

Education challenge in kenya essays examples

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Kenya is an interesting African country. I choose this country because of the richness of culture and the struggles it is making towards independence. Like all other countries in the sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya is faced with many challenges of economy. One of the challenges that Kenya face and has been with it since independence is the education system. This is the reason why the education system has undergone many changes since independence in 1963. Fifty years after independence, there are still some aspects of the British education system especially when it comes to management and the pedagogy. In the struggle to define a new path, the Kenyan government is trying to improve an education system which is underfunded with the coming up of reforms that are geared at bringing new reforms in the education system, and the structure of the curriculum.

One challenge that this country faces is that not all children have a chance to attend school. There are various statistics regarding the number of children who attend school. The dominant statistics indicate that only 30% of the children in Kenya achieve the basic education system by doing Kenya Certificate of Primary education (KCPE). Of these, it has been found out that only 50% manage to complete secondary level (KCSE). This means that less than one in every five pupils will eventually graduate with a high school diploma. Given the fact that there are 1. 2 million children who are orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, a very small percentage of children will manage to live above poor living conditions to be able to attain the need to attend any form of schooling.

Parents face a big challenge of tuition costs which are rising by the day. Part of the cost of tuition for public primary school was eliminated in 2003 when

the government reintroduced free primary education. Although this is the case, the basic costs of such items as school text books, school uniforms, PTA fees, and extra curriculum fees still remained the responsibility of the family. The basic needs of food, nutrition, health and care for young children remain an issue that keeps many from attending school.

Another challenge that parents face is transporting their children to school. Many schools are located in far places from homes. The parents who have the means are seen to send their children to private schools which are known to be expensive and a preserve of the rich only. There are different fees structures for provincial, district and national schools. These different schools also have varying quality of education offered, and the environment that the school offers. Children who are bright are not able to attend the schools of choice because of the long distances and the lack of school fees. Many children woke up very early in the morning, trek long distances, and return late in the evening. They will have to work on household chores and if there is a source of light, they will do their “ school preps”. This leaves the children with no time for play, and development in normal environment.

Another aspect is ICT which is an important component to the Kenyan society in economic development. There is lack of electricity, computers, and computer laboratories in many public schools. This makes learning deficit in most children. Although there are efforts by NGOs, government, and corporate sector to donate computers to schools, there are still a significant percentage of schools that have no access to ICT. The new government promised to roll out one-lap-per child program. This is been laughed off because of the lack of infrastructure and a poor policy in enrolling this

project. There is also the lack of technicians who work on broken computers in the laboratories which leave many computers in broken condition. For the schools which are able to purchase computers, the high costs of connectivity makes it expensive for pupils to connect to the internet. The costs of internet service providers are still an issue. The need for ICT is seen to be of lesser magnitude compared to the need for clean water, healthcare and the basic education.

There are remnants of the colonial system where there is standardized testing that takes place after standard eight (KCPE) and form four (KCSE). These testing processes are meant to place students on a common and level playing field that will enable students to get admissions to high schools and universities. This is an issue for most students because the system blocks them from advancing to another level of learning. This is a raging debate in Kenya where many question the efficacy of the use of one testing system to assess the path for future careers and learning. Students have been put under pressure because they are required to achieve. The high achieving and performing schools have created a schooling system which is endowed with fear and rejection. Students fear that they will be rejected from the system. This is a trending phenomenon that is an issue to the learning system in Kenya.

Schools also face the challenge of funds. Most schools receive funds at times which are hard to predict and in trickledown approach. This makes the funds insufficient. There have been complaints by heads of schools that the funds they receive for public schools have never been enough. This has led to suppliers not getting the payment of the services on time. For this reason,

there are many schools which have closed indefinitely because they are not able to sustain themselves.

Plans to offer free secondary education were introduced in the year 2008. A sum of Kshs. 10265 was allocated which is only 30% of the actual fund that is required for a student to attend secondary school. One of the unfortunate scenes that are seen in the country on a daily basis is the sight of many students who are sent home to collect schools fees. They are normally sent home because they lack school fees.

The access to funds for such activities like capital projects is a challenge that many schools face. Capital projects like infrastructure and water are not accessible and doable because of the lack of funds. This is only possible through public fund-raiser like Harambees, NGOs funding, and the use of Community Development Funds that is issued by the government.

There is also the issue of salary for the teachers who are qualified. Apart from salary, the teachers walk long distances from home. There is a growing trend with the prevalence of HIV/AIDS where male teacher are not able to establish a normal family because of deplorable conditions. The teacher to pupil ration is approaching 1: 100 because classes are forced to merge because of the lack of teachers. Although these challenges abound, it is remarkable to see teachers committed to their duties and the students that they work together.

In conclusion, the education system in Kenya still has many challenges.

There is still a lot that the government should do to eradicate the challenge in the education sector. Education is an important component that is used

for development. It is an important pillar of development and should not be ignored.

References

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