

EFFECT OF AMOUNT OF CASH DISTRIBUTED ON EDUCATION ACCESS BY ORPHANS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: The cash transfer initiative in Kiambu County has notably enhanced educational opportunities for orphans attending public secondary schools. However, the County's cash transfer schemes for underprivileged children are benefiting only a small percentage of the orphans enrolled in these institutions. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the impact of the cash transfer program in Kiambu County, Kenya, on the enrollment of orphans in public secondary schools. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of effect of amount of cash distributed on education access by orphans in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. This study employs a descriptive research approach, focusing on secondary public schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. According to the Kiambu County Children's Office (2023), a survey was conducted with 540 beneficiary households. Additionally, 10 members from the Beneficiary Welfare Committee and 5 from the Constituency Social Assistance Committee participated as respondents, selected through simple random sampling after an initial stratified sampling. The final sample included 232 individuals. Primary data was gathered using a structured questionnaire, which was pilot tested with 23 participants. Validity was ensured through content, criterion, and face validity procedures, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α). Results were presented narratively, with qualitative data analyzed thematically and quantitative data analyzed using statistical techniques such as standard deviation and mean, visually represented in tables and figures. The research revealed a significant correlation between the distribution amount of cash, payment frequency with the access to education for orphans in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The research concludes that an increased cash distribution amount is directly linked to orphans' capacity to cover school fees and acquire essential items, including textbooks, uniforms, and stationery. The research suggests that the County ought to seek for more donations from the international community and any other foundations that deal with funding of school programs.

Keywords: Amount of Cash Distributed, Education Access by Orphans.

1. INTRODUCTION

Direct cash transfers meant for the families caters for various school expenses such as fees, their uniforms, writing and text books, transport and many others. In such a case these programs assists in eliminating the difficulties related to finance that make the school going children leave out of the school (Behrman & Parker, 2020). In cash transfer schemes, families are given the freedom to decide how to spend the money according to their own needs and circumstances (Bohn, Veiga and Gouvea, 2022). Parents may put their children's education first and make sure they have everything they need to attend and engage in extracurricular activities because of this flexibility. Consequently, many families rely on financial transfers as a safety net, allowing them to keep their children in school and ultimately escape poverty.

Because families with financial resources can invest in additional educational support like tutoring or extracurricular activities, which can enhance learning and academic performance, Hartarto, Wardani, and Azizurrohman (2021) note that cash transfer programs have positive effects on educational outcomes. According to Attanasio, Sosa, Medina, Meghir and Posso-Suarez (2021), the demand for quality education is increased when school enrollment rates are increased through cash transfer programs. This, in turn, prompts governments and educational institutions to invest in infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum development, ultimately leading to better educational systems overall. As a result, all children benefit from enhanced educational opportunities and results.

A number of Asian nations have seen increased enrollment in higher education after implementing cash transfer schemes. When it comes to cash transfer programs in Pakistan, for example, Khan, Shah, and Gul (2020) point out that UCTs and CCTs are both possible. To qualify for conditional cash transfers, beneficiaries must meet certain criteria, such as getting their children enrolled in school, keeping up with regular attendance, and participating in nutrition and health programs. However, there are no strings associated to unconditional cash transfers, which provide financial assistance. By providing financial aid to low-income families and vulnerable groups, cash transfer programs in Malaysia help promote access to education, which in turn helps reduce educational inequalities and ensures that every child has the chance to receive a quality education (Nooh, Subramaniam and Hanafiah, 2021).

There have been notable increases in educational results and enrollment rates as a result of the effective implementation of cash transfer programs in Brazil, which have promoted educational access (Soares, Ribas & Osorio, 2020). The Bolsa Família is emphasized by Rasella, Aquino, Santos, Paes-Sousa and Barreto (2023) as a major program that transfers funds to low-income families. Poverty and inequality have been significantly reduced because to this initiative, which has also improved education. Hence, Bolsa Família has contributed to reducing the financial strain on families by assisting with school expenditures including supplies, uniforms, and transportation. The eventual result of this aid is that more families are able to send their children to school and keep them enrolled.

A growing body of evidence points to cash transfer initiatives in Africa as an effective means of expanding access to quality education. Families in need may get direct financial assistance via these programs to help cover school-related costs (Owusu-Addo, Renzaho & Smith, 2019). According to Machaga and Ghamunga (2022), the government of Tanzania is making great strides to remove obstacles to education by funding cash transfer programs and other activities to increase access to education. Investment in education by the Tanzanian government is having a multiplicative effect, bettering the lives of both immediate families and the nation in the long run.

Many households in Zimbabwe struggle to pay the price of schooling due to the high poverty rates. A lack of consistent school attendance is a common consequence for children from low-income homes who must work to help support their family. Cultural norms, gender-based violence, and early marriage are additional obstacles that girls encounter on the path to school. Thus, these initiatives help families cover these costs and provide their children a chance at a good education by giving them financial transfers (Nyamukapa, 2019). Skovdal, Mushati and Gregson (2023) state that Zimbabwean cash transfer programs usually provide eligible households with regular cash payments that can be used to pay for school-related expenses like fees, uniforms, textbooks, stationery, transportation, and other supplies.

According to Njeru and Minja (2019), cash transfer initiatives in Kenya aim to help families and children from marginalized and vulnerable backgrounds overcome obstacles to education, including poverty, gender inequality, and social exclusion. These programs target vulnerable populations and help them overcome these obstacles. Asfaw, Davis, Dewbre, Handa and Winters (2021) mention that cash transfer programs in Kenya often target certain disadvantaged populations, such as females, orphans, and children with impairments, who encounter extra obstacles to their education. Thus, monetary transfers aid in promoting inclusion and equitable educational opportunities by catering to the needs of these disadvantaged groups.

Access to education for orphaned children is an important issue that must be tackled in order to ensure their overall well-being and future prospects because orphaned children often face numerous challenges and barriers when it comes to accessing education, including financial constraints, lack of support systems, and limited opportunities (Mwoma & Pillay, 2018). Nyamukapa, Foster and Gregson (2022) indicate that educational chances for children without their parents are vital because such children benefit from overcoming poverty facing their home and other challenges that they face. In that case, education imparts these children with the required knowledge and capacity that they can have a better future and also become more empowered to rely on themselves with the society they live.

In order to make sure that the money goes to the right people, there is a methodical and controlled procedure for distributing cash transfers to orphans so that they may go to school (Miller & Tsoka, 2020). The total amount of cash dispersed may include a wide range of transactions, including dividends given to shareholders, salaries and wages provided to workers, interest paid to lenders, and payments made to suppliers for products and services (Njoki and Wairimu, 2023) among others. So, to make sure that the money is being used wisely to help disadvantaged kids get a better education, there has to be a lot of planning, coordinating, and monitoring involved in the distribution of cash transfers to orphans.

The public secondary schools located in Kiambu County, provides a good opportunities for education for its school going children. Such schools meet the needs of various students as per the Ministry of education guidelines. Amongst observed element of the public schools in Kiambu County, is the effective implementation of inclusivity and accessibility. The County allows all students from different setup irrespective of whether its social, economic, culture or gender. Such a move has ensured that there is equity among each student in receiving quality education and pursuance of their academic related goals.

It is observed that there is quite a big number of orphans who are attending public secondary schools within the County. According to recent data by County government of Kiambu, the enrollment of orphaned students in public high schools in Kiambu County stands at approximately 15%. This means that out of the total student population in these schools, 15% are orphaned individuals who have lost one or both parents. This figure highlights the significant impact of orphanhood on education in the region. Further analysis of the data reveals that the majority of orphaned students in public secondary schools are female, accounting for around 60% of the total orphaned student population. There are multiple factors contributing to the gender gap, one being cultural traditions and practices that prioritize male education over female education.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Similar to the rest of Kenya, Kiambu County has had a high rate of students dropping out of high school (Kiambati & Katana, 2020). Orphans in Kiambu County now have much easier access to public secondary education because to the county's cash transfer scheme. Orphans and other disadvantaged children may get financial aid via the program to help pay for things like school supplies, uniforms, and tuition. Five hundred children without parents have received financial assistance via the initiative in Kiambu County. The number of county orphans enrolled in public secondary schools has increased by 20% as a direct consequence of this. Also, compared to 15% before the program was launched, just 5% of recipients are dropping out of school now, a significant decrease among orphans.

Additionally, the cash transfer program has improved the academic achievement of public secondary school-aged orphans. Eighty percent of program recipients have shown an increase in academic performance following receiving funding. Nevertheless, a new research out of Kiambu County revealed that cash transfer programs meant to help disadvantaged children were only helping 30% of orphans enrolled in public secondary schools. This points to a major hole in the execution of these programs, which deprives many orphans of the financial aid they sorely need to attend a good school.

The impact of financial transfer programs on orphans' ability to attend school has been the subject of many investigations. The quantity of the transfer was determined to be insufficient to cover all family requirements when Komu (2017) examined the impact of a cash transfer program on the ability of orphans and vulnerable children to attend secondary school. But since it only looked at Embu West Subcounty in Kenya, the research doesn't provide any background information. In their 2020 study, Naibei and Cheben looked at the impact of educational stipends on the human capital development of disadvantaged children in Kenya's Emgwen Sub County, Nandi County. According to the results, human capital development was positively affected by educational financial transfers. The research was conducted in Emgwen Sub County, Nandi County, Kenya, which creates a contextual gap.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

Capital Theory

The capital theory was developed by Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk in 1884 which examines how distribution of resources in an economy is affected by capital and interests rates, and the allocation of resources in an economy which helps in understanding the various forms of capital that individuals possess and how these forms of capital can influence educational outcomes. Eugen (1884) capital theory recognizes that individuals possess various types of capital, such as economic,

cultural and social. Economic capital pertains to the financial resources that individuals have access to, which can impact their ability to access quality education. For example, individuals from low-income backgrounds may face financial barriers that limit their access to educational resources and opportunities. Therefore, understanding economic capital is crucial in designing policies and interventions that aim to reduce educational inequalities.

Fevre, Rees and Gorard (2019) cultural capital can influence educational outcomes as individuals with higher levels of cultural capital may have an improved comprehension of the education system's expectations and norms. They may also possess the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate educational institutions successfully. Recognizing the role of cultural capital helps educators and policymakers in developing inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practices that cater to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students. According to Quiggin (2022) social capital can play a significant role in educational outcomes as individuals with strong social networks may have access to valuable resources, such as mentorship, guidance, and opportunities for educational advancement. By understanding the importance of social capital, educators and policymakers can work towards creating supportive and inclusive learning environments that foster positive relationships and networks among students.

The capital theory is of significant importance in the execution of cash transfer programs aimed at enhancing educational opportunities for orphaned individuals. By considering and applying the principles of cultural capital, financial capital, human capital and social capital, policymakers and program implementers can design and implement more effective cash transfer programs. These programs can empower orphans to access quality education, develop their skills and knowledge, build supportive networks, overcome financial barriers etc.

Empirical Literature Review

Researchers Lopez-Arana, Avendano, Vanlenthe, and Burdorf (2019) examined the effects of a conditional cash transfer program on children's health in Colombia, specifically evaluating the Familias en Accion project through a quasi-experimental approach. Assessments were conducted on children and their families in 2002, 2003, and 2005–2006. A difference-in-differences methodology with logistic linear regression was used to analyze the effects in both rural and urban areas. The study compared 1,450 participants from 31 treatment areas with 1,851 participants from 65 statistically comparable control municipalities. Results showed that while the cash transfers had limited impact on women's employment, empowerment, and caregiving practices, they did improve dietary diversity and the use of preventive healthcare services. However, the quasi-experimental evaluation method presents a limitation in the research.

Skovdal, Robertson, and Gregson (2021) examined a community-based financial assistance program for disadvantaged and orphaned children in Zimbabwe, focusing on the acceptance of its conditions. The research drew on data from a cluster-randomized evaluation of a cash transfer initiative in Manicaland, eastern Zimbabwe. It included 35 in-depth interviews, three focus groups with 58 adults and four adolescents, and a survey of 5,167 households to assess community opinions. Findings revealed broad support for the program's regulations, which were seen as equitable and indicative of responsible parenting. Community members, including beneficiaries, embraced the conditions tied to child grants, despite them not being viewed as a fundamental human right in the current social and economic climate. By meeting the requirements, community members felt empowered to participate actively, viewing this engagement as a mark of achievement. However, the study's focus was limited to underprivileged children in Zimbabwe.

Wanyama (2018) studied the impact of financial transfer grants on the school attendance of orphaned and vulnerable children in Eldoret West Sub County, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Using a descriptive survey methodology, the research followed Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling criteria, selecting 322 participants from a pool of 2000, including children's officers, head teachers, classroom teachers, and heads of households receiving the OVC-CT grant. Data were collected through questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. The findings revealed that financial assistance for school supplies increases class attendance and that the financial stability of students' households, due to these transfers, enhances student retention.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research approach, focusing on secondary public schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. According to the Kiambu County Children's Office (2023), a survey was conducted with 540 beneficiary households. Additionally, 10 members from the Beneficiary Welfare Committee and 5 from the Constituency Social Assistance Committee participated as respondents, selected through simple random sampling after an initial stratified sampling. The

final sample included 232 individuals. Primary data was gathered using a structured questionnaire, which was pilot tested with 23 participants. Validity was ensured through content, criterion, and face validity procedures, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α). Results were presented narratively, with qualitative data analyzed thematically and quantitative data analyzed using statistical techniques such as standard deviation and mean, visually represented in tables and figures.

5. FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics results on amount of cash distributed are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Amount of Cash Distributed

| Statements | M | SD |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| Accurate identification and registration of orphans enables better understanding of the specific needs and challenges faced by this vulnerable population. | 4.55 | 0.515 |
| Identification and registration of orphans helps to tailor cash transfer programs to address these needs and ultimately improve access to education for orphans. | 4.52 | 0.603 |
| The disbursement mechanism help to alleviate the financial burden that often prevents orphans from accessing education | 4.63 | 0.490 |
| Implementing a cash transfer program with a disbursement mechanism can be an effective way to enhance education access for orphans | 3.96 | 0.444 |
| Need assessment helps to determine the specific needs and challenges faced by the beneficiaries | 4.46 | 1.190 |
| Need assessment assist in gathering qualitative information on the beneficiaries' needs and priorities. | 4.05 | 0.760 |
| Aggregate Score | 4.36 | 0.667 |

Table 4.3 shows that participants strongly agree on the importance of accurately identifying and registering orphans to better understand their unique needs and challenges ($M=4.55$, $SD=0.515$). This consensus highlights the critical role of proper identification in addressing the emotional, social, and economic issues faced by orphans, allowing stakeholders to tailor interventions effectively. The identification process also aids in customizing cash transfer programs to enhance orphans' access to education ($M=4.52$, $SD=0.603$). Although slightly lower, this mean score indicates strong agreement on the link between financial support and educational opportunities. Targeted cash transfers can help cover costs like school fees and supplies, which often hinder orphans' education. Moreover, effective disbursement mechanisms are crucial in alleviating financial barriers to education ($M=4.63$, $SD=0.490$). This highest mean score reflects participants' belief in the effectiveness of these mechanisms, ensuring timely financial support for orphans in need, thereby facilitating their educational pursuits. The finding agree with Avendano, Vanlenthe, and Burdorf (2019) research observation that when financial assistance is aligned with the specific needs of beneficiaries, it not only enhances their immediate access to resources but also contributes to long-term educational attainment and social integration.

The study found that a high mean score of 3.96 ($SD=0.444$) indicates strong agreement on the effectiveness of these programs. Participants also emphasized the need for a needs assessment, which received an even higher mean score of 4.46 ($SD=1.190$). This highlights the importance of understanding the specific challenges faced by orphans, allowing for tailored interventions. The needs assessment aids in identifying educational obstacles and gathering qualitative data on beneficiaries' experiences, reflected in a mean score of 4.05 ($SD=0.760$) that underscores the value of this insight in program design. These findings support Skovdal, Robertson, and Gregson (2021) research observation that cash transfer programs can reduce financial barriers to education, enabling beneficiaries to cover essential costs like school fees and materials.

The aggregate mean score of 4.36 indicates strong agreement among respondents on the positive impact of cash distribution on educational access in Kiambu County, with a low aggregate standard deviation of 0.667 suggesting little variation in opinions. This consensus likely reflects a shared understanding of the challenges orphans face and the potential of cash transfers to address these issues. The finding agree with Wanyama (2018) research observation that cash distribution programs can alleviate some of the financial burdens faced by families, thereby enabling children to access education more readily.

Inferential Statistics Results

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

| | | Amount of cash distributed | Access to education |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Amount of cash distributed | Pearson Correlation | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | |
| | N | 219 | |
| Access to education | Pearson Correlation | .793** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | |
| | N | 219 | 219 |

The data presented in Table 2 provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between various financial distribution factors and access to education. Specifically, the Pearson correlation coefficients (r values) indicate a strong positive correlation between the amount of cash distributed and education access, with a value of 0.793. This suggests that as the amount of cash distributed increases, access to education also tends to improve significantly.

Table 3: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .895 ^a | .801 | 0.685 | 1.0052 |

The model results summary in Table 4.10 indicate that the R value of 0.895 shows a strong positive correlation between independent variable and dependent. This suggests significant changes in educational access as these factors vary. The R square value of 0.801 indicates that about 80.1% of the variance in educational access is explained by the model, underscoring the relevance of the analyzed factors. The adjusted R square value of 0.685, while lower, still reflects strong explanatory power after accounting for the number of predictors, indicating that a significant portion of variance remains explained. Therefore, the remaining 31.5% explains other variables not studied. Finally, the standard error of 1.0052 suggests that the model's predictions are close to actual values, indicating reliability in its estimations.

Table 4: Regression Coefficients

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 0.618 | 0.263 | | 2.349 | 0.003 |
| | Amount of cash distributed | 0.785 | 0.214 | 0.0521 | 3.668 | 0.002 |

The results as presented in Table 4 show that when amount of cash distributed is held constant, the education access by orphans in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya would be 0.618. The coefficients obtained indicated that and improvement in amount of cash distributed would improve the education access by orphans in public secondary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya by 0.785. Therefore, the regression equation is expressed as follows;

$$\text{Education access} = 0.618 + 0.785(\text{amount of cash distributed}) + \epsilon$$

The beta coefficient for cash distribution stands at 0.0521, indicating a positive relationship between the amount of cash distributed and educational access for orphans. This suggests that increased cash distribution raises the likelihood of orphans receiving an education. The significance value of 0.002 associated with this coefficient underscores the robustness of this relationship, indicating that the effect is statistically significant and unlikely due to random chance. These results are consistent with the research by Lopez-Arana et al. (2019), which examined the effects of a conditional cash transfer program on children's health in Colombia, finding that while such transfers have limited impact on women's employment and empowerment, they do improve dietary diversity and the use of preventive healthcare services.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that a higher cash distribution amount directly correlates with the ability of orphans to pay school fees and purchase necessary supplies such as textbooks, uniforms, and stationery. When orphans receive sufficient financial support, they may experience increased self-esteem and confidence. This can lead to better participation in school activities and improved academic performance. Financial assistance can help mitigate the stigma associated with being an orphan. When orphans are able to afford the same resources as their peers, they may feel more included and less marginalized.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the County should apply for grants from international organizations, NGOs, and foundations that focus on education and child welfare. Highlight the specific needs of orphans in Kiambu County. Create dedicated scholarship funds for orphans to cover tuition fees, uniforms, and learning materials. This can be done through partnerships with educational institutions and community organizations. Help schools develop better resource management practices to maximize the use of existing funds and identify additional funding. Engage local businesses and corporations to invest in educational programs for orphans. This could include scholarships, mentorship programs, and infrastructure development.

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