

## **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of free day secondary education subsidy on completion rates in public day secondary schools in Kitui County, Kenya. The journal is based on findings of a study conducted in 2017. The objectives of the study were; to investigate the influence of education subsidies on retention rates in day secondary schools in Kitui County; to assess the influence of education subsidies on dropout rates in day secondary schools in Kitui County; to assess the relationship between educational subsidies and completion rates. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study sample was 119 principals of public day secondary schools in Kitui County, 16 treasurers of Constituency Bursary Fund and one County Director of Education. Data was collected using a questionnaire, interview schedules and document review guide. Validity of the research instruments was ascertained through piloting and expert judgement. A test-re-test technique was used to assess reliability of the research instruments. The scores were correlated to get the co-efficient of stability using Spearman's coefficient of correlation and an instrument reliability value of 0.823 was obtained. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyse data using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to analyse hypothesis. The study found that subsidies given to day secondary schools were not adequate to finance education expenses of the learner; the study further found that education subsidies were more often disbursed late; The study also found that completion rates in public day secondary schools has been rising steadily from 70.4 per cent in 2007 to 72.6 per cent in 2013 a trend attributed to education subsidies. The study recommended that government should increase the amount of free day secondary tuition per student per year and remit it in good time to public day secondary schools so that the school managers could plan with precision and be able to retain the students in schools. The study concluded that provision of educational subsidies in public day secondary schools has increased students' retention rate and reduced dropout rates subsequently this has led to high completion rates.