Abstract

According to education sector report (2007: 12), the primary school completion rate (PCR) has grown from 52.5% in 2001 to 67.4% in 2005. The primary net enrolment rate (NER) similarly increased from 82.1% in 2004 to 83.2% in 2005. This is a clear indicator that nationally, Kenya is yet to achieve full participation rates because there are gaps between NER and PCR worth assessing. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to unearth the factors influencing participation rates in public primary schools in Rangwe division of Homa Bay District in Kenya. Using descriptive research survey design, in which data were collected and analyzed from 20 headteachers, 20 class teachers and 100 pupils by means of questionnaires, interviews and direct observation, it was established that provincial differences in terms of poverty index, persistent drought, insecurity, cultural and religious beliefs has a bearing in primary schooling hence creating complexity in achieving 100% primary participation rates, by province, district or division. It was also observed that processes undertaken by school administrators and QASO officials in ensuring that teaching and learning is provided according to required standards played a major role in influencing participation rates in public primary schools in Rangwe Division.