

MANAGING THE FINANCING OF HOME BASED LEARNING AND TEACHING IN KENYA AMID COVID 19; PERCEPTION AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract: The study focused on perception and challenges of homebased teaching and learning amid COVID-19 pandemic in Uasin Gishu County. The objective was to determine the perception of the parents who have their children in secondary schools across the country on the home based teaching and learning and identify the challenges they face while implementing the program. The study utilized purposive sampling on the parents or guardians who have secondary school children. selection was at random for the parents whose contacts were available to the researchers. A total of 25 parents were interviewed from the total 80 parents in the contact list. The findings indicated that 80% had participated in the online classes from their respective schools through WhatsApp and zoom. 23% of the total respondents indicated having interacted with one or more teachers of their children on phone or physical contact to ask questions on the learning. The perception by the parents towards online home based learning and teaching was low impact, Costly and added no much value to the learning. The main challenge that came about was cost implication, technology incapacity and time consuming.

Keywords: Teaching, Learning, Technology, Cost.

1. BACKGROUND

Teaching and learning process in Kenya has been cost shared with the government taking a bigger share in the recent past while parents have been supplementing (Kiveu & Mayo, 2009; Wambugu, 2012). Cost-sharing policy in Kenya was introduced in 1988 with aim of managing the economic strain of the time. Recently, free and compulsory primary education was introduced to accommodate every school going child (Wambugu & Mokoena, 2013). According to LeBaron et. al., (2018), knowledge on financial management for young people is achieved at homes and expounded in other social institutions. Furthermore, extent of finance management impacts on learning aspects of health, academic, interpersonal interactions and general personal growth (Chowa & Despard, 2014; Xiao, Chatterjee, & Kim, 2014).

COVID-19 pandemic caused various changes in lifestyle that include the social distancing that was recommended by the world health organization and the government of Kenya. Social distancing made the closure of schools inevitable and therefore learning at home a necessity. Integrated support for learners can only be enhanced through building close interaction between schools and parents. Development of mutual responsibility among the sector players is key ingredient for learners' success in the current educational system. Parents therefore provide direct influence in making home based learning a success in the educational system (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017).

Putting into consideration the key role parents currently are playing in the learning process at homes, this paper explains the financial implication and perception of homebased teaching and learning in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Furthermore, we suggest conclusions and recommendation that could help in planning and focus on improvement of parent involvement in the homebased learning.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Uasin Gishu County focusing on parents who had children in high school and whom the researchers had their contacts. The number of parents interviewed were 25 from a total of 80 in the contact list. The purposive list of the contacts and with children in high school were selected at random to arrive at the 25.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Proper relationship among learners, teachers and parents is essential in achieving better results in students (Linda et al., 2020). The relationship increases trust which further enhances understanding of common objective (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Leadership based on relationship can be distributed among all the sector players in the system including the role of parents towards the learning exercise. Trust emanating from the relationship plays a critical role in the achievement of goals and objectives of school by the children (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016). Constant interaction scheduled in agreement between students, teachers and parents through meetings including online meetings improves the perception of learning exercise both in school and home (Darling-Hammond, Ramos-Beban, Altamirano, & Hyler, 2016; Darling- Hammond et al., 2002).

A strong interaction between the school and family guarantees better results for learners as illustrated by Jeynes (2012, 2017). Better results of students can even be achieved more through shared reading by parents with their children, similarly strategies that increased communication between parents and teachers as well as parents checking learners assignment (Jeynes, 2012; Linda et al., 2020). This implies therefore that parents involvement in the learners activities encouraged better performance (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Luppescu, 2010).

Results established that 80% of the parents had facilitated their children to online learning either through WhatsApp or zoom. Furthermore a total of 56% had bought bundles for the purpose of children learning online. About 15% had taken trouble of teaching their children favorite topics or subjects of interest. The findings indicated 40% had supervised their children in doing assignments of learning with only 5% having given own assignments to the learners. Calling teachers to seek clarification had been done by 23% of the parents in the study area and about 35% had followed up on the TV and Radio program learning. Results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Role Played by Parents in Online Learning

Role of played by a parent in online learning	Response (%)	
	Yes	No
Facilitated child on WhatsApp or Zoom by giving a phone	80	20
Facilitated the child on online learning by buying bundles	56	44
Attended the child in teaching specific topics or subjects	15	85
Supervised child in doing assignments	40	60
Gave the child own relevant assignment	5	95
Called the teacher for clarification of assignments or topic	23	77
Followed up on TV and Radio teaching program	35	65

Results shown in Table 2 indicate that majority of the respondents were of the view that online learning using Zoom and WhatsApp or related channel was expensive for the parents as shown by response of 38%. Being a time consuming venture was closely indicated to being the second leading perception of using WhatsApp and zoom at 34% response rate. Categorically, this can be associated to the use of a parents phone by the learners making the parent wait for it for some time at the expense of other routine productive work that is meant for livelihood. Buying of bundles for the learner was expensive as represented by 44% of the response followed by time consuming venture at 26% and parents feeling that it was not any of their business to teach or facilitate the teaching shown by response of 21%.

Many parents represented by 37%, 25% and 24% felt that attending the learner by teaching a specific lesson or topic time consuming, complicated exercise and a difficult venture respectively. Many parents supervised their children in carrying out exercises (59%), However 19% felt it was a difficult exercise and complicated activity for them (12%). Parents of secondary school learners did not give own exercise to students at home for reasons based described at complicated to do the assignment submission (35%), Difficult to give set and give assignment (31%) and Time consuming venture (29%) as key reasons of the role of a parent towards home based learning. Many parents indicated by 75% of the response felt it was a difficult thing to call the teachers for guidance and assistance on the learning aspects of their children. TV and Radio lessons were perceived to be time consuming than self-learning and is represented by 54% of the total response as shown in Table 2.

Perceptions by the parents affect the performance of learners and the learning process at home hence affecting the total home based learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic that has led to temporary closure of schools. Ministry of education and individual schools are promoting home based schooling in order to sustain the tempo it had set and to minimize the risk of forgetting what had been learned in schools prior to closure.

Table 2: Perception of Online Learning by Parents

Perception of the role towards financial implications	Response (%)				
	Expensive	Difficult	Complicated	Time consuming	Not my business
Facilitating child on WhatsApp or Zoom by giving a phone	38	4	13	34	11
Facilitating the child on online learning by buying bundles	44	2	7	26	21
Attending the child in teaching specific topics or subjects	5	24	25	37	9
Supervising the child in doing assignments	5	19	12	59	5
Giving the child own relevant assignment	2	31	35	29	3
Calling the teacher for clarification of assignments or topic	5	75	2	5	13
Following up on TV and Radio teaching program	12	17	5	54	12

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the aforementioned findings from the study, it can be concluded that many learners are facing challenges in the execution of the homebased learning. This can be attributed to the cost implication it comes with, the technological challenge that is accompanied and the difficulty in balancing of livelihood and managing the learning process at home. It is therefore recommended that parents be sensitized on the need to assist and be a part of the training process of the learners withing the pandemic and after. The policy makers should be considerate in executing and pushing for the homebased learning based on the environmental diversity and economic background which differ in most parents of one single school.

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