

## ABSTRACT

Studies by UNICEF in 2010 indicate that the number of children working in the informal sectors increased globally. In Nyatike the number of youths involved in *boda boda* operations increased from 253 in 2008 to 2,360 in 2013, translating to 332.81% increase. This was a concern as it affected primary school enrolments that declined. For example, the 2008 cohort enrolment of boys in class one was 4346 and in 2012 they were 3543 in class five, indicating an 18.48% decline. The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the opportunity cost of acquiring primary school education in Nyatike Sub- County as it became a concern. Objectives of the study were to: determine the earnings of *boda boda* operators aged 18-35 years; establish the attitude of *boda boda* operators towards primary education and *boda boda* business and establish challenges faced by *boda boda* operators. A conceptual framework was based on the concept of Investment Choices by Pscharopoulos and Woodhall (1985), whereby primary education is the investment. Descriptive survey design was adopted. Study population consisted of 135 *boda boda operators*, 124 head teachers, 1 DQASO and 6 chiefs. Saturated sampling was used to select 6 chiefs, the DQASO and 120 *boda bodas* after using 15 in pilot. Purposive sampling was used to select 32 primary head teachers. Reliability of the instrument was established using Cronchbach Reliability Coefficient, which was 0.89. Data was collected through questionnaire and interviews. Quantitative data was analysed by descriptive statistics inform of frequency counts, calculation of percentages and means. Qualitative data was transcribed and analysed in emergent themes and sub themes. The findings were that 34(28.33%) of operators without primary education earned Ksh.601 per day while 36(30%) operators with primary education earned Ksh.800, making the opportunity cost of acquiring primary education to be low since those with primary education had more earnings. Majority of operators with primary education had a positive attitude towards primary education but were more negative towards *boda boda* business. Again, majority of operators without primary education viewed *boda boda* business positively as compared to those with primary education. Both operators, however, agreed in support of primary education more than they did in support for *boda boda*, making primary education ultimately important in all economic activities. The greatest challenges were police harassment and frequent road accidents both attributed to the operator's limited academic background. The study recommended that the public in Nyatike had to be persuaded to view schooling more positively than before. The study is significant in that it informs stakeholders in education on the fact that opportunity cost of acquiring primary school education is low and therefore a pupil incurs no or little opportunity cost in acquiring it.