

INFLUENCE OF CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME ON ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION: A CASE OF EMBU WEST SUB-COUNTY, EMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Children are vulnerable and dependent on adults for their basic survival. When children lose their parents through death, their survival is threatened. Orphans face a more serious challenge of accessing education in the absence of guardians and the breaking up of community social support structures. This study therefore sought to explore the influence of cash transfer programme in accessing secondary school education in Central Division, Embu West District. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of cash transfer programme on orphans and vulnerable children and access to secondary school education in Embu West district. In this regard the study was guided by the following objectives; to determine the extent to which the demographic characteristics of the caregivers who receive the cash transfer influence access to secondary education among orphans and vulnerable children in Central Division, Embu West district; to establish the extent to which different modes of cash transfer payment influence access to secondary education among orphans and vulnerable children in Central Division, Embu West District and to establish how prioritization of cash transfer influences orphans and vulnerable children's access to secondary education in EMBU WEST SUB-COUNTY, Kenya. Descriptive research design was used to collect data from a sample of 225 households who receive the cash transfer. Cluster sampling was used since there was an already complete list of beneficiaries from the District Children's office, Embu-West. Systematically the first household head was selected to take part in the study. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire developed by the researcher while secondary data was from both published and unpublished literature. Participant observation was used for the household head and the children to get qualitative data. Data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences(S.P.S.S) where frequencies, percentages were obtained and was presented in frequency distribution tables and also cross tabulations. Study findings indicated that the level of education of the caregivers influenced prioritization of needs whereby all the caregivers who attained secondary education prioritized education. Study findings also indicated that the mode of payment is convenient and highly efficient. On decision making on how the Cash Transfer is used, 69% said it is made by the wife, while 15.3% by husbands. This is consistent with the finding that most of the respondents were widows. Further, all the decisions were made by adults without involvement of the OVCs despite the fact that they were the reason the households were selected for the Programme. Most of the money was used for education related expenses at 55.6%, followed by food at 25.9%, medical care 13.9%, investment 4%, social functions at 0.4% and rent at 0.2%.None of the respondents stated that the money is used on entertainment and non-essential commodities such as alcohol, tobacco and clothes for the adults. However, the transfer amount was found to be inadequate to meet all household needs. From the study findings, it was recommended that cash transfer should be increased to a higher amount in order to cater for more needs. Cash transfer per household should be determined by taking into consideration the number of orphans and vulnerable children the household is taking care of. Sensitization of beneficiary households on child participation and encouragement to involve the OVCs in decision making on utilization of the Cash Transfer. The researcher suggests that the issue of child participation in the Programme should be studied to understand the causes and the intervention that can be put in place to ensure their involvement as they are a key stakeholder. Further study on the effects of the Programme on social relationships in the community is required in order to understand the underlying issues and how to resolve them to avoid conflicts in future.

Keywords: Cash Transfer; Demographic characteristics; Modes of payment; Prioritization of transfer.