

Awareness Levels on Existing Sources of Funding for Vocational Training in Elgeyo-Marakwet County, Kenya

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Abstract: *There has been record of vocational training centres being under capacity in Elgeyo-Marakwet County for the past several years. The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether the level of awareness on existing sources of financing contribute to enrolment in public vocational training centres. The target population comprised of 11 principals, 60 tutors, 1437 VTCs students and 20 primary school leavers. The sample size had 394 respondents; 11 principals, 52 tutors and 312 VTCs students. Snowballing method was used to locate 20 primary school leavers. The study used questionnaires and interview schedules as instruments for data collection. The study found out that the level of awareness of existing sources of funding by students and school leavers contributed to low enrolment rate in public VTCs. This is because some potential students and their parents were found not to be aware of various agencies providing financing for learning in public VTCs. The study recommends that the county government should create awareness on existence of VTCs and requirements for one to join them.*

Key Words: *Awareness, Financing, Vocational, Enrolment, Sources*

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I. Introduction

Technical vocational education and training is one of the objectives of sustainable development agenda in addition to Kenya’s vision 2030 (Wangeci, 2013; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2015). The achievement of this goal might not be across all countries because Germany, Switzerland and Austria, do not have more than 50% of their young people choosing this option (United Nations, 2015). In Kenya, the government has put a lot of effort in order to increase enrolment to TVET institutions. Several policy documents including: Kenya Vision 2030; Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015 (previously No. 14 of 2012), Policy Framework for Education and Training on Reforming Education and Training Sectors in Kenya); National Education Sector Program (NESP) 2014-2018; and the TVET Act of 2013 guides the reforms in TVET have been developed. The Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015 requires: attainment and sustaining a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 20% in TVET; and providing adequate opportunities for accessible competency based training. To increase GER in VTCs, the government has equipped them with most of what is necessary for training, and also trains instructors and pays them (Wangeci, 2013). However, the concern is that the TVET VTCs are not to their full capacity, thus experiencing a lot of wastage. The Elgeyo-Marakwet County’s Website (2017) Report, reveals that there is low enrolment in vocational training centres with some public VTCs having an enrolment of below 10. Elgeyo-Marakwet County Education Report (2016) indicates that transition rates from secondary to universities and colleges is low, resulting to under-utilising the post-secondary and vocational training centres which includes; 11 Vocational Training Centres, 1 Teacher Training College (TTC) and 2 Medical Training Colleges (MTCs) (Elgeyo-Marakwet County Education Report, 2016). This research paper seeks to establish whether level of awareness among the youths and parents on the cost of vocational training could be the reason for low enrolment in the above mentioned facilities (VTCs) in Elgeyo-Marakwet County in Kenya. There has been marginal increase in enrolment in Elgeyo-Marakwet County as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Data on Enrolment in VTCs in Elgeyo-Marakwet County (2013-2017)

Year	Enrolment per gender		Total	% Change
	Girls	Boys		
2013	337	588	925	-
2014	390	702	1092	18%
2015	415	760	1175	7%
2016	483	777	1260	7.2%
2017	578	859	1437	9.2%

Source: Department of Education and Technical Training Elgeyo-Marakwet County (2018)

According to Department of Education and Technical Training Elgeyo-Marakwet County (2018), the 11 vocational training centres are supposed to accommodate 3000 students but only 1437 have enrolled so far representing 47.9%. That is why this study sought to establish whether awareness on the financing could be a determinant of enrolment in public VTCs in Elgeyo-Marakwet County.

Statement of the Problem

Technical and Vocational Education and Training is critical to Kenya's achievement of Vision 2030 that aims at producing skilled human power for country's growth and development. The initiative of vocational training centres in Kenya was to ensure that school leavers do not just stay at home or engage in other social evils but go for artisan training in these institutions. Elgeyo-Marakwet County Education's report 2017 showed that some VTCs had less than 10 students while others have none. The capacity of VTCs in Elgeyo-Marakwet County is 3000, and only 47.9% (1437) students are enrolled. This state of affairs motivated the researcher to investigate why enrolment in VTCs has remained low by focusing on determining the contribution of level of awareness of cost associated with learning in VTCs.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to whether establish the level of awareness on existing sources for financing VTC affects enrolment in by students in Elgeyo-Marakwet County, Kenya.

II. Literature Review

The rationale for the introduction of VTCs is to equip youth with skills and competencies for social economic development (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2012). Majority of youths appear not to understand different sources of financing available for enrolment in vocational training centres (Metto, 2015). Could this awareness contribute to low enrolment? A question that this study hoped to answer. In Commonwealth Australia, Dommer, Myconos, Swain, Yung and Clarke (2017) research was on 'engaging young early school leavers in vocational training. This research was undertaken in selected disadvantaged regions in Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria. The objective was to find how students got information on joining the vocational school. They used a multi-phase, mixed-methods design. They found out that in Australia, an estimated number of early school leavers of age between 15 and 19 stood at 62.1% of those enrolled in a VET program in 2015 nationally. They found out that, program enrolments in vocational training by the 20-24 years early school leavers were lower at an estimated 43.3%. Young people identified family members as the main source of information about VET. Some interviewees noted that they learnt about vocational education through siblings who had undertaken formal vocational training. Information about the training courses offered by training providers also appeared to be confusing for early school leavers. A lack of clarity and variable fee structures became a significant deterrent. This research determined if information on awareness on existing funds contribute to youths decision to enrol in vocational training centres or not. It did not only focus on family information but also government, private and media as sources of awareness levels.

Metto (2015) investigated and described VTC students' awareness of vocational training in Nandi County, Kenya. The target population was 1521 students, 34 instructors and 12 principal managers in VTCs in Nandi County, Kenya. The study found that VTCs student had either positive or negative perceptions of vocational training which emanated from: instructor competencies, skills learnt, teaching methodologies, challenges encountered; student entry behaviour and societal beliefs. Further, it was also found that instructors had pedagogy challenges; VTCs faced many challenges that included rundown and old facilities. The study also revealed that most learners in VTCs were weak academically and needed motivation. The research by Metto (2015) failed to indicate whether awareness of funding sources influenced enrolment in vocational training centres.

Wangeci (2013) studied extent to which the level of awareness of courses offered in vocational training centres affected enrolment. The study used descriptive survey design. Questionnaires were used to obtain important information about the population. On the effect of awareness of courses offered in VTCs it was found that, the level is very low. This was evident in the fact that the majority of the respondents learn about the courses offered through friends. The researcher recommended that VTCs and other stakeholders should publicize the courses offered to improve awareness. The scholar focused on awareness of courses offered but failed to look at awareness of the existing sources of funding and how it has affected enrolment in public vocational training centres.

Kitui (2015) investigated the factors influencing access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bungoma East sub-county. A descriptive survey research design was used to conduct the study. Questionnaires was used to collect data from 120 finalist youth trainees, five youth polytechnic managers and one sub-county youth officer. The research established that youths' lacked information (awareness) concerning

career choice and development, besides believes they had about Youth Polytechnic courses that it is meant for the failures in national examinations. Kitui's study was conducted in Bungoma County and addressed issue of information on career choice. This research determined whether lack of information on funding sources influence youths decision to enrol in public vocational training centres in Elgeyo-Marakwet County.

III. Materials and Methods

A descriptive research design was used in this study. The use of descriptive survey research designs permits use of interview, questionnaires and document checklists (analysis) as instruments of data collection. The study collected information from students, tutors, institutions principal and school leavers on whether level of awareness of financing sources was a determinant of enrolment in public vocational training centres in Elgeyo-Marakwet, Kenya. The study population was 11 VTCs in the County. A total of 11 principals, 52 tutors, 1437 youths enrolled in VTCs in the county and 20 school leavers formed the target population for this research. Stratified sampling was used to select VTCs in different sub counties. The 11 VTCs principals who were selected using purposive sampling technique. School leavers who were unable to proceed with secondary school education were also selected to participate in the research. A contact was made with their former schools to identify their location after which one particular participant helped to identify the other school leavers through use of snowball sampling technique. Students and tutors were also selected using stratified sampling method based on the sub-counties they come from. The final sample size consisted of 10 principals, 20 school leavers, 52 tutors and 312 students (youths) from Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The study employed the use of questionnaires and interviews schedules as tools used to gather information from the respondents sampled. The instruments were tested for validity and reliability by conducting a small pilot study. The data obtained from open-ended questionnaires items and interviews was put together under broad themes. Quantitative data was analysed into frequency counts through use of Statistical Product and Service Solution (Version 20.0). The analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics to be used included means, percentage and standard deviation which enabled the researcher to answer the research questions for the study. Analysed data is presented in the next chapter in form of tables, pie charts, graphs and narrations for qualitative data from interviews.

IV. Results and Discussions

The objective of the study was to establish the level of awareness by respondents on existing source of financing vocational education and training among students in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The study collected data through questionnaires from teachers and regular students while interviews were for principals and school leavers. Tutors and students were asked to provide their level of awareness of existing source for financing Vocational education and training in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The following Likert scale determining level of awareness was used based on the following values; highly aware (4.5-5.00), aware (3.5-4.4), moderately aware (2.5-3.44), slightly aware (1.5-2.44) and not aware (1.0-1.44). The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Level of Awareness on Existing Sources for Financing of Vocational Education and Training
(Regular Students n=309 & Tutors n=52)

Statement	Students		Tutors	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Parents /guardian support	4.0291	1.11183	4.4038	.84621
County government allocation / support	3.1618	1.52885	4.0769	1.16898
National government support	2.8123	1.54910	4.3077	1.03920
Income generating programmes	2.1845	1.46217	2.7692	1.33747
Donors	2.1942	1.52293	2.0385	1.39974
Well wishers	2.2136	1.53096	2.4423	1.43368
Religious institution	2.6311	1.54367	2.7500	1.59503
Private business	2.0324	1.43436	1.5962	1.17590
Bursaries from CDF	3.0485	1.58961	4.3846	1.10531
Scholarships	2.1683	1.52389	2.6731	1.77920
Instructional resource funding e.g.	3.4693	1.30055	3.3269	1.49143
Prior information on existence of VTCs	3.2621	1.43446	3.7308	1.35929

Table 2 result show that 29 (55.8%) of tutors were highly aware and 157 (50.8%) of regular students were aware that parents and guardians contributed much in terms of school fees for VCT. Therefore, students (M=4.02 and SD=1.11) and tutors (M=4.40 and SD=0.84) were found to be aware of existence of parental support towards supporting their children enrolled in VTC. This shows that parents were the ones mainly supporting their children in VTCs. This finding agrees with Kitui (2015) who found out that 90 (68.7%) of students' fees were paid by their parents in vocational training centres in Bungoma County. This is similar in Busia county, where Mayabi (2014) found out that 91 (56.3%) of trainees fees came from family members and guardian. This showed parents/guardians had an obligation of paying fees for their children in VTCs. Findings

reveal that 132 (42.7%) of regular students were aware while 86 (27.8%) were not aware at all on county government support towards VTC. On the tutors perspective, 18 (34.6%) were aware and 24 (46.2%) were highly aware of the county government allocation / support towards the VTCs in the county. This result shows disparity in the level of awareness where tutors appeared to be aware (M=4.07 and SD=1.16) of the county government and allocation support towards revolutionising vocational training compared to students who were moderately aware (M=3.16 and SD=1.52). This means that tutors appear to have information on the level of support that county government provides to VTCs but this information is not clear to students and could in one way or another affect enrolment in VTCs.

Most 29 (55.8%) of tutors were highly aware of national government support towards VTC. However, 115 (37.2%) of regular students were aware while 114 (36.9%) were not aware at all on the existence of national government support towards VTCs. It can be seen here that most tutors (M=4.30 and SD=1.03) appear to be aware and students (M=2.81 and SD=1.5) moderately aware based on the mean and standard deviation scores. The result is somewhat different from Mayabi (2014) research in Samia, Busia county where most students 89 (55.0%) appeared to know government support towards vocational training centres. Further in terms of the level of awareness on existence of donors support in VTCs, majority 180 (58.3%) of students were not aware at all. This view was supported by 31 (59.6%) of tutors who were also not aware of existence of donor support for VTCs. This may imply that donor support for VTCs in the county was slightly low as perceived by regular students (M=2.19 and SD=1.52) and tutors (M=2.03 and SD=1.39). This implies that the level of awareness with regard to donor support for vocational education and training is low among tutors and students. In agreement with the study results, Shaibu and Baki (2013) established that there were inadequate donors (individuals or organisations) to support technical vocational education in Nigeria and this affected enrolment of students.

During interview, 12 (60.0%) of school leavers were aware of the bursary being provided by NG-CDF. When asked to share their awareness on whether the bursary by NG-CDF also targeted students wishing to join VTCs, all 20 (100%) of them said that they were unaware and they only knew that students in secondary schools, colleges (middle level ones) and universities were the only ones benefiting from the kitty. They also said that they have not heard any of their friends, former colleagues or relatives who had received support or sponsorship from NG-CDF to enrol in public VTCs. Result revealed that 24 (46.2%) of tutors were aware and 16 (30.8%) were highly aware of prior information on the existence of VTCs. On regular students part, 148 (47.9%) were aware but 73 (23.6%) were not aware at all of existence of VTCs. Mean data show that only tutors were aware of the prior information on existence of VTCs in the county (M=3.73 and SD=1.35), students were moderately aware of prior information on VTCs existence in the Elgeyo-Marakwet County (M=3.26 and SD=1.43). This shows that lack of prior information (when in primary or secondary school) among students could have affected their decision to enrol in the said institutions. Other sources of funding as reported by tutors were; fundraising events (harambees) and friends support as indicated in open-ended questionnaires.

To establish the overall mean scores for the tutors and students responses (Table 2) with regard to level of awareness of existing funding sources, computations were done by summing up the total scores and dividing them by 12 (awareness on sources of financing of vocational education and training). Results are given in Table 3.

Table3 Descriptive Data on Level of Awareness on Existing Sources of Financing Cost of Vocational Training

Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	(Regular students n=309 & tutors n=52) 95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Students	309	2.7796	.71555	.04071	2.6995	2.8597
Tutors	52	3.2173	.59002	.08182	3.0530	3.3816
Total	361	2.8427	.71489	.03763	2.7687	2.9167

Source: Field Data (2019)

Mean data from Table 3 shows that students (M=2.77 and SD=0.71) were moderately aware with together with tutors (M=3.21 and SD=0.59). This shows that teachers appears to have higher level of awareness on existing source of financing cost of vocational training followed by students. Average statistics indicated that they were moderately aware (M=2.84 and SD=0.71) on the source of funding to enable enrolment in public VTCs.

To establish of the above differences were significant at 95.0% confidence level, a one way analysis of variance was computed. The findings are given in Table 4.

Table 4 ANOVA on Level of Awareness on Existing Sources for Financing Cost for Vocational Training

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.527	1	8.527	17.447	.000
Within Groups	175.456	359	.489		
Total	183.983	360			

Source: Field Data (2019)

Result from Table 4 show that at 95.0% confidence level, there exist significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between respondents means on level of awareness on existing source of funding for vocational training on enrolment of students in public VTCs centres in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. From the finding, school leavers, regular students and students have different level of awareness on existing sources of finance for enabling enrolment in public VTCs. School leavers appeared to only know that for one to be enrolled in VTCs, only parents / guardians were capable of providing support.

Students were further asked to state which other funding source they have benefited from. Their responses are given in Table 5.

n=309

Table 5 Funding Source that Students have benefited from

Areas of benefit	Frequency	Percent
Not benefited from others apart from parents	231	74.7%
Farming activities that I do (IGAs)	4	1.3
County government	12	3.9
National government support	16	5.2
Bursaries NG-CDF	44	14.2
Scholarships	1	.3
Business	1	.3
Parents / guardian support	27	8.7
Total	309	100.0

Source: Field Data (2019)

It is observed from the Table 5 that close to three quarters of students 231 (74.7%) have not benefited from any other funding sources mentioned above other than from their parents. Nevertheless, it is seen that bursaries is the main source of funding that has benefited 44 (14.2%) of students and which has helped them to be retained in vocational training centres in the county. This means besides their family support, regular students' awareness of existence of bursaries might have helped in increasing enrolment in vocational training centres.

Further, the researcher asked the tutors to give their view on the adequacy of funding sources that they mentioned towards improving enrolment in vocational training centres in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. The responses are given in Figure 1.

n=52

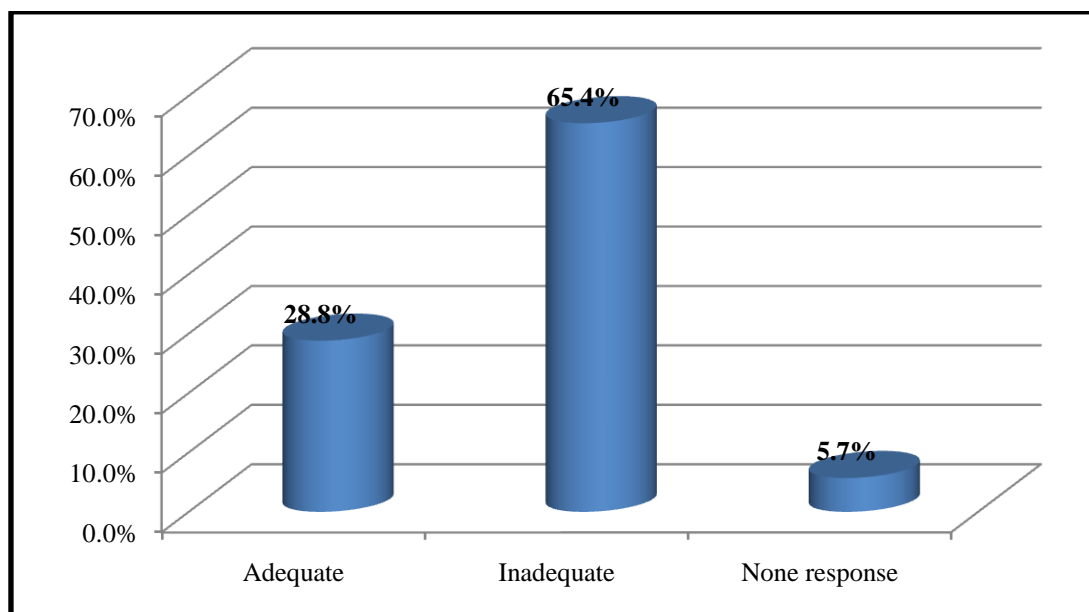


Figure 1 Tutors Response on Adequacy of Funding Sources and Enrolment in VTCs

Majority of tutors 34 (65.4%) said that the funding sources available was inadequate to enhance enrolment of learners in public VTCs in the county with only 15 (28.8%) saying that the funding would be available. This means that despite existence of funding source, most tutors perceive the fund as inadequate to facilitate enrolment of students in VTCs. Tutors felt that government needed to increase tuition fee support and increase the number of tutors in VTCs. This coincides with Kinara (2014) research that showed that increased in government funding to the TVET sector would result to immediate increase in number of students enrolling in those institutions in Kenya.

Moreover, the tutors were asked to indicate how the information could be relayed to school leavers or their parents with regard to funding sources for vocational educational and training. Tutors preferred modes of raising awareness are given in Table 6.

Table 6 Methods of Raising Awareness to School Leavers on Existing Funds for Enrolling in VTCs

Chanel of creating awareness	Frequency	Percent
Notices, posters, market centres and mass media	17	32.7
Social gatherings e.g. churches, parties, burials	6	11.5
Through local government offices	5	9.6
Through notices and posters	5	9.6
Through local government offices and notices and posters	5	9.6
Posters, notices and mass media	3	5.8
Market centres and mass media	2	3.8
Local government offices, posters, notices and market centres	2	3.8
Word of mouth communication	2	3.8
Past students	2	3.8
In market centres	1	1.9
Through mass media	1	1.9
Social media	1	1.9
Total	52	100.0

n=52

It can be seen from Table 6 that 17 (32.7%) putting of posters in market and urban centres around the Elgeyo-Marakwet on existing sources of funding for vocational education and training. Similar to the study results, Wangeci (2013) found out that most respondents (36%) got to know about the courses offered at the VTCs through friends, 26% through *barazas* and churches, 16% through brochures, and 13% by visiting the VTCs and 9% through open days organized by the VTCs in Nyeri South Sub County. This implies the above mentioned medium of raising awareness on existing sources of funding for vocational education and training need to be fully utilised to ensure higher enrolment in VTCs.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study found out that despite existence of several sources of funding from principals and tutors view, very few students benefited from such. Majority of of students enrolled in VTCs relied on their parents/guardians support for payment of school fees which principals said that it was irregular. School leavers were also found to have lower level of awareness of various sources of funding for VTCs and this affected their decision not to proceed with their schooling. Only 14.2% of students admitted to have received bursary support (from county or CDF) to enable their learning in the said institutions. Lack of adequate and reliable funding sources was mentioned by tutors to be a challenge influencing enrolment of students in public vocational training centres in Elgeyo-Marakwet County. To address the level of awareness on existing sources of funding that was found to be low, there is need for county government to work together with TVETA to educate parents and students in primary and secondary schools leavers on various funding available through mass media, churches and *barazas* to enable high access to such institutions by learners. This will ensure that the carrying capacity of the available institutions is attained.

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