

## Research Article

# Effect of Cost on Cross-Border Secondary Education from Kenya to Uganda

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### Abstract

Cross Border secondary education has become significant in Busia Border especially from the Kenyan side to the Ugandan side. The purpose of the study was to determine the socio-economic determinants of cross-border secondary education from Kenya to Uganda at the Busia Border. The study therefore sought to establish the effect of cost of education on cross-border secondary education. The study employed Ravenstein theory of migration descriptive research design. A combination of simple random, stratified and purposive sampling was used to select respondents of the study. The respondents included 151 students, 147 guardians, 5 administrators and 2 District Education officers (DEOs) from both Kenyan and Ugandan. Questionnaires, interview schedule and document checklist were the data collection instruments. Reliability of instruments was tested by Cronbach Coefficient Alpha and its figure stood at  $r=0.713$  while to test validity, the instruments were examined by two research experts at Moi University. Data was analyzed using descriptive, Pearson correlation and regression analyses and presented in tables, charts and graphs. The findings of the study were: Cost ( $\beta=.383$ ,  $t=5.858$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), showing that it had a significant influence on cross-border secondary education. The study therefore recommends: The Kenyan Government should make its secondary more affordable.

**Keywords:** Cost; Cross-Border; Effects; Kenya; Uganda.

### Introduction

Rapidly increasing demand for education exceeds the capacity of many countries to supply it domestically [1]. Increasingly, many students have moved across borders to obtain education at any level and today they continue to do so in increasing numbers. Cross-border education is a situation where a citizen of a country participates in another country's education system. This occurs when students travel abroad to study or when there is exchange of scholars and researchers [2]. Initially, Kenya government financial support for secondary declined by 10 percent over the period 1991-1994. Consequently, the GER in secondary schools reduced from 24.9 percent in 1990s to 22 percent in 2000 due to cost-sharing policy [3] increased levels of and increased user fees charges despite the government's effort to introduce fee guidelines which have been ignored by most secondary head teacher, are the reasons for reduced GER.

After implementation of free primary Education in 2003 by the NARC government in Kenya as per Government commitment at

Independence [4] there has been suggestion to improve transition to secondary schools. Debates to introduce free secondary education (FSE) had been going on in Kenya (The Standard, February 6, 2007). This was effected in 2008, where coalition Government of PNU and ODM started FSE in day schools parting 10,250/= per child to supplement the other fees charged on parents [5]. Critically, [6] in their study of globalization of education done in Sweden noted that cost is in important factor in education. In fact through their regressed results using the survey method, they found that cost was a very significant factor that led students to migrate to other countries. The study noted that apart from scholarships which would endear students to other countries, low and affordable costs made the difference between where to study and which courses to undertake and that consequently countries were now strategic in considering how to cost their education. However, this study did not consider other determinants like system of education, the quality aspects and the issue of access as this study has done [7].

In [8] in his work on financing higher education, partners, trends and options done in

France found certain salient matters on cost. In his comparative review of literature on cost of education, he found that cost was a significant element in education including being a factor in deciding where to study. He however noted, in contradiction to [9] that many students preferred a somewhat expensive education because of the perception that high cost was commensurate to high quality of education. Of course this still undergirds the idea that cost was a determinant to cross-border education but that in this case high cost was preferred to low cost [10]. This study however dealt mainly with higher education and did not consider the element that is unique in developing countries like Kenya and Uganda where based on the socio-economic status of benefactors, low cost could be a welcome idea [11].

### Research methodology

Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of the data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purposes with the economy, [12]. In this study, two research designs were adopted; descriptive survey research design and correlation research design. Descriptive Survey Design is defined by [13] as a research method that involves asking a large group of people questions about a particular issue at hand. In this design, the researcher attempted to study the respondents in their natural setting. In [9] it defines this design as an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population in respect to one or more variables. This design was appropriate in this study in that it promoted objectivity and reduced biasness in the study. It enabled the researcher to collect data from a wide population using questionnaires and allows research to use a sample from the population and make generalizations to the entire population with respect to the problem of the study. It also aided quick data collection in a relatively short time, and was also cheap.

Correlational Research Design is highly recommended for research in education [3]. It is considered suitable for studies where random assignments of subjects to treatment and manipulative control of the independent variables are not possible [4]. It was appropriate as it was used to establish the degree of relationship between socio-economic determinants and cross border education. So

while descriptive survey was used describe the events involved in socio-economic determinants to cross border education from Kenya to Uganda correlational research design was used to establish the degree of relationship between socio-economic determinants and cross border education.

### Results and discussion

As part of the study, a measure of the dependent variable through the questionnaires from parents and students, cross-border secondary education was needful. The results are as seen in table 1. It is clear from table 1 that majority of parents and students at 67.4% agreed that cross-border education from Kenya to Uganda was very common in Busia Border. Only 26.5% disagreed and 6.0% were undecided. This indicates a high popularity of cross-border secondary education in Busia border. As a subset of educational internationalization, cross-border education is part of international efforts to develop cooperative projects, commercial initiatives and academic exchange programs. There are numerous reasons for the emergence of cross-border education programs. The first of these is the substantial growth of student populations worldwide. In [10] it indicated several other factors contributing to the rapidly increasing demand for education these include changing demographics; the greater number of secondary school graduates worldwide; a movement to lifelong learning, and the growth of the knowledge economy.

On whether cross-border education was necessary taking into consideration, cost, quality, access and the system of education, 65.1% agreed, 28.2% disagreed and 6.7% were undecided. This implies that there were certain socio-economic determinants to cross border secondary education. This is in total agreement with [11] who had argued that there are certain socio-economic determinants that lead to cross border secondary education. He cites accessibility, system of education, cost and perception of quality or standard as the main determinants that have been considered by Kenyan parents in sending their children to Ugandan secondary schools and his study he noted that both students and parents feel significantly on the same matter. When asked if cross-border education took one form, the physical attendance of studies in foreign country, and not the other forms like distance learning,

validation of certificate by foreign country on courses offered in local country, among others, 65.4% agreed, 26.8% disagreed and 7.7% were neutral. This implies that cross-border education on the secondary level was simply a physical attendance by students and not any other form. This means that cross border secondary

education was limited to one form, leaving the other forms to post-secondary education that has also taken off. In [3] they had noted that while cross-border secondary education was popular in border countries, it only took one form because of the limited nature of secondary education, currently.

Table 1. Cross Border Secondary Education

	Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Cross-Border Education from Kenya to Uganda is very common in Busia Border	201	67.4%	18	6.0%	79	26.5%	298	100%
Cross-Border Education is necessary taking into consideration, cost, quality, access and the system of education	194	65.1%	20	6.7%	84	28.2%	298	100%
Cross-Border Education takes one form, the physical attendance of studies in foreign country, and not the other forms like distance learning, validation of certificate by foreign country on courses offered in local country, etc	195	65.4%	23	7.7%	80	26.8%	298	100%
Cross-Border Education from Kenya to Uganda, in my opinion, will continue to grow and expand even farther	197	66.1%	20	6.7%	81	27.2%	298	100%

Finally, when the respondents were asked if cross-border education from Kenya to Uganda, in their opinion, would continue to grow and expand even farther, 66.1% thought so, 27.2% disagreed and 6.7% were undecided. This gives an indication that the respondents thought highly of cross-border education particularly from Kenya to Uganda and somewhat hoped for its growth. At secondary school level, Tanzanians form the majority of foreign students closely followed by Kenyans. Although neighbouring countries have also introduced free primary school education, the attraction for Ugandan

education has not decreased. In [8] it indicated that the past prohibition of private education and limited access to secondary education in Tanzania created a market in Kenya and Uganda for Tanzania children. During a UPE review in 2010, it was established that there was an average of 20% of foreign students in Busia, Malaba, Tororo and Mbale and that the number was dimmed to grow.

The objective sought to establish the influence of cost of education on cross-border secondary education. From Table 2 majority of guardian respondents at 93.0% said that the

Ugandan government indirectly paid fees at a figure between 10,001-15,000 Kshs. Only 3.0% said it was below 5000, 2.3% said above 15,000 Kshs and 1.75 Said between 5001-10,000 kshs. This implies that the government offered substantial indirect fee aid to its students. While on fee paid directly by guardians, 91.3% said they paid between 5001-7000 Kshs, 3.0% between 7001-9000 Kshs, 2.7% paid between 9001-11,000, 1.7% above, 11,000 and 1.3% below 5000 Kshs. This implies that the guardians paid a relatively cheaper cost of education in Uganda compared to Kenya record that places the fee at above 10,000kshs. This is in agreement with the response of the DEO of Busia District, Uganda, who said that the government in Uganda provides indirect fee to offset payment that would have been paid directly by guardians making the cost cheaper on the part of the guardians.

Table 2. Fee paid by Ugandan Government and Kenyan Guardians

Fee Paid Indirectly by government	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5000	9	3.0%
5001-10,000	5	1.7%
10,001-15,000	126	93.0%
Above 15,000	7	2.3%
Fee Paid directly by guardians	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5000	4	1.3%
5001-7000	121	91.3%
7001-9000	9	3.0%
9001-11,000	8	2.7%
Above 11,000	5	1.7%

The Kenyan situation under affordable secondary education is more expensive than the Ugandan system. According to the DEO on the Kenyan side, the fees paid by government and the guardians are almost equal, cumulatively, with the government paying 10,250 Kshs per child per term and guardians paying 11,000 Kshs. Contrarily, the direct fee paid by guardians in Uganda amounts to 6000 Kshs and 14,000 Kshs paid by government. This result shows the reason for the push and pull factor that lead to cross-border secondary education in line with the

migration theory as argued in this study and as asserted by [13].

It is clear from table 3 that majority of parents and students at 64.4% agreed with the statement that the cost of education in Uganda was relatively cheaper than in Kenya. This is an indication that the cost of education in Uganda under USE was relatively cheaper than education in Kenya under affordable secondary education and implies the need for cross-border education by Kenyan students at Busia border to Uganda secondary schools. In [6] they agree with this result when he notes that the cost of education in Uganda is a major pull factor for Kenyan parents who are relatively struggling to earn every month. He further asserts that secondary education needs to keenly look at its cost of education to make it attractive to its citizens. When asked if the low cost of education allowed parents to afford necessary education which would have been difficult in Kenyan Secondary schools, 63.4% agreed, 29.5% disagreed and 7.0% were undecided. This indicates further the relatively cheap secondary education in Uganda as compared to Kenyan secondary education. In [12] he noted that affordable cost of education encourages higher access to education and promotes the MDGs and Education for All (EFA).

When the respondents were asked if they also incurred other costs like transport but that they were worthwhile considering the whole scope of cost, 65.4% agreed, 28.9% disagreed and 5.7% were neutral. This implies that the overall cost towards educating students across border to Uganda from Kenya was relatively cheap and affordable. On cost, the government gives a reprieve to foreign students to pay the same school fees as their local counterparts [5].

Lastly, when asked if the affordable cost of education in Uganda was a major determinant of cross-border migration by students from Kenya to Uganda, 66.1% agreed, 27.5% disagreed and 6.4% were undecided. This is an indication that the cost of education was a socio-economic determinant of cross-border secondary education. It is also in agreement with literature [1] who argued that when considering cross-border education, whether it is at secondary or post-secondary levels, the cost of such education, among other factors, come out as a major determinant for adoption of cross-border education.

Table 3. Influence of Cost of Education on Cross-Border Secondary Education

	Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
The cost of education in Uganda is relatively cheaper than in Kenya	192	64.4%	20	6.7%	86	28.9%	298	100%
The Cost of Education allows us parents to afford necessary education which would have been difficult in Kenyan Secondary schools	189	63.4%	21	7.0%	88	29.5%	298	100%
We also incur other costs like transport but they are worthwhile considering the whole scope of cost	195	65.4%	17	5.7%	86	28.9%	298	100%
The affordable cost of education in Uganda is a major determinant of cross-border migration by students from Kenya to Uganda	197	66.1%	19	6.4%	82	27.5%	298	100%

## Conclusions

The cost of education in Uganda was relatively cheaper than in Kenya and the cost of education allowed parents to afford necessary education which would have been difficult in Kenyan Secondary schools. However, they also incurred other costs like transport but that they were worthwhile considering the whole scope of cost. The affordable cost of education in Uganda was a major determinant of cross-border migration by students from Kenya to Uganda. Literature supports the argument that cost is a major determinant of cross-border secondary education particularly from Kenya to Uganda, whether day schooling for close border or boarding for faraway places. It can therefore be concluded that Cost of education is a significant socio-economic determinant to cross-border secondary education.

## Conflicts of Interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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