SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND GENDER FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY SELF-SPONSORED PROGRAMME- A CASE OF KISII UNIVERSITY, KISII COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: Student socio-economic factors influencing enrolment in Universities. University education plays a key role in the economic development of a country. In this respect, the government of Kenya has endeavored to increase enrolment in University education since independence. It has expanded opportunities at the University level and increased the chances of getting University admission through private self-sponsored programme. Nevertheless, it is a fact that people's aspirations and ability to enroll in various programmes is sometimes limited by socio-economic factors. The purpose of the study was to determine the socio-economic factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate s self-sponsored students in Kisii University. The study was guided by the following objectives: To determine the influence of Parental level of education, Parental Occupation ,Parental Income and Birth order and Family size on enrollment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was 1714.It consisted of a dean of students, an academic registrar and 1712 students of the 2013/2014 academic year cohort. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select a dean of students and an academic registrar. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 513 students whowere 30% of the student target population. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires, in-depth interview and document analysis. Validity of instruments was determined by two experts in the Faculty of Education at Kisii University. Data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Reliability of the instruments was determined by piloting on the 2012/13 academic year cohorts. Piloting was done in five Faculties through test-retest method. Pearson Correlation was used to calculate reliability which was established at 0.741.Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies and graphs while qualitative data was analyzed on the basis of themes and sub themes. The researcher upheld the research ethics by ensuring the autonomy of the respondents. From the study, it was established that the most significant socio-economic factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students were: nature of school attended, parental occupation education and income. The University socio-economic factors that influenced enrolment were mostly the cost of the courses, financial support through bursaries, physical infrastructure, teaching staff, accessibility of the material required for the course and management. The conclusion was that socio-economic factors and gender constitute a significant determinant to undergraduate students' enrolment. It was recommended that the government should endeavor to cushion the needy students pursuing their degrees through self-sponsored programme. A study should be carried out on financing of University education and participation of undergraduate students at Kisii University.

Keywords: Kisii University, socio-economic factors, self-sponsored programme.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Many countries have invested dearly in education and especially in the field of University education with an aim of promoting both economic and social development (Nungu, 1997).In deed, increased investment in education particularly at the university level is the most fundamental way to the realization of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Republic of Kenya (2005a). In fact, the increase of access to higher education is more factually attributed to the expansion of higher education opportunities (Belyakov, Cremonini, Mfusi and Rippner, 2009).Nevertheless, across times; Universities have experienced discrepancies in students' enrolments per area of specialization.

Globally, education is recognized as a fundamental human right-one that all individuals are entitled to benefit, the circumstances in which they live notwithstanding (Unesco, 2012). Education also brings important benefits to individuals and the society as a whole. In order to achieve these benefits faster, it is necessary the participation of both men and women be on the equal basis (De Mcpherson, 2000). The position of Unesco (1998a) in this regard is that women have the right to the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Therefore, they also have to be seen as great contributors of human resource in every nation.

On the American continent, the research findings by Casely, (2000) and Morley, Leach and Lugg (2009) have demonstrated that students socio-economic status affect their ability to acquire and participate in all levels of education particularly at the tertiary level. Similarly, another study by Bowen, Kurweil and Tobin (2005) shows that in United States, low –income students are less likely to enroll in one of the group of 31 selective colleges or universities that fall under the Consortium on Financing Higher Education(COFHE).In the same line, research findings as established by Oxman-Martinez and Ri Choi (2014) revealed that poor educational outcomes were mostly realized in immigrant children who do suffer from socio-psychological inclusion and relatively low economic status. In fact, in Canada, it was established that gender had a significant influence not only to the students' aspirations to the level of education but also to their education achievement as they progress (Shapka, Domene and Keating, 2012).

In South Asia region, Chitrakar (2009) has empirically demonstrated the existence of a relationship between gender and educational achievement. As far as socio-economic factors are concerned, a study carried out by James (2002) has affirmed the existence of discrepancy in higher education participation rates based on community groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

Actually, gender and socio-economic factors have a big impact on people's education attainment. In Africa, a number of studies carried out in African countries have provided data that illustrates the gross underrepresentation of females in Science oriented subjects and Aspirations (FAWE,1997).At a conference organized by the Federation of African Women Educationists (FAWE),it was observed that in many African States, girls are still limited to studying what is perceived to be "soft option" subjects which has curtailed their access to scientific and technology oriented disciplines in institutions of higher learning. For instance, Rwanda is one of the countries that have achieved gender parity in primary education since the year 2001 (USAID/Rwanda, 2014).Nevertheless, the statistics of the early admissions to the University of Rwanda (UR) for academic year 2014/2015 has proved that only a third of the enrolled applicants were female (Ijumba,2014).

In South Africa, higher education is has substantially increased. However, the students' participation in different programmes varies substantially and the major factors behind this scenario are age and socio-economic factors (Steiyn, 2009).Apart from the aforementioned factors, there are external factors that influence enrolment of students in various subjects. In Ethiopia, Stebleton (2007) found out that political and economic consideration, previous work experience and the contribution of key individuals in a person's life had a role to play in enrolment of students in various subjects.

 In Uganda, girls are underrepresented in school system, drop out of school prematurely and perform poorly than boys in examinations. This discrepancy worsens as they proceed to higher levels of learning (Kasente, 1995).Similarly, in Tanzania, women's access to tertiary education had been narrowing. For instance, in 1996, the study indicated that at the University of Dar es Salaam, women accounted 17.00% of its intake. Within different faculties, the differences were pronounced with Science and Engineering showing the lowest figures (Othman, 2000).

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In Kenya, access to education can be trailed from colonial policy on development which significantly accommodated exclusionary practices resulting into certain regions benefiting more from development that is access to infrastructure, social, as well as educational amenities were and still, in most cases distributed along colonial administrative divisions, with ethnic groups in the more resourced and centrally located regions benefiting from the closeness to these amenities Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF,2012).

Higher education in Kenya can be dated back to 1922 when the then Makerere College in Uganda was established as a small technical college which was expanded to address the needs of the three East African countries that is Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. It also met the needs of Zanzibar, Zambia and Malawi. This lasted until 1956 when the Royal Technical College became the University college of Nairobi, following the establishment of University of East Africa with three constituent colleges in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Makerere. The University of Nairobi was thus established as the first University through an act of parliament (Ngome, 2006).As years went by, the number of Kenyans seeking university education exceeded the capacity of University of Nairobi. This led to establishment of Moi University in 1984 as the second university in Kenya following the recommendations of the Presidential Working Commission, the Mackay Report which collected views from many people and found great support by Kenyans for the establishment of the second technologically based university in the country. Kenyatta University became the third national university in 1985.Egerton became a full-fledged university on 23rd December, 1987 whereas Jomo Kenyatta became autonomous in 1988 (Chacha, 2004).Since then, the Government of Kenya has opened up more opportunities for higher education. This has been done by setting up universities, Colleges and Campuses across the country to cater the increasing demand for higher education (Wainanina,2011).The Public Universities have risen to 29 while Private Universities stand at 27.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

University education contributes heavily to the social, economic and political development of a country The inception of Privately Sponsored Student Programmes opened many opportunities to those who attained the minimum University requirement but had no possibility of securing admission because of limited opportunities available in government funded programmes (CHE, 2008) .The response to the degree programme has been positive as demonstrated in the enrollment figures. For instance in Kisii University, in the 2014/2015 academic year, the total undergraduate student population stood at 9,525. The male students consisted 57% whereas the female students were 43% of the total population (Kisii University Registry, 2015). Nevertheless, female students' enrolment still lags behind that of their male counterparts in most of the programmes in Kisii University. The bare fact is that these students come from various cultural settings and socio-economic backgrounds which limit their choice of careers. Secondly, with the increasing numbers and cost of education, support by the government does not suffice. Most students end up deferring or dropping along the way due to factors such as high cost of accommodation, feeding and transport (Kasozi, 2006). Whereas a lot of literature on University education has focused on social adjustment and academic performance, few researches have dealt with the factors that affect the enrolment trends in various faculties for both male and female students. There is little data in Kisii University that shows the links between gender, socio-economic status and self-sponsored students' enrolment in various Faculties. Such information is particularly helpful to policy makers in University education level now that loans and bursary schemes are in implementation. It is against this backdrop that the current study looked at the gender and socio-economic factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University.

1.3 Objectives to the study

The objectives that guided the study were to:

a) Determine the influence of Parental level of education factors on enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University.

b) Find out Parental Income influencing on undergraduate self-sponsored students in various faculties in Kisii University.

c) Establish Parental Occupation factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University.

d) Determine influence of Birth order and Family size factors on enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The following was the scope:

The study was based in Kisii University, Kisii. Kisii University is the 13th public university in Kenya. It received a charter in 2013.The study was done in the Main Campus, Kisii.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Student socio-economic factors influencing enrolment in Universities

Socio-economic status according to Considine and Zappala (2002) is a person's overall social position to where achievements in both the social and economic domain contribute. They add that socio-economic status is based on an individual's achievements in education, employment, occupational status and income. In this study, socio-economic status was characterized by parental education, family income, parental occupation, family size and birth order.

2.1.1 Parental level of education.

Hart (2013) conducted a study in Netherlands on inequality between students of higher and lower socio-economic backgrounds in the Netherlands between 2009-2011.Data of the student monitors 2009 to2011 were used where a representative sample of freshmen were surveyed which was supplemented with data of the student monitor 2011.The data was analyzed using panel analysis and results showed inequality persists in higher education both in enrolment and holding aspirations. However, researcher did not find convincing evidence for increase in inequality. For that reason, parental level of education, perceived difficulty of the subjects, economic motives and student's academic ability could not explain increase in inequality, though they had in most analyses the expected significant effects. The above method used in data analysis failed to establish the inequality between students of higher and lower socio-economic status. The researcher only gave general results on how a few socio-economic factors contributed to the increase in inequality. The current study's concern is not on the widening gap in inequality but looks at how students' socio-economic differences influenced their enrollment in undergraduate degree programme given that the demands of courses differ.

In a study conducted in Australia on the influence of social and economic disadvantage in the academic performance of school children, Considine and Zappala (2002) found that families where parents are endowed socially, educationally and economically foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They found that these parents provide a higher level of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of the skills necessary for success at school. Whereas the above study was done in Australia, the current study was carried out in Kenya and the variables are similar although the current study was geared towards how the socio-economic factors of students contributed to their enrolment at University level and not academic success.

A study was conducted in Denmark on effects of parents' education, living conditions, and other background factors on Danish children education attainment (Mette and Mohammed, 2002). Using cross-sectional design with qualitative data on how their level of education influences their children participation in education. The study found that parents' education, and especially mother's education, plays a role in children's educational attainment, and that living conditions also had some significance. The above study was conducted in developed world and it may not reflect the situation in Kenya. Besides, qualitative data, the current study analyzed quantitative data that provided a clear reflection of how parental level of education played a role in the higher education of their children.

In Nigeria, Ahmad and Najeemah (2013) conducted a study on influence of social-economic and educational background of parents on their children's education in Chibok, village, Nigeria. The study used descriptive study design. Out of the 5019 parents in this village, 213 were administered with questionnaires to provide quantitative data on how their social-economic status influences their children's education. Using descriptive statistical analysis such as mean, mode and median, the study found that students whose parents have higher socio-economic status and higher levels of education may have an enhanced interest in learning, more positive ability beliefs, a stronger work orientation, and they may use effective learning strategies than children of parents with lower socio-economic status and lower levels of education A review of this study shows that the literature failed to give information on how parents' level of education influenced both girl-child and boy child education but rather provided the information in general. Further, the study only provided

quantitative data meaning qualitative data was ignored yet they could also provide in-depth information on what is happening on the ground. The present study fills this gap in the literature by assessing the influence of education level of parents to the education of the children and especially enrollment at University level.

Owens (1999) conducted a study in Uganda on relationship between parent and guardian educational attainment to academic achievement and concluded that educational attainment of parent does have a relationship with academic achievement of their children. She argued that the higher the parent's educational level, the higher the academic achievement. This study was similar to Sentamu (2003) who argued that families in rural areas and urban families where both parents were illiterate or had inadequate education do not appear to consider tuition for their children a priority and that illiterate families will not cultivate a study culture in their children since the parents themselves did not attend school or the education they received was inadequate to create this awareness in them. The above studies are geared towards academic achievement which is a motivating factor for the retention of students in learning institutions. The current study goes further to look at the parental level of education influence on students' choice careers.

2.1.2 Parental Income

Zhao, Corak and Lipps (2013) conducted a study in Canada on family income and participation in post-secondary education. They explored the relationship between family income and post- secondary participation in order to determine the extent to which higher education in Canada has increasingly become the domain of students from well to do families. An analysis of two separate data sets indicated that individuals from higher income families are much more likely to attend University than those from lower income families. They also noted that the relationship between family income and post-secondary participation did become stronger during the early to mid-1990s but weakened thereafter just after tuition fees first experienced substantial increases. The increase in fees led to a lot of borrowing and the decline in university participation rates of those from middle income families. They also posit that men have been increasingly more inclined to choose community college. The review of the above study shows that the study does make a distinction between participation in colleges, vocational schools and universities neither does it distinguish the younger men from young women at the university. The current study fills this gap by looking at how the economic status of parents influences the gender representation at different various Faculties.

Vandenberghe and Debande (2007) conducted a comparative study on the relationship between parental income and tertiary attendance. They did an empirical assessment using Belgium, German and United Kingdom. The findings indicated that for Belgium and German, there is no parental-income effect on attendance but there is a small positive effect for Poland. A 33% increment in family income, results in a 3% increment in tertiary education attendance. They also realized a strong positive effect for Hungary where a tertile increment along the income distribution generates a jump of 20 percentage points in attendance rate. The above study was carried in developed countries and the results may not be generalized to developing countries like in the present study. The study also just gave general results on relationship between parental income and tertiary attendance. The present study gives in- depth information on the influence of parental income on a particular University.

In South Africa, Fakude (2012) conducted a study on some factors which contribute to poor academic achievement among undergraduate students at a tertiary institution. The purpose of the study was to determine factors that affected undergraduate students' performance at the University of Zululand. A qualitative case study was used with an attempt to understand the issues from view points of the participants. Purposive sampling was used to select a small sample of ten students of the University of Zululand. A semi-structured interview was used with each participant to collect rich and reliable data and content analysis was employed data analysis purposes. The factors that negatively affected academic achievement were financial difficulties, enrollment, political affiliation and unavailability of lecturers. The review of the literature shows that data analysis was only qualitative and the sample size was small and therefore could not give a clear picture of factors affecting performance. The current study fills this gap by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. It also looked at parental income and its influence on enrolment and not academic performance as in the above study.

Barrera-Osorio, Glewwe and Chang (2011) point out that in determining access to education, house hold income is found to be an important factor. This is because there are many costs associated with schooling and education process. They link household income to a range of factors such as how often students attend school, ether they have to temporarily withdraw

and also when to drop out. In a similar observation, studies conducted by Zhao and Glewwe, (2010) and Dachi and Garret, (2003) affirm that students' enrolment, retention and completion can seriously be affected by low socio-economic status and low educational level of parents which result to poverty. The current study is similar to this by examining how the economic status of a parent influenced their students' access to university education. However, the current study goes further to look at influence of students' economic status on the choice of course at the University.

A study was conducted in Uganda on factors affecting academic performance of undergraduate students of Uganda Christian University. Kyoshaba (2005) emphasized on the relationship between admission points, parents' socio-economic status, former school background and academic performance of undergraduate students at Uganda Christian University. The study employed correlation design. Data was collected from 340 respondents sampled from all the six faculties of Uganda Christian University using the simple random sampling method. The data was analyzed with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistical tool. The findings revealed a significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and academic performance. A correlation tells us that the two variables are related, but could not say anything about whether one caused the other. The present study used descriptive statistics to analyze similar variables.

A study was conducted by Okioga (2012) on the impact of students' socio-economic background on academic performance in universities, a case of Kisii University College. The main objective of the study was to establish the factors that influenced the student academic performance. To achieve this, a sample of 156 respondents in Kisii University College was selected in six faculties using simple random sampling. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Regression analysis was also used to determine the relationship between the student socio-economic background and academic performance. The results revealed that socio-economic background influenced student academic performance. However, the above study shows that the researcher only utilized questionnaires in data collection which could not adequately take care of in- depth information based on the thematic issue. The present study would fill this gap by utilizing interviews and document analysis of students' records that would unveil more information on the socio-economic factors that influence their enrolment.

2.1.3 Parental Occupation

Long, Carpenter and Hayden (1999) conducted a study in Australia on socio-economic status and participation in higher education. They found that parental occupational status was the only dimension of SES, out of the key dimensions of education, occupation and income, to have an independent effect on patterns of educational participation and notably participation in higher education. Of all young people, those with parents in Professional and White-Collar occupations were found to be about a third more likely to attend University than young people with parents in blue –collar occupations. The current study is similar to the above study only that the results established in Australia may not be generalized to Kenya given the differences in economic base and modes of remuneration to various occupations. The study would therefore fill this gap by exploring whether the parental occupation of students influences their participation at University level.

Pfingst (2015) studied the relationship between parental socio-economic status and girls' career aspirations in Queensland University. The main objective was to determine the links between family background and the choices girls make when considering their futures. The research was conducted using a quantitative approach with qualitative analysis of current practices. The outcome of the study found that female students' aspirations were influenced by parental background in a variety of significant ways. Students whose mothers had completed either year 10 or 12 and were in formal employment had higher chances of attending University at the completion of their Secondary Education. The study only concentrated on girls and failed to establish whether parental occupation played a role on male children. The current study fills this gap by looking at both the male and female students.

Omonijo, Chibuzor, Oludayo and Nnedum (2015) examined the socio-economic status of work study students in Covenant University, Ota, and South West Nigeria. The study used survey method to collect information from 120 respondents. The findings indicated that a percentage variation in parental income and occupation significantly increased the likelihood of student participation in work and study programme by 0.453 and 0.367 percentages. The study was also found significant at 5% (p<0.05) and 1 percent level of significance (P<0.001) respectively. The study concluded that a significant support of parental income and occupation played a substantial role in student individual choices of whether to enroll in a work study initiative or otherwise. Whereas the study only looked at how parental occupation related to work

study programme, the current study looks at the relationship between parental occupation and enrollment at various Faculties.

Migosi (1998) conducted a study in Moi University on enrolment at University level in Kenya and its equity implication. The purpose of the study was to determine the regional, gender and socio-economic composition of Moi University students in the 1995/96 academic year. Data was collected from students, Ministry of Education and University Administration. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the students. It sought information on the parental level of education, occupation and income. Students' Parents' occupation was assessed Descriptive statistics namely percentages, bar graphs, and tables, were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that most of the students' mothers' are peasant farmers. However, male students showed a higher representation here than female students. Female students had more numbers of mothers who are school teachers, small scale businesswomen and civil servants while male students have little representation in this profession. The study is similar to the present one. However, review of the study shows that the findings were established several years before and may not be relevant in the current dispensation where there are many self-sponsored students as compared to the time when Migosi's study was conducted. The study therefore sought to provide up to date data.

2.1.4 Birth order and Family size

Khan and Hussein (2012) conducted a study on impact of birth order on academic achievement of students. The aim of the study was to find out the impact of birth order on academic achievement of students. The research hypothesis that there is no impact of birth order onacademic achievement was tested. Population of the study included all students of Gomal University. A random sample of 100 students was taken from different departments/institutes of Gomal University. The collection of data regarding birth order and academic achievement was presented through questionnaire and interview. A descriptive analysis of data was done. The results showed that male were significantly better than females at different birth order although at some stages in birth order females were better than males. The current study looks at birth order and the family size in relation to how they contribute to the enrollment and not performance.

Black, Sandra, Devereux and Kjeil (2005) used data for entire Norwegian Population to estimate the impact of family size and birth order on education. They employed dummy variables for birth order. They found that their negative correlation between family size and children's education achievement became negligible once they included dummy variable indicators for birth order. Thus, their birth order effects are not divorced from family size effects. They found a statistically significant negative correlation between educational attainments on the one hand and higher birth order and larger family size on the other. This study was conducted in a developed world and the results may not be generalized in a developing country like in the current study. The results are also general and are not attributed to a specific level of education. Therefore, the current study looked at the influence family size and birth order on University level of education.

Mosheshoe (2016) examines the effect of birth order on educational attainment and child labour using family fixed effects models in Lesotho. He establishes a negative robust relationship between birth order and educational attainment. The result show that higher birth order are less likely to be enrolled compared to their first born sibling. The current study is similar to Moshoeshoe's but looked at a higher level of educational attainment.

Martim (2009) conducted a study in Egerton University on birth order and selection for university education in Kenya. The participants were 1293 University freshmen (650 women and 643 men) majoring in Education. The mean family size was 7.2 children. The hypothesis tested here is that birth order has a strong relationship with university entrance. In view of the stiff competition for university places, it was hypothesized that more first borns will be more likely to survive the rigour of the two examination hurdles and be overrepresented among those admitted to pursue undergraduate university education than later borns. Data on age, sex, family size and birth order was collected by use of questionnaires. The results showed that the hypothesis that first borns would be overrepresented compared to later borns was supported. The probability of later borns attending University decreased with birth order. Whereas Maritim's study was biased to the Faculty of Education only, the current study looked at students from various Faculties, which would also give an insight on whether birth order plays a role on enrollment at University.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Descriptive survey research design was preferred for this study because it enabled the researcher to collect information on the subject under study in its current state. It also enabled the researcher to receive detailed information from respondents who were either directly or indirectly involved in enrollment at the University under study.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Kisii University, Kisii County, Kenya. Kisii University is situated approximately two kilometres from Kisii town Centre off Kisii-Kilgoris road. Kisii town is located South Western Kenya on latitude 0 30' and 1 0' South and Longitude 34 38' and 35 0' East. It covers an area of 1332.7km^2. Whereas Kisii University is located in Kisii sub county, Kisii Locality. Kisii Sub County on Latitude 0° 41'30.24" and Longitude 34° 46' 58.91" The study was carried in Kisii University Main Campus which was given a charter in 2013.It was preferred because it has the largest number of students as opposed to other campuses. It provided adequate student representation for the study.

3.3 Target population

Target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research study (Borg &Gall, 1996).The target population for the study was 1714.It consisted of a dean of students, an academic registrar and 1712 undergraduate students for the 2013/14 academic year cohort. This being the first cohort since the Kisii University was given a Charter and had a diverse population that enabled the researcher to come up with a sample that was diverse to increase the chances of applicability of the research findings to an entire population.

3.4 Sample size and sampling techniques

Purposive sampling technique was employed to select a dean of students and an academic registrar. While stratified random sampling technique was used to select 513 students. This is 30% of total population in each Faculty. It is in accordance with (Orodho,2002) who concluded that a researcher would need 30 subjects in each group for co-relational and descriptive research. The students came from all the Faculties under study. Purposive sampling technique was employed because the respondents involved were direct respondents in the provision of data necessary for the study. They are the custodian of various students' records that concern the issues under research. Stratified random sampling was appropriate because the researcher was able to represent not only the overall population but also key subgroups of the population such as gender and like in the present study.

Table 3.1: The Population and Sample size of Kisii University Enrolment of SSP students in 2013/14 Academic Year.

Faculty	Enrolment per Faculty	Sample Size.
Education and Human Resource Development	789	236
Agriculture and Natural Resource	175	53
Pure and Applied Sciences	0	0
Arts and Social Sciences	9	3
Health Sciences	47	14
Commerce	391	117
Engineering and Technology	301	90
Total	**1712**	513

Source: Kisii University Students registry

3.5 Research Instruments

The research instruments of data collection for this study were an in-depth interview that was used to collect data from the dean of students, questionnaires that were used to gather data from the students and the academic registrar, and document analysis that was used in observation of documents related to admission of students.

3.6 Validity of the Instruments

Validity is the degree to which an empirical measure or several measures of a concept accurately represent that topic (Orodho, 2003). Similarly, Wallen and Fraenkel (2000) posted that the instruments to be used in data collection should be relevant to the purpose to which the researcher wishes to put them. In respect to this, research instruments were presented to two independent experts in the area of educational research and management who assessed what the instruments were trying to measure and established content validity. The instruments were also examined by the supervisors who established content validity.

3.7 Reliability of the Instruments

To establish reliability, the questionnaires were piloted in Kisii University main campus. The piloting was done on the 2012/13 academic year cohorts which is a non-participating cohort in the research. The questionnaire was administered to the same students used in the pilot study within an interval of one week. The responses from the questionnaire were assigned numerical scores. The correlation coefficient (Pearson r) between the scores of responses from the questionnaire administered on the two different occasions was used to calculate the reliability coefficient. The Pearson product coefficient was worked out and gave r=0.741.The items were said to be highly correlating.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher upon receiving a letter of introduction from Kisii University proceeded to the National Council for Science and Technology to get a research permit. The researcher made appointment with the Dean of Students and Academic Registrar Office. On the agreed dates, the researcher visited the respective respondents and collected data using questionnaires and conducted interviews. The questionnaires were administered in person by the researcher with the help of research assistants to the respondents and were collected immediately after responding to them.

3.9 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means, frequency counts and percentages and bar graphs. Qualitative data from the interviews was analyzed based on themes and sub themes that emerged from the study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Students' Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Enrolment at Kisii University

The first research question responded to was:

What are the students' socio-economic factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University?

The respondents to this research question were the 425 students of 2013/14 Academic Year and the Dean of Students.

4.1.1. Students' Responses on Socio-Economic factors.

This information on students' socio-economic status was extracted from the second part of the student questionnaire. This information included: birth order, family size, schooling, mortality of parents, the educational background of the parents, occupation of the parents and source of income for the family

Ordinal Positions of the Students

The students' birth order was studied. The reason s for studying birth order was to gauge the age range of the parents of the students and secondly, for the researcher to be able to assess the students responsibility towards their families. The size of the family could also be known from the birth order of the students. Students who come from large families are usually faced with socio-economic challenges because their parents have to cater for the other siblings too.

The distribution of the students according to the birth order is demonstrated in (Table 4.3).

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Table 4.1 Kisii University Students by Ordinal Positions

n=425

Ordinal Position	Male n=251	Female n=174
1	32.67% (82)	31.03% (54)
2	21.12% (53)	20.11% (35)
3	27.89% (70)	18.97% (33)
4 and above	18.33% (46)	29.89% (52)

Legend: Figures in parentheses are frequencies

From Table 4.1 above, the results showed that 31.81% were first borns, 20.45% were second borns, 25% were third born and 22.72% were fourth borns and above. Further categorization by male and female students indicated that more male students than female were born in the first three positions in their families an implication that they had more responsibilities towards their siblings as compared to the females. These results also imply that the majority of Kisii University self-sponsored students have relatively younger parents. This demonstrates that a few students have a major financial responsibility towards their sisters and brothers. The study of ordinal position is in line with the study of Martim, (2009) whose results showed that first borns were overrepresented in enrollment in the Faculty of Education at Egerton University compared to later borns . The current study also looked at family size and established that the average family size was 6.4. However,

Maritim's study was based on a single Faculty but the current study looked at various Faculties. The students' comments on whether their family size and birth order influences their enrolment were assessed and the major theme derived was that there is no link between the birth order and family size and their enrolment. This finding concurs with that of Mosheshoe (2016) who examined the effect of birth order on educational attainment and child labour using family fixed effects models in Lesotho and established a negative robust relationship between birth order and educational attainment.

Students who got tuition at home by either parents or hired tutors

This section also sought information on tuition at home by either parental or hired tutors. This is usually a phenomenon that is associated with urban set-up or parents who are enlightened about the value of education. Learning environment at home contributes greatly to the performance of the students at secondary school level and consequently the course they take at the University level. The students' responses were summarized in (Table 4.4) below

Table 4.2 Students who got Tuition by Parents or Hired Tutors.

n=425

Responses	Male n=251	Female n=174
Yes	29.48 % (74)	13.21% (23)
No	66.9% (168)	86.78% (151)
No response	4.0 % (09)	

Legend: Figures in parentheses are frequencies.

From Table 4.2 above, it was noted that male students were offered this service in large numbers compared to their female counterparts. This is evidenced by 29.48% and 13.21 % for male and female students respectively. This has translated into a higher number of males' enrolment in a number of faculties than females.

Students Attendance of Private Nursery Schools.

Students' attendance of private nursery schools is usually associated with the financially able parents who seek for quality education for their children. Parents who are enlightened through their level of education also prefer to take their children to well-equipped schools. This could be used to gauge the students' socio-economic status. The students' responses on whether they attended private nursery schools are demonstrated in (Table 4.5).

Table 4.3 Students' Attendance at Private Nursery School

n=425

Responses	Male n=251		Female n=174	
Yes	35.05%	(88)	25.86%	(45)
No	56.97%	(143)	74.13%	(129)
No response	7.96%	(20)		

Legend: Figures in parentheses are frequencies.

From (Table 4.3) Information obtained on students' attendance at Private nursery schools indicated that more male students 35.05% attended Private nursery schools compared to their female counterparts who were represented by 25.86% only. This implies that more of male students were drawn from well-off family backgrounds than their female counterparts .

Category of Secondary School Attended.

This was studied because school environment, facilities and teaching staff heavily contribute to the performance of the students and later influences students' decision on the kind of career to take. A Study that has been done by Mackenzie (2009) had demonstrated that students' chance for success in learning cognitive skills is heavily influenced by the climate of the school which is in line with this finding.

The students' responses on the category of secondary school where they studied is shown in (Table.4.6).

Table 4.4 Category of Secondary School Attended.

n=425

Category of School	Male n=251	Female n=174
Private	9.96 % (25)	9.77 % (17)
Public	90.03% (226)	90.22 % (157)

Legend: Figures in parentheses are frequencies.

From (Table 4.4), data obtained on the schools the students attended revealed that 94.11% attended Public schools while 9.88% attended Private schools. In Kenya, because of the introduction of Free Primary Education and Subsidized Secondary School funds, most public schools are overcrowded with students leading to overstretching of facilities. This was also noted by Gatheru (2008) in a study in Narok County, Kenya, who established that due to over-enrolment in public secondary schools, teachers are somehow overwhelmed and not able to give individual attention to students The fact that most students are drawn from public schools, shows how the learning environment has contributed to the attainment of their scores at form four level and consequently the choice of courses.

The public schools were later categorized into Sub county, County and National schools. The three categories of schools have different learning environments when it comes to preparation of students for their final examinations and also shaping their careers. The results were summarized in Table 4.4

Table 4.5 Category of Public School Attended

n=425

Category of School	Male n=251		Female n=174	
Sub county	50.99 %	(128)	27.54 %	(48)
County	39.84 %	(100)	50.00 %	(87)
National	9.16 %	(23)	22.41%	(39)

Legend: Figures in parentheses are frequencies.

From Table 4.5 above, it was revealed that 50.99% of the male students were from Sub county schools, while 27.54% of the female students were from Sub county Schools.

Page | 44

Majority of the female students studied in National schools and County schools. The socio-economic factors of a school that a student learns contributes to the success of students Bell and Rhodes (2003) asserted that school determinants which include school facilities such as the administrative offices, classrooms, staffrooms, laboratories, equipment, libraries, hostels or dormitories, staff houses and even school grounds determine the examination performance of students. National schools are normally well equipped with resources required for good performance yet few students learned in these schools.

Nature of Secondary Schools Attended.

The nature of secondary school attended by students shaped the students differently academically and socially. Day schools for instance are associated with limited facilities, most students lack exposure to the current affairs and they constitute the family labour. Boarding schools on the other hand have better learning environment and facilities. Students' socialization in Boys' only schools and Girls' only schools is different from those students mixed secondary schools. The students' responses on the nature of secondary school attended were summarized in Table 4.5

Table 4.6: Nature of Secondary Schools Attended.

n=425

Nature of School	Male n=251	Female n=174
Day	21.11 % (53)	31.03 % (54)
Boarding	56.97% (143)	51.72 % (90)
Day and Boarding	21.91% (55)	17.24 % (30)

Legend: The Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

From Table 4.6 , with regard to the kind of school attended by students up to form four, results showed that 56.87% of the sampled male students were in Boarding secondary school, 21.171% in Day secondary schools and 21.91% in Day and Boarding secondary schools. The female students constituted 31.03% in Day secondary, 51.72% in Boarding secondary and 17.24% in Day and Boarding secondary school. This trend best demonstrates the fact that the learning environment in these schools is quite different. In boarding schools, students have time allocated to them for their personal studies whereas in day schools, they are limited by their study time hence the differences in their academic performance and later choice of career. In a similar way, Clarkson, (2008) noted that the type of the school a student attended contributed to the academic performance in college.

Average Class Size Attended by Students.

The size of the class dictates the level of teacher interaction with the students. Teacher-student ratio determines the level of quality education and success of students. Classes that are overcrowded denotes minimal interaction with students hence the quality of learning is compromised. Students who learn in overcrowded classrooms do not do well because the facilities are overstretched. The responses are seen in (Table 4.9).

The table below shows the students' responses on the average class size in which they were in the secondary school.

Table 4.7 Average Class Size in Secondary Schools Attended.

n=425

Average Class Size	Male n=251	Female n=174
Below 20	8.76% (22)	4.02% (07)
20-30	3.58% (09)	4.59% (08)
31-40	22.31% (56)	25.86% (45)
41-50	40.23% (101)	47.70% (83)
Above 50	25.09% (63)	17.81% (31)

Legend: Figures in brackets are frequencies.

From Table 4.7 above, responses indicated that most students were drawn from schools with class sizes of 31-40 and 41-50 students per class and these were indicated by 23.76% and 43.29% respectively .In Kenya, teacher student ratio stands

at one teacher to forty students, from the results above Table 4.7, most students learned in classes that were above this ratio an indication that the quality of the education and their success level may have been determined by the class sizes.

Mortality of Parents.

This item was studied so as to establish family structure from which the students came from. The family structure is an important indicator of the socio-economic status from which a student comes from. According to Bankston and Caldas (1998), single headed families are six times more likely to be poor compared to other families. Therefore, students in such environments will not only have to deal with the absence of the father or mother figure, but the financial constraints it entails with.

The students' responses on the mortality status of their families is portrayed in the (Table 4.10).

Table 4.8: Students' Mortality of Parents.

n=425

Gender	Mortality	Father	Mother
Male n=251	Alive	92.83% (233)	90.84% (228)
	Dead	7.17% (18)	9.16% (23)
Female n=174	Alive	62.10% (108)	87.93% (153)
	Dead	37.93% (66)	12.10% (21)

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies

From Table 4.8 above, most of the students' fathers were found to be alive and this was represented by 92.83% and 62.10% for male and female students respectively .This data showed that the percentage of mothers 89.65% alive was higher than that of fathers (80.24%).Male students had a higher percentage of mothers alive 90.84% compared to their female counterparts (87.93%).

Education background of parents.

The level of education of a parent determines a child's chances of success through the influence a parent gives to a child. In Australia, Considine and Zappala (2002) found that families where parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They found that these parents provide a higher level of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school. The same revelation was asserted by Mette and Mohammed, (2002) who found that parents' education, and especially mother's education, matters for children's educational attainment .This study also sought data on parental level of education to ascertain whether it played a role on the enrollment of students at Kisii University.

The results of students' responses on parental level of education is summarized in Table 4.9 and Table 4.10

Table 4.9: Students' Fathers Educational Background.

n=425

	Male n=251	Female n=174	
No schooling	6.77% (17)	2.87%	05
Lower Primary std 1-3	10.76% (27)	4.59%	08
Upper Primary std 4-8	11.95% (30)	6.32%	11
Secondary School	29.08% (73)	32.76%	57
Certificate	5.98 % (15)	25.86%	45
Diploma	22.71% (57)	14.94%	26
Degree	9.96% (25)	10.92%	19
Doctoral	2.79 % (7)	1.72%	3

Legend : Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

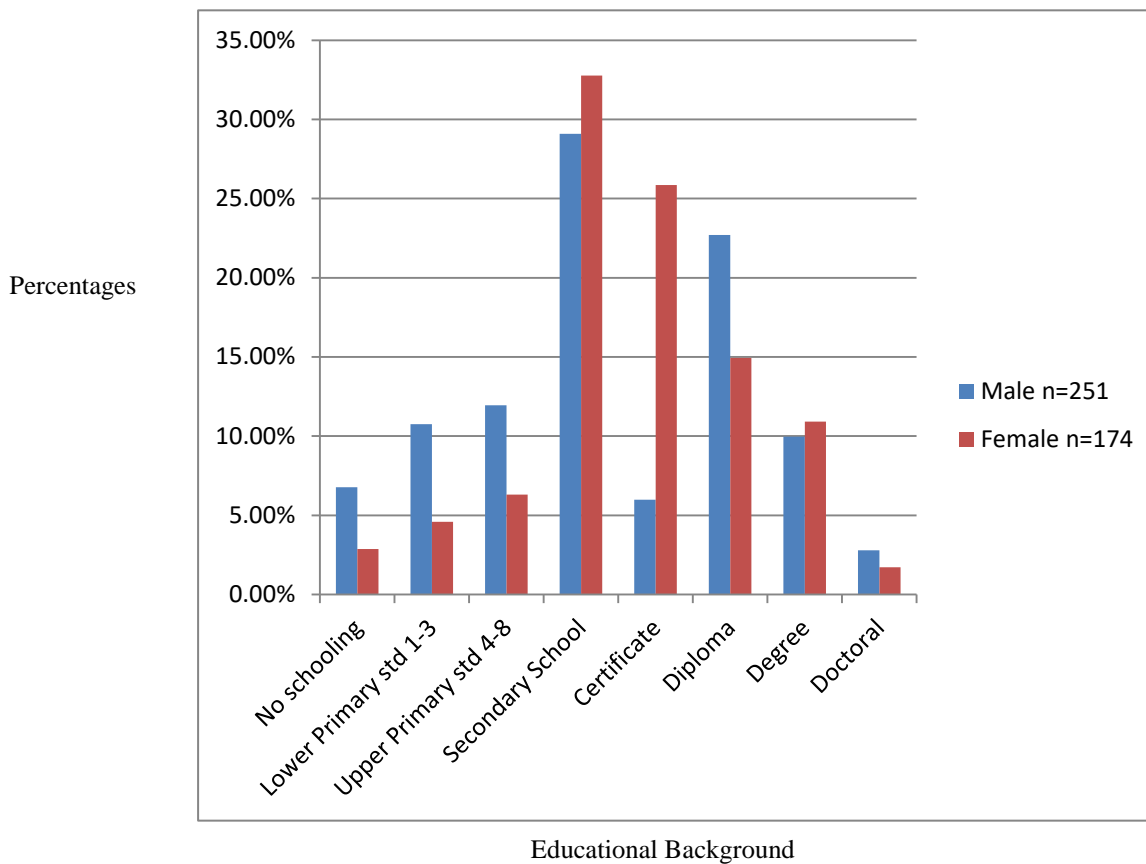This data was translated into a chart for better visibility (Figure.4.1)

Figure 4.1: Students' fathers educational background.

From (Table 4.9), the results revealed that female students had 32.76% representing fathers with secondary school education. This percentage is higher than that of the male students 29.08%.Male students had a higher number of fathers with no schooling (6.77%) than the female students (2.87%).The number of fathers with tertiary level is higher in male students as compared to female students. This shows that male students were more likely to be influenced by their fathers to enroll in university education as compared to the female students. Mothers educational level also contributes greatly to the educational attainment of children (Mette and Mohammed ,2002).

The responses of the students' mothers educational background is recorded in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Students' Mothers Educational Background.

n=425

Educational Background	Male n=251	Female n=174
No Schooling	10.76% (27)	5.17% (09)
Lower Primary std 1-4	5.18% (13)	6.89% (12)
Upper Primary std 5-8	13.94% (35)	29.89 % (52)
Secondary School	25.89% (65)	27.01% (47)
Certificate	11.55% (29)	10.92% (19)
Diploma	9.96% (25)	6.32% (11)
Degree	21.51% (54)	13.22% (23)
Doctoral	1.19% (03)	0.57 % (1)

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

The information on mothers' educational background was then translated into a chart (Figure 4.2)

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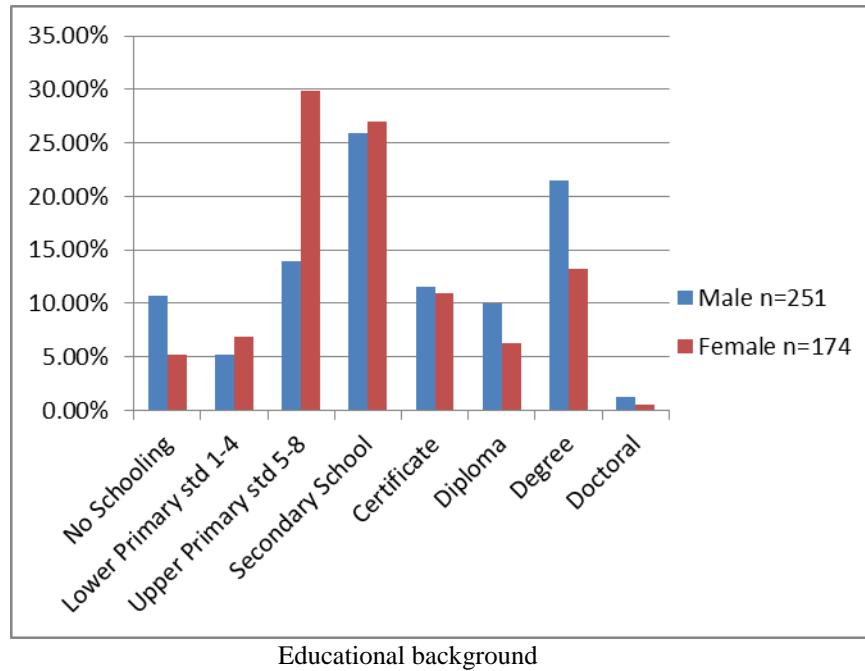
Percentages

Figure 4.2: Student mothers' educational background.

From (Table 4.10) and Figure (4.2) above, more males (10.76%) than female (5.17%) have a higher number of mothers with no schooling. Female students on the other hand have a higher percentage of mothers with secondary school level (27.01%) than male (25.89%).This shows that female students were influenced greatly by their mothers' level of education in pursuing higher studies. In terms of tertiary education, male students had a higher number of mothers with tertiary education compared to the female students. For instance male students have (21.51%) of mothers with degree level of education while female students have (13.22%).Students were also asked to comment on their parents education influence on their enrolment and the theme that was revealed was that parental level of education significantly contributed to their enrollment at the University. This was represented by 63% of the male students' responses and 71% of the female students' responses who expresses positive contribution of their parents' education on their education.

Parents Occupation

Occupation was used as a measure of students' socio-economic status. According to Nyakundi , Akama, Momanyi, Gichaba & Okioma (2012), occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making ability and psychological demands in the job. They assert that occupations are ranked and some of the most prestigious occupations are physicians, surgeons, lawyers chemical and biomedical engineers. These jobs are considered to be in the high status in classification, provide more challenging work, ability and greater control over working conditions. Jobs with a lower ranking were food preparation workers, counter attendants, dish washers. Janitors, helpers and house keepers. These jobs were less valued, more laborious, very hazardous and provide less autonomy. The students responses on parental occupation is presented in Table 4.11 and Table 4.12.

Table 4.11presents percentages and frequencies of Kisii University undergraduate SSP students' mothers' occupation.

Table 4.11: Students' Mothers' Occupation.

n=425

Occupation	Male n=251	Female n=174
Civil servant	14.74 % (37)	9.77% (17)
Larger Scale Farmer	13.15% (33)	12.07% (21)
Business Person	20.72 % (52)	18.97 % (33)
Peasant Farmer	33.07% (83)	37.93% (66)

National Executives	-	-	-	-
Teacher	16.73% (42)		19.54%	(34)
Surgeon	0.79% (02)		-	-
Others	0.79% (02)		1.72%	(03)

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies

The data on mothers' occupation was translated into a chart (Figure 4.3)

Percentages
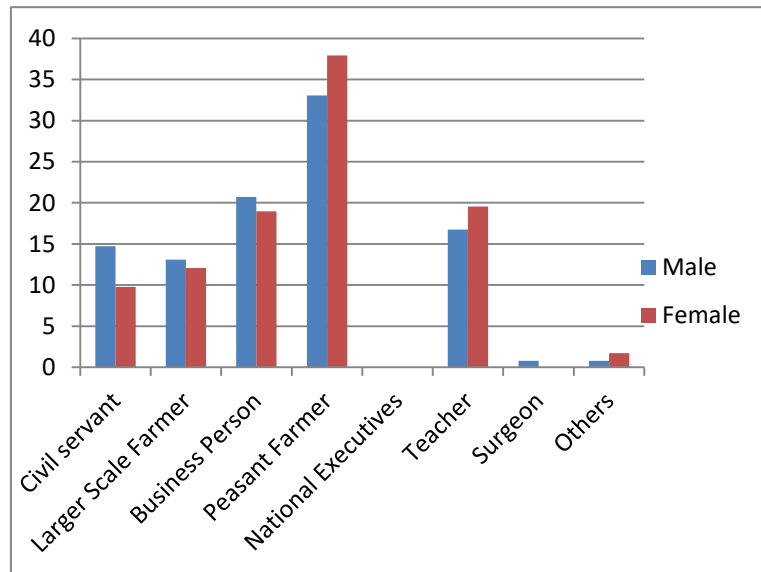
Occupation

Figure 4.3: students' mothers' occupation.

From Table (4.13) and Figure (4.3), the frequently named job category was that of peasant farmers. Male students indicated that 33.07% of their mothers were peasant farmers whereas female students indicated that 37.93% of their mothers were peasant farmers .Male students also had a higher number of mothers who are civil servants, Larger scale Farmers and those doing businesses as compared to the female students. This finding is similar to that of Pfingst,(2015) who found that students whose mothers had completed either year 10 or 12 and were in formal employment had higher chances of attending University at the completion of their Secondary Education.

Fathers occupation

The percentages and frequencies of the students' fathers occupation was also analyzed and the results were recorded in (Table 4.14)

Table 4.14: Students' Fathers' Occupation.

n=425

Occupation	Male n=251		Female n=174	
Civil Servant	34.26% (86)		16.66%	(29)
Larger Scale Farmer	5.57%	(14)	17.81%	(31)
Business Person	12.74%	(32)	13.79%	(24)
Peasant Farmer	31.47%	(79)	28.73%	(50)
National Executives	1.59%	(4)	-	-
Teacher	14.34%	(36)	21.26%	(37)
Surgeon	-	-	1.72%	(03)
Other	-	-	-	-

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

Students' fathers' occupation was translated to figure 4.4
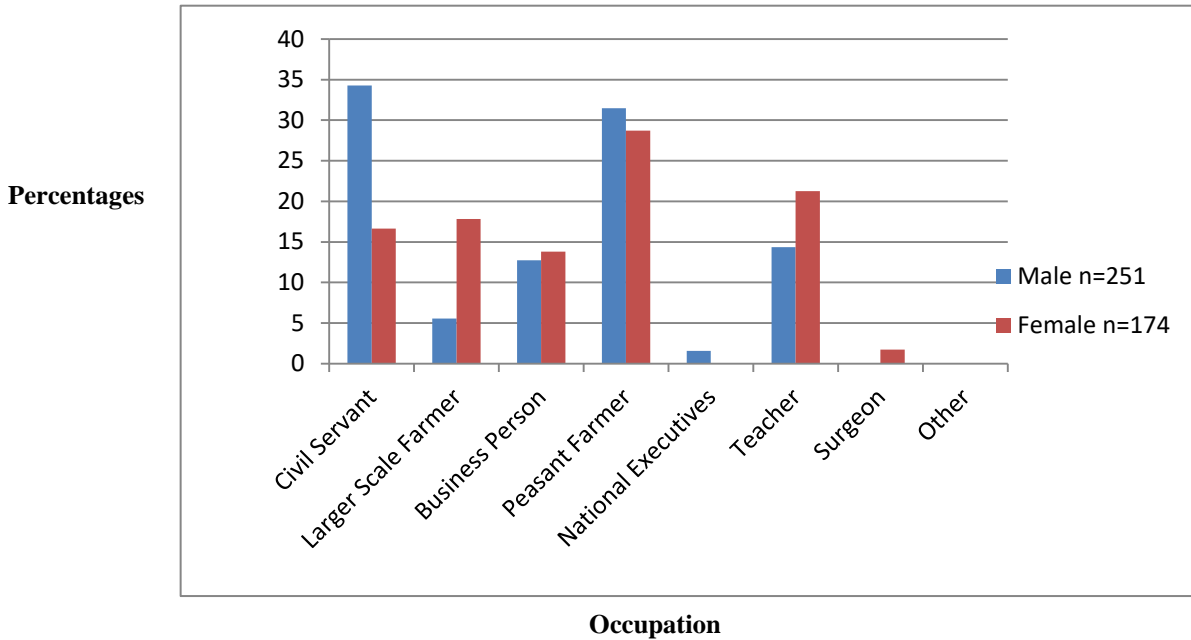

Occupation

Figure 4.4: students' fathers' occupation.

From the results in (Table 4.14) translated to (Figure 4.4)above, it is clear that most of the SSP undergraduate students come from ordinary families and this disapproves the notion that SSP students come from well off families. This in seen from the fact that 31.47% and 28.73% of male and female students respectively indicated that their fathers are peasant farmers. This can be explained from the basis that most of the SSP undergraduate students come from Kisii County where land is highly fragmented and most of them own small parcels of land. This results are contrary to that of (Long, Carpenter & Hayden,1999) who realized that of all young people, those with parents in Professional and White-Collar occupations were found to be about a third more likely to attend University than young people with parents in blue –collar occupations. This could be explained by the fact that the government is now supporting the SSP students through provision of loans and bursaries to enable them access University education. There is need therefore for them to be supported financially in order for them to pursue their studies without financial constraints.

Total Family Income

Another item that sought information on the students' socio-economic status was the students' total family income per month. This was arrived at based on a number of items such as salaries, wages, income from farming, machinery and businesses that the parents engaged in to earn income. Simiyu (2001) posits that the family income refers to wages, salaries, profit, rents and any flow of earnings received. Income can also come from interests, dividends, royalties, trusts, alimony or other government, public and family financial assistance.

The percentages and frequencies of total family income of the students is shown in (Table 4.15)

Table 4.13: Students' Total Family Monthly Income

n=425

Family Income(Ksh)	Male n=251		Female n=174	
0-10,000	31.07%	(78)	9.19%	(16)
10001-20000	21.91%	(55)	52.87%	(92)
20001-30000	13.94%	(35)	21.83%	(38)
30000 and above	33.06%	(83)	16.09%	(28)

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

From Table 4.13 above, the information obtained showed that most students were drawn from middle income level , that is earning between 10001 and 20000.This was represented by 21.91% and 52.87% for male and female students respectively .This was followed by category four of earnings exceeding 30000 where 33.06% and 16.09% represented male and female students respectively. Category one of those earning 10000 and below had the highest representation among male students with 31.07% and 9.91% for male and female students respectively. In addition, male students had the highest percentage of those earning 30,000 and above with 33.06% whereas female students had 16.09%. This indicates that male students are polarized in the lowest category and highest category. On the other hand, most female students are concentrated in the middle lower category. This revelation confirms other assessments of socio-economic status of male and female students (Migosi, 1998). In the same way, Kyoshaba (2005) established a significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and academic performance in a Ugandan Christian University although the current study looks at enrolment and not performance.

Students' opinion on socio-economic status

Based on educational background, parental level of education, occupation and income, students were to state their views on the socio-economic background in which they come from. The percentages and frequencies is recorded in (Table 4.16) below.

Table 4.14 :Students' Opinion on their Socio-Economic Groups.

n=425

Social Group	Male n=251		Female n=174	
Upper	19.92%	(50)	1.72%	(3)
Middle	54.18%	(136)	88.50%	(154)
Lower	25.89%	(165)	9.77%	(17)

Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

From (Table 4.14) students' opinion sought on their socio-economic status revealed that majority of male and female students were drawn from middle socio-economic status . Male students scored a percentage of 54.18% and female students scored 88.50%.This was followed by low socio-economic status shown by (25.89%) for male and 9.77% for female students.

Students' opinion on how socio-economic background influences their choice of career

The education background from which the students originate influences their choice of courses at the University. The selection of University courses is done at form four level and their performance at K.C.S.E level determines their choice of careers. Parents who have progressed in their education influence their children on the type of career to undertake. On the other hand, the family level of income also dictates the kind of course to be undertaken by the students as most of them depend on their parents and loans from the government. Students from low economic status are inclined to the Art courses because they are not as demanding as those of Science and Engineering. Otieno, Bizimana & Ndayambaje (2015) revealed that socio-economic status of the student was an important component in the enrolment of both parallel and regular students in public universities in Kenya.

The students' responses on how socio-economic status influences their choice of career are recorded in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Students' Responses on how socio-economic status influences their choice of careers.

n=425

Responses	Male=251		Female n=174	
Yes	52.98%	(133)	55.74%	(97)
No	47.01%	(118)	44.25%	(77)

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Legend: Figures in Parentheses are Frequencies.

From Table 4.15 above, majority of female 55.74% than females 52.98% were influenced by their socio-economic status in the selection of their courses.

Deferment

Concerning whether students had ever deferred their studies due to financial constraints, it was demonstrated that more females 17.23% than males 11.89% had ever deferred their studies due to financial constraints.

4.4.2 Dean of Students' Responses on Students' Socio-Economic factors influencing enrolment.

When asked to comment about the socio-economic factors that affect SSP students' enrolment at Kisii University, the Dean of students attested that:

The factors are numerous given that our main catchment area is from Kisii. Many of them come from very poor economic backgrounds. Quite a number are total or partial orphans. Some parents are quite aged hence unable to pay school fees. Some have ailing parents, others come from polygamous families hence favouritism. There are those from large families and have many siblings to support. The surrounding area is highly fragmented hence low income from economic activities and due to scarcity of land many opt to take their children to school hence high enrolment. Many of them rely on HELB(Higher Education Loans Board). If it were not for it, many of them wouldn't have seen the door to a University. I can say only 0.1% don't rely on government sponsorship. Majority rely on HELB and defer until HELB bails them out. In fact, the deferment rates are very high and majority are SSP students and some end up dropping completely. There are those who have delayed to graduate like some enrolled in 2011 and they have only done one exam, first year, first semester. They would have finished in 2013, now this is 2015 yet they have not finished (**Dean of students**)

When asked to comment on how the students' socio-economic status has affected the office, the Dean of Students had this to say:

We as an office are overwhelmed by level of needy cases we handle, rate of deferment is high for SSP students. There are those with psychological problems due to financial challenges and many end up in counselling. Some drop out of school, cohabiting due to lack of money. Even some miss classes, their grades go down, many retakes leading to counselling. There's high rate of stealing especially electronics, gambling, sell of illicit drugs and drug abuse. Many a times officers in the Deans office have had to pay fees for some, provide food. Siku mbili ukimwona mwanafunzi hajakula unafikiri anatoka ward,tunachangachanga, tunampa(two days when you see a student who has not taken any meal ,you may think he/she is from the ward, we make contribution for him/her).During exams we do have a kitty to help them, sometimes we approach staff members who pick some students and start paying up. The student union too has a kitty for bursaries. Majority of students who benefit are SSP due to the amount of fees balance they have (**Dean of students**)

The socio-economic factors that influence enrollment of students are: mortality of parents, parental occupation where most of them are small scale farmers, parental level of income, family size, psychological problems and drug abuse. This observation is similar to that of Okioga (2012) who conducted a study in Kisii University College on the impact of socio-economic background on academic performance of students. He found out that students' socio-economic background contributed to their academic performance. The students were asked to show their level of agreement and disagreement on a Likert scale about their affordability of catering facilities, quality of food and access to quality entertainment. The students responses were negative an indication that they perceive their socio-economic background in which they interact as a determinant of their attitude and behavior.

The way the students are struggling to eke a living is also seen in another study, Kasozi (2006) who realized that higher education has increasingly become expensive in terms of tuition, resulting in high rates of attrition, high cost of accommodation, feeding and transport which compel a majority of students to reside in slums neighbouring the institutions, going without meals which causes some to faint during examinations and buying cheap food from unhygienic places that put their health to risk. They engage in prostitution as a means of survival. The same revelation was pointed out by Maphosa (1999) at Zimbabwe University. He noted that, students at Zimbabwe University like those in Kenya were driven into undertaking business enterprises by the desire to raise additional income due to the spectre of economic recession.

Therefore, the socio-economic factors influencing the students' enrolment from the students' responses and that of the Dean of students include: birth order, family size, parental education, occupation and family income. Most parents are holders of secondary school level education which cannot accord them well-paying jobs to support their children. A good number practice farming in small scale because of the small piece of land there is little income that they generate from the farms. Majority of them come from low socio-economic background which inhibits them financially hence high rate of deferment due to lack of finances. This finding is similar to that of (Glewwe, 2010; Dachi & Garret, 2003) who affirm that students' enrolment, retention and completion can seriously be affected by low socio-economic status and low educational level of parents which result to poverty.. In this regard, access to university education through the introduction of self-sponsored programme still faces equity challenge as many students who enroll in this programme may end up not completing their studies due to socio-economic background. It calls for concerted effort from stakeholders to enhance remedies to disparities in socio-economic status of students.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the findings

The study aimed at exploring the socio-economic and gender factors influencing enrollment of SSP undergraduate students at Kisii University. The research questions that guided the study were:

What are the students' socio-economic factors influencing enrolment of undergraduate self-sponsored students in Kisii University?

5.1.1 Students' socio-economic factors that influence enrolment

This study found out that:

Results of fathers' educational background showed that male students' were drawn from fathers who had tertiary level of education than their female counterparts.

Results of mothers' educational background indicated that male students have a bigger number of mothers without formal schooling, unlike their female counterparts. Male students have also a better representation in mothers' education particularly at higher levels of education. Female students had a higher number of mothers with secondary education.

Data on students' mothers' occupations show that most of the students' mothers are peasant farmers. However, female students showed a higher representation here than their male counterparts. Female students have more numbers of mothers who are school teachers while male representations indicate that they have more numbers of mothers who are civil servants, Larger Scale Farmers and Business Persons. It should be noted that educated mothers increase girl child's education and aspirations for further education.

Data on fathers' occupation shows that male students have more fathers who are peasant farmers than their female counterparts. On the other hand, female students have a higher number of fathers who are Larger Scale Farmers and teachers. In general, it can be observed that female students' fathers have better representation in formal jobs than their male counterparts.

The classification of data on students' total family income per month shows that both male and female students are mainly drawn from middle and lower income group . Data on the students' opinion on their socio-economic group indicated that 25.89% and 9.77% of male and female students fall under low income group while the rest are in middle and upper.

5.2 Conclusions of the study

The following concluding remarks were made based on the findings of the study.

5.2.1 Students' socio-economic factors that influence enrolment

The significant student socio-economic factors that affected enrolment were: nature of secondary school attended, parental level of education, occupation of parents, and parental income. On socio-economic group representation of SSP undergraduate students at Kisii University, there is an under-representation of low social group. The researcher used parents' occupation, education and monthly income to gauge socio-economic group. The level of monthly income,

occupation and education could also be deceptive because some parents have university degrees yet they lack resources and wealth that go with it yet some people may have basic education or no schooling at all but have the resources that go with it. This moves them to the upper stratum of the social groupings. This is particularly true in the private sector. In Kenya, therefore, anyone living below a dollar a day is classified in the low socio-economic group. Using this approach then, it means that no schooling, lower primary, upper primary and secondary level of education all fall under low SES because their salary is low. This makes up for 59% and 47% for male and female students' fathers educational background respectively while the rest falls in the middle and upper groups.

The other finding on mothers' educational background shows that 56% and 69% of the male and female students respectively come from low socio-economic groups. On parents' occupation, it is the peasant farmer who falls under the low socio-economic group. In this category, 33% and 38% for male and female students' mothers' respectively are involved in peasant farming. The other occupations have a higher earning and they fall under middle and upper socio-economic groups.

The available information from the study therefore indicates that female students are drawn from a lower socio-economic group than that of male students because most of their parents are peasant farmers.

5.3 Recommendations of the study

The following were the recommendations made for this study in the light of the findings.

In the light of the finding that there are students' socio-economic factors that influence SSP students' undergraduate enrolment at Kisii University, this study recommends:

i) The government should endeavor to cushion the needy students pursuing their degrees through private self-sponsored programme to enable them pursue their studies.

ii) The University programmes that support needy students should be upheld.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Based on the above conclusions and recommendations, the following suggestions for future research were made: A study should be carried on:

(i) Financing of University education and participation of self-sponsored students at Kisii University.

(ii) The role of financial aid on enrollment of students at Kisii University.

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