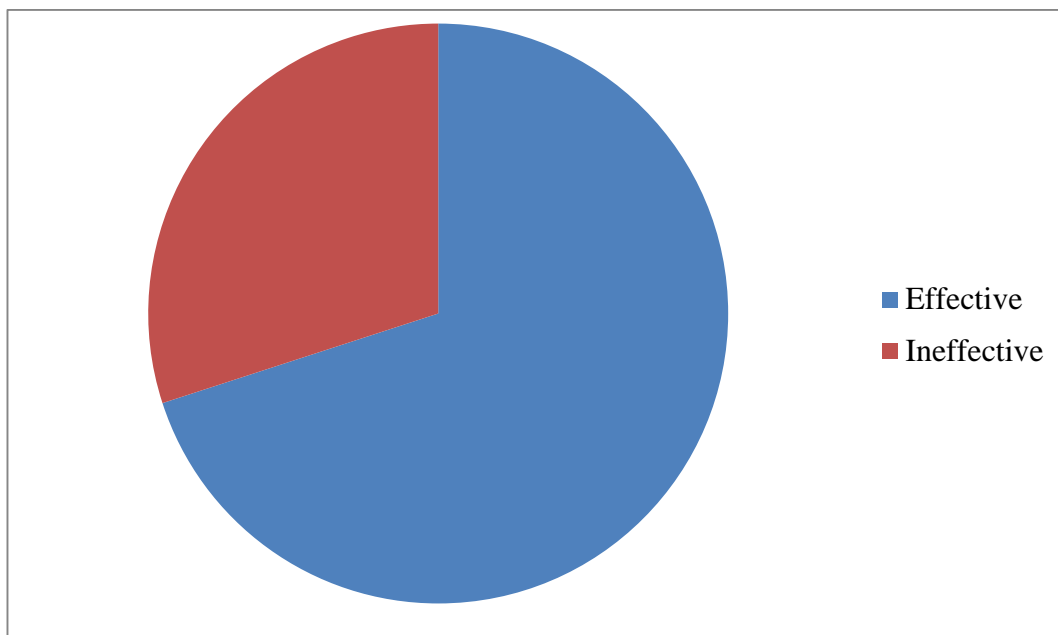
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Students fills forms and await Consideration	7	41.18
CDF office disburses	4	23.53
Vetted by CDBFC and cheque Disbursed to schools	3	17.65
Student allocated pick Cheque from CDF office	3	17.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that 7(41.18%) of the principals indicated that students fill forms and wait for consideration, 4(23.53%) of them said CDF offices disburses the funds whereas 3(17.65%) reported that students allocated funds pick Cheques from CDF offices and another 3(17.65%)



revealed that students were vetted by CDBFC and cheques disbursed to schools. This illustrates that principals are not directly involved in bursary disbursements in their schools based on the responses they gave.

Principals were also asked to rate the effectiveness of the procedures employed. Figure 1 shows their responses.



**Figure 2: Effectiveness of procedures employed on bursary disbursement**

The figure shows that 12 (70.59%) of the principals indicated the procedures employed on bursary disbursement in their schools were effective since they were able to capture student bio data ,economic background of the parent ,student performance and family background status as stipulated in the CDF policy guidelines.5(29.41%) indicated that the procedure was ineffective.

Further in determining students who were to apply for the bursary, 10(58.82%) of the principals said that they considered those with huge fees balances and their background information, 3(17.65%) reported that application for bursary was open to all students, 2(11.76%) indicated that they consider bright and needy students who are willing to learn, 1(5.88%) said that CDBF committee determines while 1(5.88%) indicated that they were not involved. This depicted that to some extent school principals played a role in determining students who were to apply for bursary funds.

The chiefs were required to respond to a question on how they participate in the disbursement of CDBF. This was relevant to establish whether they understood their roles in bursary



disbursement. One chief (A) had this to say: *“My major role in the disbursement of CDBF is to sign forms for the students and confirm that they hail from my area of administration.”*

From the chiefs transcript the following points were revealed: Signing forms, confirming and area of residence

On the same note another area chief (B) had the same sentiments and asserted that:

*You know our work concerning bursary is only to sign forms for the students and ensure that those we sign for come from our area of administration*

From the chiefs response the following were cited: Signing forms and confirming area of residence

On interviewing another area chief (C) he attested that:

*When application for bursary fund is due i convene a baraza to inform people about bursary so that they can pick forms and apply for consideration. I also sign for those ones who come from my location.*

Points that can be cited from the respondent are: Informing people when application is due and signing forms

The chiefs were further asked about the criteria used to award bursaries to needy students. In response one chief (A) said that: *“Mostly when considering the award of bursary first priority is given to orphans followed by students with single parents and those with both parents but in needy are considered last.”*

The respondent revealed that: First priority was given to orphans, Students with single parents were considered next and Students with both parents but who are needy are considered last

In response to the same question a chief (B) said:

*The orphans are given the highest marks. Those with single parents are ranked second highest and lastly students with both parents but who are needy. In addition students’ performance and discipline is also taken into consideration.*

The following can be cited from the chief: Orphans considered first, followed by students with single parents and lastly those with both parents but in needy and Performance as well as discipline is also considered

Further another area chief (C) contended that:

*You know the committee in charge considers first whether a child is an orphan or not. Then those with single parents follows .If there are students with both parents and have problems of fees they are also considered. Other requirements include performance and gender.*

From the transcript the following points were cited: Orphans, those with single parents and those with both but needy are considered and Gender and performance are also considered

### **SEOs response on Criteria Employed in Awarding CDBF to needy students in Public Secondary Schools**

The SEO was required to respond to a question on how they participate in the disbursement of CDBF. This was relevant to the researchers so as to know whether he really understood his role in bursary disbursement. The SEOs' responses were that:

*I participate in a number of ways when it comes to disbursement of bursary funds. I collect data from the field about students' enrolments in the sub-county and furnish the Ministry for decision making. I also form a committee to oversee the implementation of the Ministry's guidelines on bursary allocation and disbursements. Signing cheques and authorizing for payments is part of the responsibilities that am entrusted with. Once students have been awarded bursaries and due process followed i forward returns of beneficiaries to the Ministry of Education.*

The points revealed by the respondent are: Collection of data from schools about enrolments and furnishing the Ministry for decision making, Forming committee to oversee the implementation of the guidelines on allocation criteria, signing cheques and authorizing payments and Submitting returns of beneficiaries to the Ministry of Education

The SEO was further asked about the criteria used to award bursaries to needy students. He asserted that:

*The criteria followed are well laid down by the ministry. We consider regional balance whereby in this case each location is supposed to identify needy cases and forward for consideration. The issue of gender is taken care of so as to ensure that a girl child is not left out from benefitting from this bursary fund. We also look at ability of the applicant, orphans are given priority followed by those ones with single parents and those with both parents but needy are considered last. In addition the performance of a student has to be average. Allocations are also done as per the status of the i.e. national, county and Sub-County schools.*

The following points were revealed from the SEO: Regional balance was considered, Gender balance was also considered, Ability where orphans are given priority followed by those with single parents and finally those with both parents but needy, The performance of a student was looked at and The allocations are done as per the status of the school

The SEO was asked whether there were systems of internal checks and balances to ensure compliance of allocation criteria. His responses were that: *“I am in charge and therefore i ensure that the criteria are followed according to the Ministry’s guidelines.”*

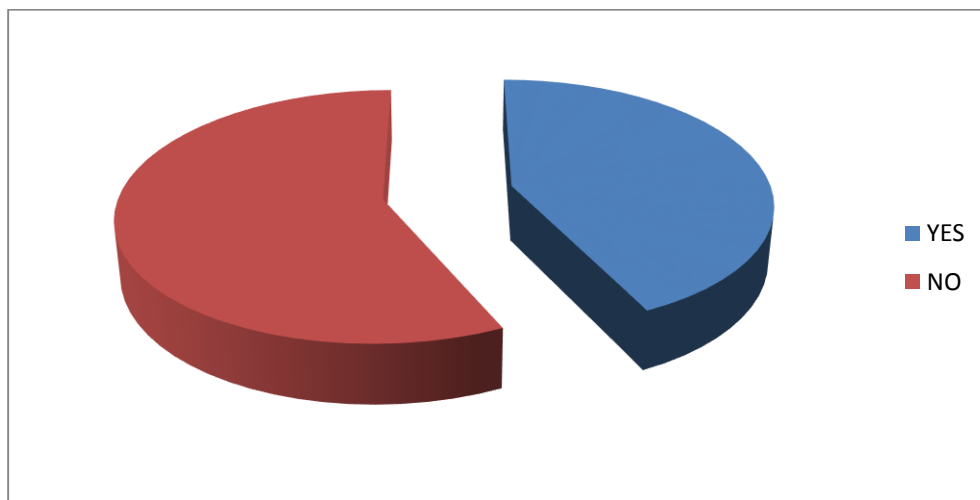
From the SEOs transcript the following can be revealed: SEO is in charge and Ministries’ guidelines are followed in awarding bursary

### **Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

The second objective of the study was to find out the level of influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on retention of students in public secondary schools. This objective was responded to by students, class teachers, principals, chiefs and SEO. The researchers wanted to establish whether there was any relationship between CDBF and retention of students in public secondary schools.

### **Students Response on Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

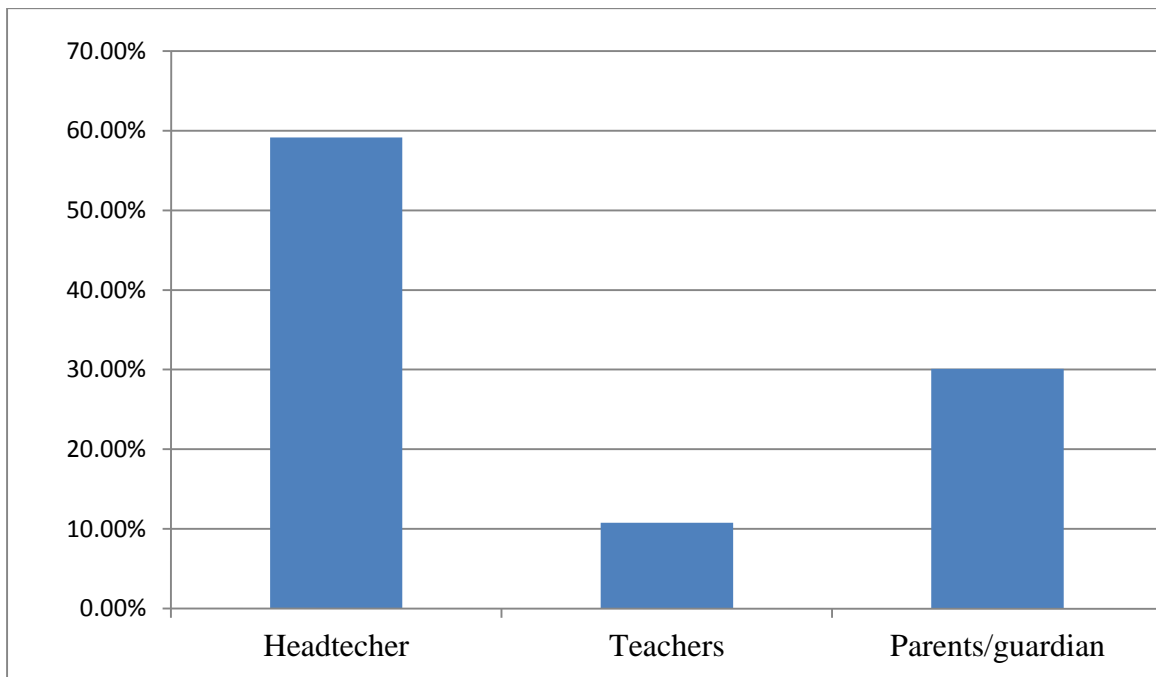
Students were asked to indicate whether they had ever heard of constituency development bursary fund. Figure 2 shows their responses



**Figure 2: Response on Awareness of Bursary Funds**

From the study findings, nearly all the students 90(80.36%) revealed that they had heard of the constituency development bursary fund while 22(19.64%) of the sampled respondents said they had never heard of the bursary fund. This depicts that the level of awareness on CDBF was very high in secondary schools in Kisii South Sub County. The findings disagrees with Orodho and Njeru (2003) who noted that the government bursary fund was yet to achieve its main objective of ensuring access and quality education as the deserving beneficiaries did not fully participate in applying for the bursary owing to lack of adequate information about CDBF.

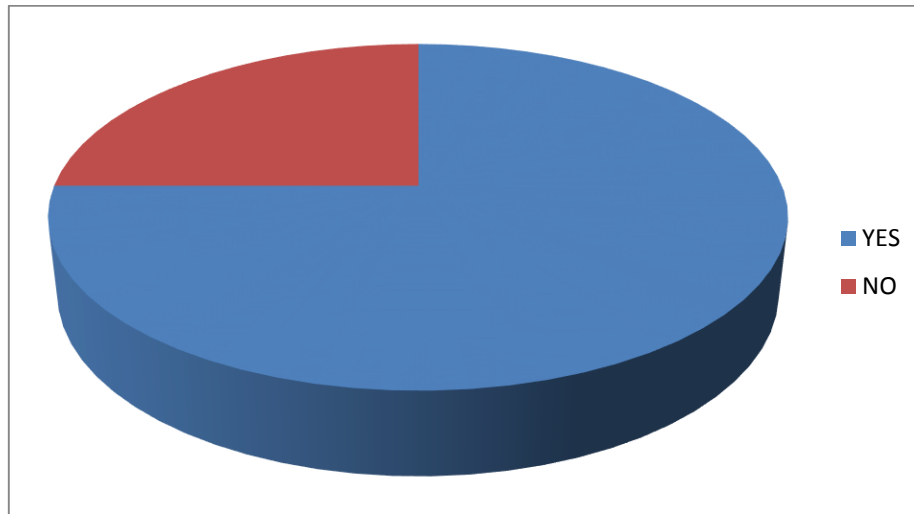
The students were further asked to indicate from whom they heard about the constituency development bursary fund. Their responses were as shown in figure 3



**Figure 3: Response on source of information on CDBF**

Figure 3 shows that out of 93 students who responded, slightly more than half, 55(59.14%) of them revealed that they had heard about the bursary fund from the head teachers, 10(10.75%) of the students respondents had heard from the teachers while 28(30.11%) of the sampled students had heard about the bursary fund from their parents/guardian. This depicts that the students relied on their head teachers and parents/guardian to know about the CDFB. The findings disagrees with Fedha (2008) who argues that the level of sensitization among the students and the parents on government SEBF programme was low as the coordination in the implementation of SEBF was only left to the bursary committees.

The students were asked to indicate whether they had ever applied for bursary funds. Figure 4 shows their responses



**Figure 4: Response on Application for Bursary Funds**

Figure 4 shows that 67(59.82%) of the students had ever applied for bursary fund while 45(40.18%) of them had never applied for bursary fund. The findings depicts that a significant number of students respondents recognized the CDBF as an important source of fund to ensure retention in secondary schools. According to Njeru and Orodho (2003), funding the secondary education was very costly to majority of the families in Kenya and required external assistance from the government and NGOs to cushion the families from the heavy financial burden of educating their children. Thus bursaries were important sources of funds to ensure access and retention of students in secondary schools.

The study also sought to know from the students why they never applied for the bursary fund. This is shown in table 2

**Table 2: Students Reason for Not Applying For Bursary Fund**

Reason for not applying for bursary	Frequency	Percentage
I don't know about bursaries	7	15.56
I did not know how to apply	26	57.78
I thought I could not get the money	10	22.22
I don't consider myself	2	4.44

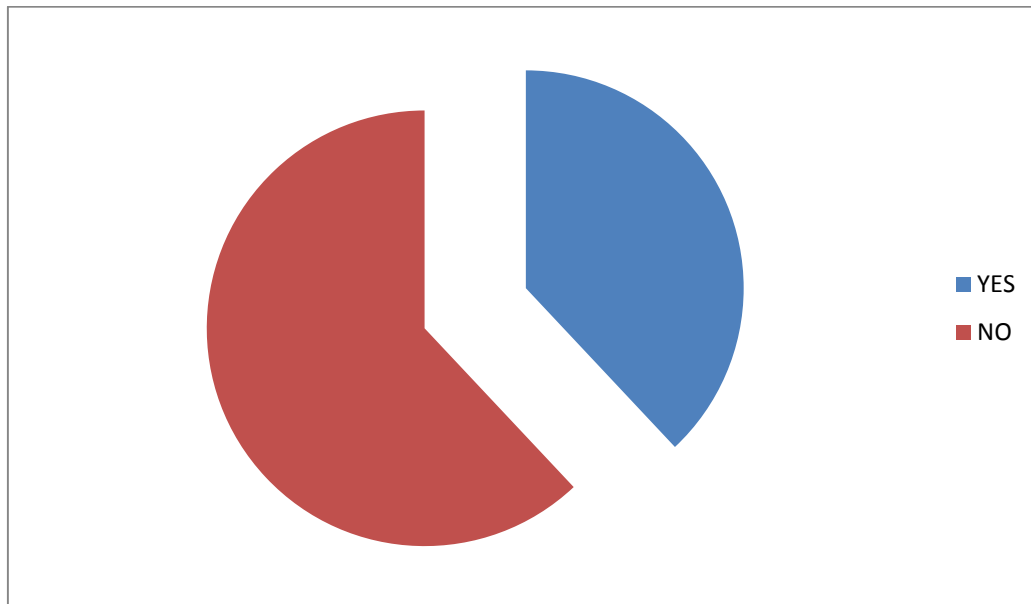
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deserving bursary		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

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From the findings, out of the 45 students who said that they had never applied for the bursary fund, 26(57.78%) of them did not know how to apply for the bursary fund, 7(15.56%) did not know about CDBF, 10(22.22%) thought they could not get the CDBF and 2(4.44%) of the sampled students did not consider themselves deserving bursary. This illustrates that lack of awareness about CDBF and procedure for applying for bursaries to this group of students was a major hindrance towards students benefiting from CDBF and consequently access and completion of students in education. The findings are in line with Njau (2013) who argued that the level of awareness on SEBF application procedure and qualification criteria was very low in secondary schools and therefore the deserving students did not apply for the SEBF.

The students were asked to indicate whether they were aware of the requirements one had to fulfill in order to get a bursary. Their responses were as shown in figure 5

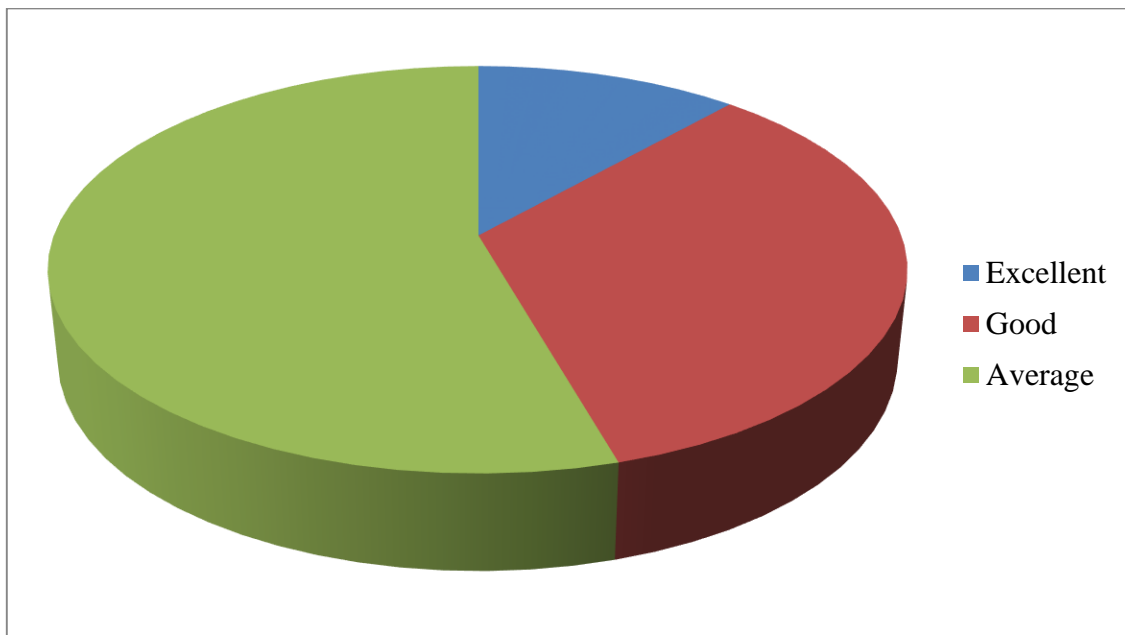


**Figure 5: Response on Awareness of Requirements for Bursary Award**

The findings indicate that 58(51.79%) of the students were not aware of the requirements one had to fulfill in order to get a bursary while a significant number of them 54(48.21%) were only aware of the requirements. This depicts that there was no proper sensitization about the requirements one had to fulfill to get a bursary amongst students and parents a reason as to why majority revealed that they did not know how to apply.

Students were asked to confirm whether the bursary funds had helped them to finance their education. This was relevant since they were viewed as the respondents who could give an honest view because of the gain they were perceived to have gotten. In response 77(68.75%) of the students said ‘NO’ while 35(31.25%) said ‘YES’. This reveals that most of the students’ respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the bursary scheme in place because of inadequacy, irregular disbursement and bureaucratic processes involved in applying for the funds.

Students were asked to indicate their performance for the previous term. This is shown in figure 6



**Figure 6: Students’ Performance**

It was established that 61(54.46%) of the students’ performance in the internal exams was average, 38(33.93%) of the students had a good performance while 13(11.61%) of them had an excellent performance. This indicates that all the students were eligible to apply for the funds.

The study further sought to assess the students’ opinion on the category of students who should apply for bursary funds. This is shown in table 3

**Table 3: Student Response on who should apply for Bursary Fund**

Who to apply for bursary	Frequency	Percentage
All students	18	16.07
Orphans	33	29.46



Bright students	0	0.00
Needy students who cannot afford fees	59	52.68
Disabled students	2	1.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 shows that most of the students 59(52.68%) indicated that the students who should apply for bursary fund were the needy students who cannot afford fees, 33(29.46%) said that they should be orphans, 18(16.07%) indicated that they should be all students while 2(1.79%) said that they should be disabled students. This indicates that almost all the students deserved to benefit from the CDBF as they belonged to various categories of students who met the criteria for applying for bursary funds.

**Class Teachers Response on Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

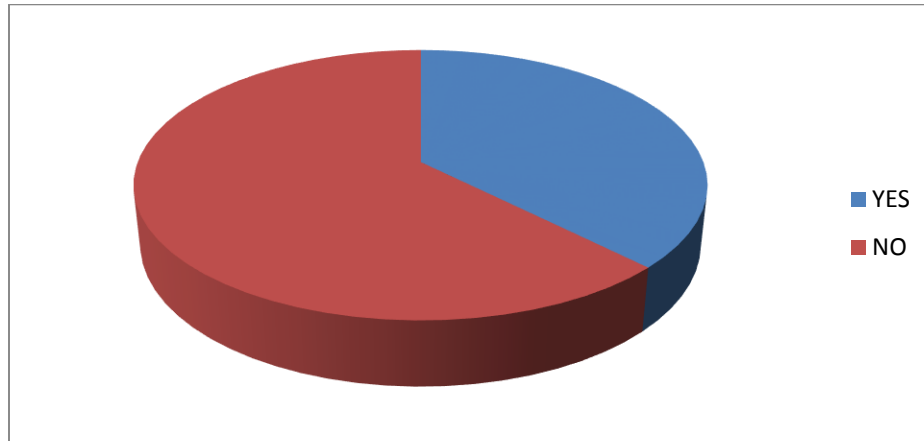
The study sought to find out from the class teachers whether needy students `really benefit from bursary funds, and in response 20 (83.33%) of them indicated “YES” while 4 (16.67%) had a response of “NO”. Consequently class teachers gave some reasons why they thought the needy students got the funds. Their responses were as recorded in table 4

**Table 4: Class Teachers’ Response on why they thought needy Students got Bursary Funds**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
CDF money sent to school	12	50.00
Students not sent home	7	29.17
No response	5	20.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

According to table 4, a half 12(50%) of the class teachers thought that needy students got bursary funds because CDF money was sent to schools, 7(29.17%) of them thought so because most of the needy students were not sent home for fees. However, 5(20.83%) of the class teachers did not give reasons as to why they thought needy students benefited from the funds. This illustrates that slightly more than three quarters 17(79.17%) of the class teachers recognized the role played by CDF bursary and were aware when the disbursement of CDF money was done to schools and even those students who were sent home because of fees.

Class teachers were asked if there were instances when they were told to verify needy cases. This was relevant because they could provide information concerning those students who had dropped out of school because of lack of fees. Their responses were recorded as shown in figure 7



**Figure 7: Class Teachers' Response on Verification of Needy Cases**

According to the findings, 9 (37.5%) of the class teachers noted that there were instances when they were told to verify needy cases, while 15 (62.5%) of them said that they had never been involved in verifying needy cases. This implies that less than a half of the class teachers had been involved in identifying needy cases whereas a big proportion of them confirmed that they had not been involved in identifying needy cases.

Class teachers were asked to indicate whether needy students and parents were aware of the existence of CDBF and procedure for applying for the funds. Their responses were as shown in table 5

**Table 5: Class Teachers' Response on Awareness of Students about Bursary and Procedure for Applying**

Response	Class teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage
YES	10	41.67
NO	14	58.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the findings, 10(41.67%) of the class teachers said 'YES' while 14(58.33%) said 'NO'.

Class teachers were asked to rate the influence of CDBF on retention in secondary education in Kisii South Sub County. This is shown in table 6

**Table 6: Class Teachers’ Response on Rating of Influence of CDBF on Retention**

Response	Class teachers	
	frequency	%
Has raised retention by over 75%	2	8.33
Has raised retention by 50-74%	3	12.5
Has raised retention by 25%-49%	13	54.17
Has raised retention by below 25%	5	20.83
Has not had any impact on retention	1	4.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that 13(54.17%) of the class teachers indicated that the bursary had raised retention by 25-49%,5(20.83%) of them indicated below 25%,3(12.5%) of the sampled class teachers indicated that it had raised retention by 50-74% ,2(8.33%) revealed it had raised retention by over 75% while 1(4.17%) noted that bursary had not had any impact on retention .This depicts that a big number of class teachers had noted that the bursary had raised retention by 25-49%.This implies that the bursary scheme slightly improved secondary school retention rates, which shows that the funds may not be enough to help the students as needed. The findings agrees with Muriuki (2011) who established that bursary schemes slightly improved secondary school retention rates, which means that there may be other factors affecting retention rates other than the availability of funds.

**Principals Response on Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

Principals were asked to give their perception about Constituency Development Bursary Fund on retention of students in public secondary schools. Their responses are shown below table 7

**Table 7: Principal’s response on retention of students through CDBF**

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total F	Total score	Av. score	% Score
No dropout	0	4	10	3	0	17	52	3.06	61.2
No repetition	1	3	7	2	4	17	46	2.71	54.2
Improved	0	2	6	7	2	17	42	2.47	49.4

academic performance	Good	3	1	9	4	0	17	54	3.18	63.6
relationship with parents	Good	2	1	5	6	3	17	44	2.59	51.8
relationship with community	<b>Average</b>								<b>2.80</b>	<b>56.04</b>

When requested to give their perception about dropout in schools the principals scored an average of 3.06(61.2%), on repetition they scored an average of 2.71(54.2%), the principals scored an average of 3.18(63.6%) on relationship with parents and an average of 2.59(51.8%) on relationship with community. On average they scored 2.8(56.04%).This depicted that most of the principals were undecided on perception about CDBF on retention of students in public secondary schools.

Principals were asked to indicate whether needy students and parents were aware of the existence of CDBF and procedure for applying for the funds. Their responses were as shown in table 8.

**Table 8: Principals Response on Awareness of Students about Bursary and Procedure for Applying**

Response	Principals	
	Frequency	Percentage
YES	14	82.35
NO	3	17.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the findings, 14(82.35%) of the principals said needy students and parents were aware of the bursary and procedure for applying while 3(17.65%) of them said that all were not aware. This reveals that most of the principals were of the view that students and parents were aware of the bursary and the procedure for applying. The reason that majority of the principals

gave was that they did make announcements when bursary was due for application and the information was relayed to parents through the students.

Further principals were asked to indicate the level of awareness of the bursary in Kisii South Sub County. Their responses were recorded as shown in table 9

**Table 9: Principals’ Response on Level of Awareness of Bursary Fund**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very high	0	0.00
High	9	52.94
Low	7	41.18
Very low	1	5.88
Not sure	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

The study established that 9(52.94%) of the principals were of the view that the level of awareness of the bursary was high, 7(41.18%) of them said the level of awareness was low while 1(5.88%) said the level of awareness was very low. This indicates that slightly more than half of the principals were of the view that the level of awareness was satisfactory.

Principals were asked to rate the influence of CDBF on retention in secondary education in Kisii South Sub County. This is shown in table 10

**Table 10: Principals’ Response on Rating of Influence of CDBF on Retention**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Principals</b>	
	<b>frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Has raised retention by over 75%	0	0.00
Has raised retention by 50-74%	2	11.76
Has raised retention by 25%-49%	11	64.71
Has raised retention by below 25%	4	23.53
Has not had any impact on retention	0	0.00

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<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>
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The table shows that 11 (64.71%) of the principals indicated that the bursary scheme had raised retention by 25% - 49%, 4 (23.53%) of the principals indicated below 25% while 2(11.76%) of the principals indicated that it had raised retention by 50-74%.This depicts that a big number of principals and class teachers had noted that the bursary had raised retention by 25-49%.This implies that the bursary scheme slightly improved secondary school retention rates, which shows that the funds may not be enough to help the students as needed. The findings agrees with Muriuki (2011) who established that bursary schemes slightly improved secondary school retention rates, which means that there may be other factors affecting retention rates other than the availability of funds.

Principals were asked to indicate how they communicate information about bursaries to students and parents. In response 17(100%) said they announce at assembly, chiefs announce at barazas and other announcements are made in churches.

Principals were asked to rate the effectiveness of these communication channels. This is shown in table 11.

**Table 11: Principals’ Response on Effectiveness of Communication Channels**

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<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very effective	3	17.65
Effective	11	64.70
Ineffective	3	17.65
Very ineffective	0	0
Not sure	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

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The findings indicate that 11(64.70%) of the principals said the channels were effective, 3(17.65%) of them were of the view that the channels were very effective while 3(17.65%) of the respondents indicated that the channels were ineffective. This implies that principals were satisfied with the mode of communication used.

Principals were asked to indicate the percentage of the students admitted in form one in 2011 who completed up to form four in 2014. This was important to the researchers so as to know whether there were students who might have dropped because of lack of fees. In response out of 17, 1 principal reported that 75% of the students completed up to form four, 6 principals indicated that 50% of the students completed upto form four, and 7 principals said 25% of the students completed upto form four while 3 of them noted that below 25% of the students had completed upto form four. This depicts that principals had varied views on the completion rate of students admitted in form one in 2011 upto form four. The findings are almost similar to a study by Mwaura (2006) who found that the CBF was ineffective in that it was inadequate; thinly spread and unpredictable and very few students had been retained by the fund up to Form Three in 2005.

Principals were asked to comment on how timely money was released to schools. In response all the principals 17(100%) said funds were released late to schools. This reveals that they expressed dissatisfaction with the bursary scheme in place because of the manner in which the funds were released.

### **SEOs Response on Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

The SEO was asked to give his views on the impact of CDBF on retention of students in Kisii South Sub-County. The SEO responded that:

*I can say that the impact of CDBF on retention of students in Kisii South Sub-County is low because not all needy cases benefit from the funds given that the funds disbursed is little and the number of needy students is high.*

From the SEOs transcript it was revealed that the impact of CDBF on retention of students in Kisii South Sub-County was low.

### **Chiefs Response on Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

Similarly chiefs were asked to give their views on the impact of CDBF on retention of students in Kisii South Sub County. The chiefs responded that it was low because not all needy cases benefit from the funds. They too noted that due to the meager allocations in form of bursaries the scheme does not effectively address the problems of needy students in schools owing to their large numbers.



**Main Challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme in Retaining Students in Public Secondary Schools.**

The third objective of the study was to find out the main challenges facing CDBF in public secondary schools. This objective was responded to by principals, class teachers, chiefs and SEO. Problems or challenges are part of a system hence it was important if they could be pointed out.

**Principals Comments on Challenges Facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

The principals were asked if there were challenges facing CDBF. The responses are shown in table 12 below.

**Table 12: Principals Responses on Challenges facing CDBF**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not all needy students benefit	6	35.29
Corruption and political influence	5	29.41
Inadequate and irregular allocations	4	23.53
Lack of awareness about bursary	2	11.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the findings, 4(23.53%) of the principals noted that challenges with bursary scheme were inadequate funds and irregular allocations of funds to needy cases, 5(29.41%) of the principals reported that corruption and political influence was a major challenge, lack of awareness about bursary was revealed by 2(11.76%) of the principals while 6(35.29%) of them noted that not all needy cases benefit from the funds. The findings are almost similar to Mwangi (2006) who found out that giving money through the constituency was faced with pitfalls. To him, students who deserve never get the money because of political interference. He further observed that, the process of sending money from the central government to the constituencies then to schools takes long. By the time students get the money, many would have been sent away from school or had wasted a lot of time trying to look for it. This is further supported by Bungei (2012) who established that there was political influence in bursary allocation which was a major hindrance to needy students from benefiting from bursary funds.

**Class Teachers Comments on Challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not all needy students benefit	5	20.83
Corruption and nepotism	4	16.67
Inadequate and irregular allocations	4	16.67
Lack of awareness about bursary	2	8.33
Does not arrive in time	2	8.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

**Programme**

Class teachers were asked to give their opinions on the problems that students who receive government bursaries get or experience. Table 13 shows their responses.

**Table 13: Class Teachers' Response on Challenges facing CDBF**

The results in table 13 revealed that class teachers reported that the challenges that the bursary scheme faced were that it did not arrive in time 2(8.33%), inadequate and inconsistent allocations 4(16.67%), not all that deserve get the bursary 5(20.83%), corruption and nepotism 4(16.67%) and lack of awareness 2(8.33%).The findings are in line with Wachiye (2010) who established that the fund was experiencing a number of set-backs namely; the amount of bursary disbursed to the constituency was insufficient and could not meet the demands of the high number of the needy applicants. There was political interference by the local Parliamentarians. The government delays to disburse these funds, a condition that inconveniences many needy students.

**Chiefs Comments on Challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

Chiefs were asked to comment on the constraints faced in bursary fund disbursement. One chief (A) attested that:

*The bursary is faced with a lot of challenges .For instance corruption, nepotism in awarding of students with bursary funds, the amount allocated is inadequate and in some cases beneficiaries come from other constituencies, thus denying opportunities to the deserving students from benefiting from the funds*

The challenges pointed out by the chief included: Corruption, Nepotism, Inadequate funds and Beneficiaries come from other constituencies

Another area chief (B) had this to say:

*You want to know about the challenges facing the bursary fund programme? They are many and among the obvious ones we experience include: Money being too little to serve all the students who are needy, nepotism is another challenge, and you know our people are never transparent when giving out the money. We can also talk about political influence where local politicians award those who voted for them even if they don't deserve.*

The points revealed by the respondent are the following: Inadequate funds, Nepotism, Lack of transparency and Political influence

The response of another chief (C) was that:

*The main challenge facing constituency bursary fund programme is corruption which denies many students from getting the funds. Political influence is also another challenge where local politicians award those who voted for them so that they can vote for the again. The other challenge is inadequacy of funds which makes a number of needy cases to miss out*

The following points can be revealed from the transcripts: Corruption, Political influence and Inadequacy of funds

### **SEOs' Comments on Challenges Facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

The SEO was also asked to give his opinion on the constraints facing disbursement of bursary funds in Kisii South Sub-County. He had this to say:

*The main challenges facing bursary disbursement include the following: amount of bursary being too little to cater for all needy cases, corruption, withholding of cheques whereby some people retain cheques with the intention of changing the names, nepotism whereby those in charge award relatives even if they don't deserve the bursary , collusion with heads and political interference. And you know we can do without these challenges if our people especially those who are mandated to be in charge of the funds realizes the importance of the funds to our learners.*

The SEO revealed the following: Inadequacy of funds, Corruption, Withholding of cheques, Nepotism, Collusion with heads and Political influence

The SEO was further asked about the strategies put in place to counter the challenges. His responses were that:

*In order to counter all these challenges we have number of strategies put in place, for example streamlining delivery of cheques to schools and demanding back receipts from school heads. By doing so we ensure that there is a lot of transparency. Another strategy put in place is displaying a list of beneficiaries, this makes it impossible for those who are directly involved in the disbursement to change the names of the beneficiaries. To ensure that all students are aware of the bursary and application time, adverts are put at strategic places for everyone to apply. And as far as am concerned every person is aware of the bursary in place because indeed we try to make this information well known to all because after all this funds are meant for students.*

The points cited by the respondent included: Streamlining delivery of cheques to schools, Receipts from schools are obtained, displaying list of beneficiaries and Adverts put up at strategic places for students to apply.

### **Strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

Principals were asked to give their views on ways of improving CDBF programme. Their responses were as shown in table 14.

**Table 14: Improvements Recommended by Principals on CDBF Programme**

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
School administration be involved in identifying needy cases	5	29.41
Disbursing funds in time	2	11.76
Increasing allocations to needy cases	3	17.65
Allocating more funds for bursaries	2	11.76
Consistency in supporting needy cases	3	17.65

Transparency in allocation of funds	2	11.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that 5 (29.41%) of the principals indicated that school administration should be included in identifying needy students, 3(17.65%) indicated that allocations to needy cases be increased, 3(17.65%) said that there should be consistency in supporting needy cases, 2(11.76%) noted that bursaries should be released in time, 2(11.76%) of them noted allocating more funds to bursaries while 2(11.76%) said that there should be transparency in allocation of funds. These findings are in agreement with Ndiritu (2011) who recommended that there should be adequate sensitization on the existence of CDF bursary fund, fair and timely allocation of funds to genuinely needy students and an increase of funds in order to meet the demand.

**Students Response on strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

Students were asked to give their views to improve CDBF programme. Their responses were as shown in table 15.

**Table 15: Improvements Recommended by Students on CDBF Programme**

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Addressing corruption	20	17.86
School heads be involved in identifying needy cases	8	7.14
Releasing funds in time	14	12.5
Assisting needy students only who cannot afford fees	40	35.71
Creating public awareness about bursaries	20	17.86
Increasing funds for bursaries to cater for all needy cases	10	8.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that 40 (35.71%) of the students indicated only needy students who cannot afford fees should be assisted, 20(17.87%) of them said corruption should be dealt with, 20(17.86%) of the students respondents said creating public awareness about bursaries, 14(12.5%) noted that funds should be released in time, 10(8.93%) indicated by increasing bursaries to cater for all needy cases and 8(7.14%) of the students noted that school heads to be involved in identifying needy cases. The findings are supported by Fedha Flora (2008) who indicated that to enhance the success of SEBF, the government should employ competent personnel to properly manage the SEBF, stringent disciplinary actions to be taken on corrupt SEBF committee members, increase in transparency and accountability of SEBF management.

### **Class teachers' Response on strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

Class teachers were asked to give their views on ways of improving CDBF programme. Their responses were as shown in table 16.

**Table 16: Improvements Recommended by Class Teachers on CDBF Programme**

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Principals be involved in identifying needy cases	4	16.67
Disbursing funds in time	3	12.5
Increasing allocations to needy cases	3	12.5
Allocating more funds for bursaries	2	8.33
Address corruption,clanism and nepotism	5	20.83
Establish databank for needy cases in the sub county	2	8.33
Bursaries not to be managed by politicians	1	4.17
Improve awareness about bursaries	4	16.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that 5(20.83%) of the class teachers indicated that corruption ,clanism and nepotism should be addressed, 4(16.67%) of the class teachers said principals be included in identifying needy cases,4(16.67%) of the class teachers were of the view that awareness about bursaries should be improved,3(12.5%) disbursing bursaries in time, 3(12.5%) increasing allocations to needy cases, 2(8.33%) noted allocating more funds to bursaries,2(8.33%) establishing a databank of needy cases in the sub county while 1(4.17%) said that politicians should not to be involved in managing bursaries. Ngware, Onsomu, Muthaka and Manda (2006) proposed that the government initiative in decentralizing and reviewing bursary funds management to constituency level should be closely monitored. Clear guidelines should be developed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in order to increase access and retention to secondary education.

### **Chiefs Response on strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

Chiefs were asked to give their opinion on ways of strengthening bursary scheme. One chief (A) asserted that:

*You know if we were to be included in bursary fund disbursement committee needy cases could be benefiting from the funds. But when issues of corruption come in the money does not perform its intended purpose and corruption must be dealt with. I am of the view that forms of those who miss out should be returned to schools to avoid misusing them to embezzle funds. This is because forms of those who do not benefit are not returned to schools and they might be used to embezzle funds by those who are in charge*

The respondent revealed the following: They should be included in bursary fund disbursement committee, Corruption to be minimized and Forms of those who miss out from the allocation should be returned to schools

Another area chief (C) asserted that:

*This bursary fund can assist students if disbursed in a proper manner. It could be prudent if all stakeholders are involved when the funds are disbursed. Transparency and timely disbursement could be the only way of ensuring that needy cases benefit from the funds and are not sent away from schools for fees*



The points that were cited by the chief included the following: Proper disbursement of funds, all stakeholders be involved during disbursement of funds, Timely disbursement of funds and There should be transparency in the disbursement of funds

Further another area chief (B) contended that:

*Bursary is good were it not for a few challenges surrounding it. But if those involved in disbursement were to follow Ministry's guidelines many students could have benefitted. In addition, issues like clanism and political influence if they can be avoided then, the deserving students could benefit from the bursary funds. In short those are the main challenges that we have which makes the funds not to help our students*

The points revealed from the respondent are the following: Following Ministry's guidelines and avoiding clanism and political interference

### **SEOs' Response on strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

The SEO was also asked to give his opinion on how the bursary scheme can be improved to ensure that all needy students enrolling in secondary schools complete school. His responses were:

*In order to strengthen bursary fund programme, the ministry of education should increase allocations meant for bursaries so as to cater for all needy cases. Issues like corruption and political influence should be minimized when awarding bursaries so as to allow the deserving students to benefit from the funds. And because the government may not have adequate funds which can cater for all the needy students, appeals should be made to NGOs to step in and assist needy cases where possible in order for them to complete secondary school. More importantly we need to have one databank for all needy students for the government to use in allocating bursary funds. This is because by having one databank of needy cases the ministry will be able to budget for these needy cases until they complete secondary school education. Otherwise the funds will not have any impact to needy cases.*

The points that can be revealed from the SEO are the following: Increasing bursary allocations, Minimize corruption and political interference and Appealing to NGOs to step in to assist needy cases

### **Conclusions of the Study**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

### **Criteria Employed in Awarding CDBF to students in Public Secondary Schools**

The study concluded that in awarding bursary orphans were given priority, followed by students with single parents and those with both parents but in needy were considered last. It was further concluded that performance and discipline were considered as requirements for students to qualify for bursary award.

### **Level of Influence of Constituency Development Bursary Fund on Retention of Students in Schools**

It was concluded that CDBF was recognized as an important source of fund to ensure retention in secondary schools and that lack of awareness about CDBF and procedure for applying for bursaries to some group of students was a major hindrance towards them benefiting from CDBF and consequently access and completion of students in education. The bursary scheme slightly improved secondary school retention rates, which shows that the funds may not be enough to help the students as needed. Further the study concluded that the impact of CDBF was low because not all needy cases benefit from the funds.

### **Main Challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme in Public Secondary Schools.**

The study concluded that the main challenges facing Constituency Development Bursary Fund programme included: Irregular allocations of funds to needy cases, political influence, not all needy cases benefit from the funds, inadequate funds, corruption and nepotism.

### **Strategies of Improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund Programme**

This study concluded that the most significant ways of improving Constituency Development Bursary Fund programme are: School administration should be included in identifying needy students, curbing corruption, bursaries should be released in time, there should be consistency in supporting needy cases and politicians should not to be involved in managing bursaries.

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