



*The Cradle of Knowledge: African Journal of
Educational and Social Science Research
AJESSR - ISSN 2304-2885-p, 2617-7315-e
Volume 7, Issue No.2, 2019
P.O. Box 555 (00202) Nairobi. Kenya
editor@serek.or.ke*

**SOCIETY OF
EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH
AND
EVALUATION
IN KENYA**

Resilient but Overwhelmed: How do Students in South Sudan Public Universities Cope with the Rising Net Cost?

*Oywak Sisto Otim¹, Jacinta M. Adhiambo¹, & Paschal Wambiya²
¹Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi. Kenya,
²Mwenge Catholic University, Moshi. Tanzania
Corresponding author email: sistootim@yahoo.com*

Abstract

South Sudan is facing the challenges of transition from a liberation movement to democratic state. The protracted political civil war has increased the country's fragility, dwindling public allocations to education and other sectors. Should education in fragile states wait for the return of peace? The purpose of this study was to interrogate the influence of net cost on out-of-state students' access in South Sudan public universities. A total of 378 students were selected through random sampling procedure. Six members of the National Council for Higher Education, four university administrators, four parents and two universities were chosen through purposive sampling. The data collection instruments were questionnaires, interview guide, observation and document analysis guide, Descriptive statistics were presented in form of frequencies, percentages and tables. A one-sample t-test was used to establish whether there was a significant difference in the influence of net cost on students' decision to access and attend South Sudan public universities between in-state and out-of-state students. Qualitative data was collected and analyzed simultaneously, coded, categorized into themes. The results indicate that although public universities have demonstrated resilience, they are overwhelmed and struggling to provide quality education services to all citizens. Students' net cost was growing faster than their family income due to the rise in inflation adversely affecting out-of-state students from low-income families' access to public universities compared to in-state students. The study recommends that the government fast-track peace and re-engineer its education system to make it more accessible, affordable and equitable to all, particularly those from the marginalized groups. It hopes to contribute to improving policy and practice in educational administration and planning.

Key words: *Conflict, net cost, out-of-state, in-state, access*

1. Introduction

Investment in higher education has been considered a key driver of social, economic, political and technological growth. Governments in both developed and developing countries have and still are allocating a large number of resources to invest in education because it has both private and social returns on investment (Rouse, 2017). As a result, social expansion worldwide has increased exponentially in the last three decades. Global enrolment has increased from 100 million in 2000 to 207 million in 2014. India, USA, and Russia have become the major catchment countries. Other states with substantial matriculation are Brazil, Indonesia, Iran, South Korea, Turkey and Nigeria (UNESCO, 2017).

Access to higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa countries is still the lowest despite the global call to make quality higher education accessible, affordable and equitable to all, particularly for learners from the under-represented background (The United Nation General Assembly, 2016). Two billion people still live in countries where development outcomes are affected by fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV). Violent conflict spiked dramatically since 2010, complicating further the fragility landscape in both low- and middle-income countries (The World Bank, 2018).

Fragility conflict and violence (FCV) contexts differs in a number of ways. A study by Diwakar (2015) examined the extent to which armed conflict affect education accumulation and enrolment rates, and whether this effect differs by gender. The researcher concluded that an increase in conflict is associated with a decrease in education

for both genders although females are more likely to be affected than males. Another study by Justino, Leone, and Salardi (2013) deliberated on the short and long-term effect of violence on education in Timor. They found that long term conflict is strongly linked with the decline in human capital and male students were more affected compared to female students.

A political economy analysis of education in Afghanistan by Pherali and Sahar (2018) describes a “failed or fragile” state as a country with a functional weak institutions and capacity to provide security and safeguard the well-being of its citizens. Their analysis revealed that since 2001 education has been the major victim of Afghanistan's protracted violent conflict, which involved international military interventions, fragile democracy, and growing radicalization. The deteriorating security conditions, weak governance, and widespread corruption led to education institutions increasingly becoming soft-target, and proliferation of extremist violent ideologies across the globe.

In the same development, Vega and Bajaj (2016) examined the gap between education as a right and reality of managing education in protracted situation of conflict in Colombian. They found that despite having its strong constitutional support and innovative educational strategies, a major gap exists in the translation of the political will into a flexible non-formal educational model designed for children affected by conflict. The study also describes the resilience of teachers who worked in the FCV contexts amidst severe limitations of inadequate programme and training support.

Countries that have made tremendous progress in widening participation and narrowing gaps between social classes albeit working in FCV context are termed as resilient, a term often used to indicate teaching and learning situation system despite a raging civil war situation. The circumstance under which education functions in a FCV condition is an important to understand the difference between schooling and learning. A study by the World Bank (2018) indicates that while many learners go to school in FCV contexts, 90 percent of "bush schools" lacks qualified teachers to support accumulation of knowledge and minimum employable skills.

This means schooling without learning is not just a wasted opportunity but also a great injustice to the willing learners. Target 4.3 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are supposed to be achieved in 2030 took this concern a notch higher by urging government worldwide to endeavor to make quality higher education accessible, affordable and equitable for all, particularly for those from low-income families. Similarly, Target 16 of SDG underscores that war against ignorance, poverty and shared prosperity can be won through building human capital for socio-economic development. This means education can significantly contribute to resettlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction of countries transitioning from FCV contexts to peace.

The negative impact of FCV on learners cannot be overemphasis. A report by Weldeegzie (2017) examined the impact of the Ethiopian–Eritrean war on a range of childhood outcomes, including schooling. The researcher found that children exposed to war are likely to drop out of school, struggle with reading, and have a relatively lower educational aspiration and overall attainment. Akresh and De Walque (2008) studied the effect of the 1994 Rwandan genocide on schooling. They found that exposure to war reduced children education by one-half of a year. Guárico and Verpoorten (2013) explained that Rwandan children who were exposed to war had 18% reduction in schooling.

The long-term effect of political violence on educational attainment also varies by sex and residence. Akresh, Bhalotra, Leone and Osili (2017) analysis on intergenerational effects of political violence case of the Biafra war indicates that ex-combatants have low aspiration to return to school because: first, the use of male children were used as combatants at their prime age to the extent that war is a skill set that need not be decoded. Second, the economic shocks of political violence impose automatic leadership and bread-winners role to surviving children that education become secondary, which has a negative effect on human capital accumulation with a far-reaching effects on rural-based children. This means that when FCV becomes a business, more violence and less funding for education becomes the norm. However, what is the case of South Sudan?

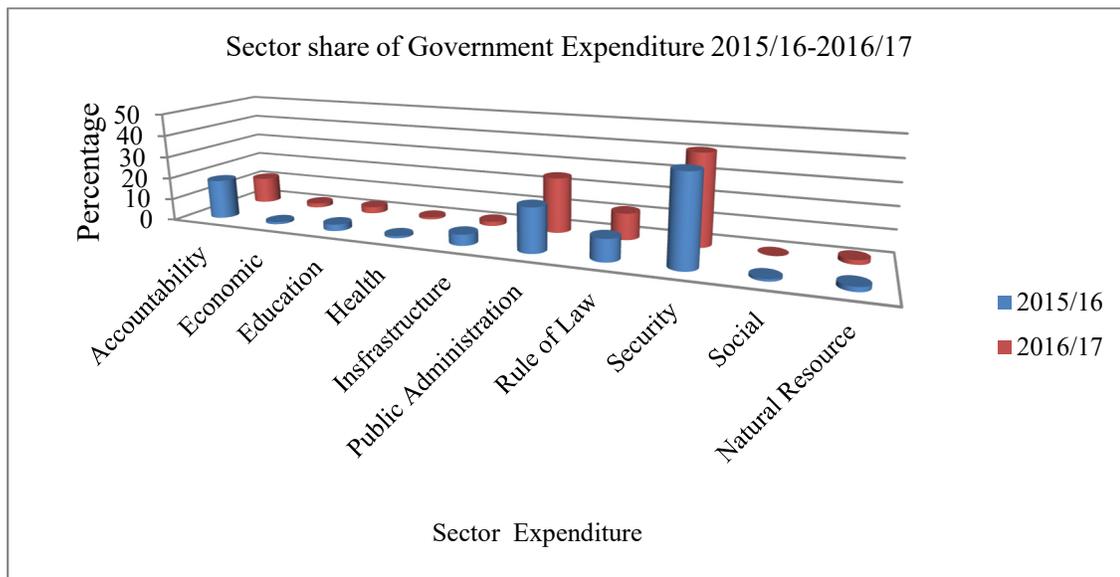
The Republic of South Sudan (RSS) became independence on 9th July 2011 through an internationally supervised referendum, where the citizens overwhelmingly voted to separate from the then Sudan. This “yes” vote effectively brought an end to almost half a century of civil war, racial and religious discrimination (Oywak, 2019). But in less than two years of peace, the country relapsed into further another violent political conflict. The post-independent war was driven by the challenges of transition from a liberation movement to building a modern democracy (Johnson, 2016; Babyesiza, 2015). The resumption of war dashed the optimism the citizens had to opening a new front on ignorance and poverty and achieving Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) motto; justice, equality and prosperity for all.

The transition from one war to another increased the new country’s fragility and dictated a new course for education. South Sudan Schools Attendance Monitoring System data indicated that primary school enrolment fell from 1.3m in 2013 to 1m in 2014 but bounced back in 2015 and 2016 in a different pattern. Many as 500 schools in Greater Upper Nile remained closed while schools in Greater Bahr-el-Ghazal and Greater Equatorial grew with the increase in the displaced persons population (Hodgkin & Thomas, 2016). A similar pattern was also reported about

the higher education sector (The 2018 University of Upper Nile Statistical Outlook; The 2015/2016 University of Juba Statistical Outlook). These reports indicate the country’s enrolment has significant rise, and educational system resilient.

If history is something to go by, then history is repeating itself. Between 1960 and 1965, enrolment increased in Sudan’s three Southern provinces that now form the Republic of South Sudan even as internal fighting gathered pace. Missionaries spread the gospel and established the teaching and learning centers. It was only not until the Khartoum government-sponsored urban massacres emptied towns and formal schooling that enrolment down significantly. But “bush schools” run by the Anya-Nya rebellion absorbed increasing numbers of students. The “bush schools” model of schools’ administration and planning was also later adopted by the SPLA/M (Mayai, 2017; Hodgkin et al, 2016). Resilience in the context of South Sudan means schools remain functional despite severe threats to their operations.

According to Oywak (2019), higher education system faced significant challenges since independence. This includes; the drop in the global oil price, rise in the military spending and raging political conflict led to drip in South Sudan’s Gross National Income (GNI). A Study by Garang, Issa and Ali (2017) calculated that the country lost around 70% since independence and the local currency loose by 80% to US dollars sending up annual inflation rate from 165 in January to 730 in August 2016. The rise in the cost of living as triggered a phenomenon to be known later as the rise in “unknown gunmen”. This outfit terrorized the citizens spreading crime and lawlessness particularly in cities adding justification for government to increase military spending. The 2016 and 2017 Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning Budget Books, respectively, reported allocation for the military when up by 40% while public spending to education and other sectors significantly declined as indicated figure 1.



Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning Budget, 2015/16, and 2016/17

The delays in disbursement of state appropriation compounded matter forcing public universities to spontaneously solicit user charges from students and/or their parents and sponsors in an attempt to balance the revenue deficit. This had ominous effects on low-income families, geographical, female and first-generation students. Although government later exerted control through imposing tuition caps, critics of government tuition harmonization plan claimed that the intervention was conceived and implemented in haste. The regulation, therefore, lacks strategic and procedural clarity as more emphasis was put merely on control with little or no prescriptions on the roles of other key stakeholders, price review procedures, accountable and transparent utilization of revenues (Oywak, 2019). It is against this background this study interrogates how the rise in the cost of living as a result of FCV context affects students’ participation in South Sudan public universities (SSPU).

Research has shown that private funding increases, the total revenue of higher education institutions if public subsidies slightly increase or at least remain (Orr, 2015). Such prediction is difficult to uphold in fragile, conflict and violent contexts. South Sudan has transitioned from one conflict to another (Mamdani, 2016). There is a growing social, economic and strategic concern that the rise in the cost of managing higher education and introduction of tuition

fees without any provision for financial aid could lead to inequalities in epistemic access. This could increase the risk of conflict, and consequently, experiencing conflict can exacerbate preexisting education inequality (Salmi & Bassett, 2014).

Education is critical in the war against ignorance, poverty, in promoting shared prosperity for all and peace. If nothing is done to reverse this trend, equity and affordability issues could undermine the achievement of the national goal to widen participation and narrow the gaps between social groups. It may also delay the realization of Target 4.3 of SDG, which calls on all educational policy makers endeavor to make quality higher education accessible, affordable and equitable to all, particularly those from under-represented groups. While Mayai (2017) and Hodgkin et al (2016) examined the effect of political conflict and violence on pupils' access in South Sudan primary schools, there is still glaring knowledge gap on how the rising cost of living due to the difficulties created by FCV situation continuous to affects out-of-state students' decision to access and attend South Sudan public universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were framed:

- i. To what extent does net-cost affect out-of-state students from low-income families' decision to access South Sudan public universities?
- ii. What are the main economic challenges affecting out-of-state students from low-income families' decision to participate in South Sudan public universities?
- iii. How can these economic challenges to students' participation be overcome to widen access to South Sudan public universities?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was framed based on the main research question "i":

- H_{01} There is no significant mean difference in the influence of net cost on students' access to South Sudan public universities between in-state and out-of-state students

2. Methods

The study used convergence parallel mixed method design. The approach was chosen because it enables the researcher collect both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently, analyze two data sets separately, and then merge the results to contrast and compare before providing an overall interpretation. The design was chosen because it pulls together the strength of each strand for purposes of triangulation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Since the researchers had no intention to follow the participants after the study, a cross-sectional survey was suitable in the quantitative strand (Lebo and Weber, 2015). The qualitative strand used phenomenology design to examine how the rise in the cost of living affects students' participation in SSPU. According to Patton (2001), phenomenology approach is ideal for probing participants' lived experience.

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for sample size was used to determine a sample unit of 378 students from a sample-frame of 16,618. The procedure stipulates that from a given population of 10,000 to 24,000, a sample of 378 is adequate to make acceptable decision on the finding when the margin of error is 5% and the level of confidence is 95%. The researchers used expert sampling (a form of purposive sampling) to select six members of the National council for Higher Education (NCHE) from a sample of 42 members (Laws of South Sudan, 2012), and four university administrators. This kind of sampling is ideal for collecting data from individuals with particular expertise. Homogenous purposive sampling was used to glean knowledge from four parents because this unit shares the same characteristics (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Quota sampling was used to ensure proportional representation of all colleges/faculties/institutes/centers (Patton, 2001)

The primary data collection instruments in the quantitative strand were questionnaires for students. Interview guide was used to solicit data from members of NCHE, university administrators and parents. The researchers also used document analysis and observation guide. Descriptive statistics were reported in form of frequencies, percentages and tables. A one-sample t-test was used to establish whether there is no significant mean variations in the influence of net cost on student's access in SSPU between in-state and out-of-state students. Qualitative data was collected and analyzed simultaneously, coded, categorized and put into themes then reported either verbatim or paraphrasing as recommended in Boeije (2013).

The researchers followed ethical considerations meticulously to endure due approvals were obtained from Institution Review Board and Ministry of Higher Education, respectively, and formal permissions granted by the gate-keepers in this case and the Vice Chancellors of SSPU, deans and head of departments. The researchers gave due consideration to the privacy of the participants by using codes such as NCHE #, Stud #, Par #, Adm.# and Uni. # to hide their identities and numbers (e.g. NCHE #1,2,3,4) to distinguish between participants. The researchers also

adhered to the norms of exit the field and no falsification of evidence and conclusions following the suggestions in Babbie and Mouton (2001).

3. Results and Discussion

The first research question sought to determine how net-cost affect out-of-state students’ decision to access and attend South Sudan public universities. To answer this research question, a null hypothesis was tested using a one sample t-test. The procedures require that both null and alternative hypotheses drawn from research question be formulated and decision rule explicit (Rose & Wilson, 2017).

H_{01} There is no significant mean difference in the influence net cost on students’ decision to access South Sudan public universities between in-state and out-of-state students

H_{a1} : There is a significant mean difference in the influence of net cost on students’ decision to access South Sudan public universities between in-state and out-of-state students

University education in FCV context can be quite expensive. Students were asked to rate whether they agree or disagree with the assumption that there is no significant difference in the influence of net cost on students’ decision to access and attend SSPU between in-state and out-of-state students, where 61% agreed, 37% disagreed and 2% were undecided. Further statistical analysis was undertaken using a one sample t-test to determine whether there was any significant means variance in the proportion of students who agree and those who disagree with the null hypothesis (H_{01}). The results are illustrated in table 1.

Table 1

Access variation between in-state and out-of-state student’ decision to access SSPU

Decision rule: reject H_{01} if $\alpha \leq 0.05$, and fail to reject if t-value > p-value

Test Value = 0					95% Confidence Interval	
Difference					Level of	
Is there any difference in the decision to access SSPU between out-of-state and in-state in SSPU?	t	df	Sig (2-Tail)	Means Difference	Lower	Upper
	31.834	373	.000	2.567	2.38	2.76

where (t = 31.834), (df = 373), p = .000

Based on results in table 1, where the observed t -value ($t = 31.834$), the degrees of freedom ($df = 373$), and p -value = 0.000 with margin of error of 5% and the corresponding confidence level is 95%. Decision rule: reject H_{01} if $\alpha \leq 0.05$, and fail to reject if t -value was larger than p -value. We, therefore, reject H_{01} and conclude that there is a significant mean difference between in-state and out-of-state students with respect to the influence of net cost on their decision to access and attend SSPU. This means the cost of attending higher education in SSPU was high for out-of-state students from low-income families compare to in-state students across income groups. This confirms Paulsen and St. John (2016) finding that unlike low-income students, out-of-state upper-income students were less bothered about the cost of attendance.

However, the number of out-of-state of students accessing and attending SSPU are still higher compared to in-state students. The surge in the number of out-of-state students in SSPU can be attributed to other non-economic factors such as: increased awareness of the returns on investment in higher education; the recognition that public universities were cheaper than private universities; the availability of qualified teaching staff and the reminiscence of public universities past glorious days as the sole institutions of higher learning. This shows that although financial factors are important, they are by no means the single most important factor in promoting students’ access in SSPU.

“Out-of-state” refers to students who enrolled in colleges or universities away from their home of origin while in-state are those who enrolled within their home state. The study hypothesized that the proximity between home of origin and education facilities has a significant influence on cost and students’ decision to choose where and what to study. A study by Paulsen et al (2016) indicated upper-income students are often less deterred from studying abroad or within the region because of their ability to pay and privilege renting.

Net cost is the amount of money paid by a student to attend college education after deducting need-based merit grants or loans. The cost of attendance consists of money paid to cover both cost of instruction and cost of maintenance. The latter includes items such as food, transport, boarding, medicare and scholastic materials. Stud # lobserved that although cost of tuition fees has remained relatively stabled due to tuition capping, the cost of

maintenance has significantly raised due to FCV circumstance of the country, overtaking family income and creating pressure on low-income families (Interviewed on April 11th, 2018).

“Notwithstanding the FCV context of the country, overall enrollments in SSPU have risen in the last six years” said Adm # 1b (interviewed on 5th April 2018). Document analysis also confirmed this assertion. For example, students’ enrolment has significantly increased from 1,520 in 2011 to 8,975 in 2014/2015 (The University of Juba Statistical Outlook, 2015). This is a clear evidence that education system in South Sudan was resilient to political conflict and a confirming the finding by Mayai (2017) and Hodgkin and Thomas (2016) that enrollment in South Sudan has shown great flexibility despite FCV situation.

While this picture may appear rosy, there are also some draw backs. Interview with NC # 6, May 10th, 2018 revealed the growing social, economic and strategic concerns that the gaps between students from low-income families and upper-income families were widening due to the rise in the cost of living. The introduction of tuition fees with any provision for financial aid is cited by parents, students and administrators as creating a great impediment to epistemic access and intergenerational mobility. Interview with Par #1 May 1st, 2018 indicated yet the most fervent appeal by parents with large family structures and widows was that they were not ripping the peace dividend of independence as their children were still left out of college.

Parents are increasingly worried about what the future holds for their children. Interview with a number of parents revealed that low-income, female, geographical and first-generation students were adversely affected. This point was also re-echoed by Par # 2 (May 3rd, 2018).and Par # 4 (May 11th, 2018). But members of NCHE are less enthusiastic and do not see this happening soon without effective peace agreement (NC # 2 April 24th, 2018), a return to state subsidies practice for all registered students (NC # 3 April 28th, 2018), a realization that education was link to peace and development (NC # 4 May 2nd, 2018; NC # 5 May 6th, 2018).

The Challenges Affecting Out-of-state Students’ Access

The second research question sought to determine what economic challenges affect out-of-state students’ decision to access and attend South Sudan public universities. Table 2 identified the following five leading economic challenges facing out-of-state students.

Table 2

Factors affecting out-of-state students’ decision to access South Sudan public universities

Challenges	Frequencies	Percentages
Lack of financial aid option for low-income families	96	25
Inadequate boarding facilities	87	23
The rising cost of transport	53	14
Recruitment system support largely urban folks	38	10
Work-family-study for non-traditional students	30	8

Based on data in table 2, 25% of out-of-state students mentioned lack of financial aid was the leading challenge to students’ decision to access and attend SSPU. Focus group discussion in both sampled universities underscored that the lack of financial aid has negative influence on out-of-state students from low-income families, female and first-generation access to SSPU (Uni # 1a May 7th, 2018). But there is a strong preference for a return to grants for all registered students rather than loans because “the country has still weak financial institutions to manage loan programs” said (Uni # 1b May 15th, 2018).

It is hard if not impossible to determine who is a low-income student from observation in FCV context. But a random spot check can show at least two female students for every ten students. The low numbers of female students are also captured in document analysis (The University of Upper Nile Statistical Outlook, 2018; The University of Juba Statistical Outlook, 2015/2016; National Bureau of Statistic, 2012). However, closing the gender disparity in public universities poses a big challenge as majority of parents would withdraw their daughters from college in favor of their sons in the events of FCV circumstance and financial deficit (Adm # 2b April 7th, 2018).

Responses in Table 2 indicated that 23% of students identified lack of accommodation in the case of the University of Upper Nile or inadequate boarding facilities in the case of the University of Juba as the second leading challenge to students’ decision to access and attend SSPU. Students who do not have any social support network rent outside the city business district (CBD). “We (students) either rent accommodation in colonies for security and financial reasons or as individual if we can afford” said a Stud # 3b (April 8th, 2018). Adm # 2b confirmed that the current infrastructures besides being less friendly to the disable students, it was neither designed for higher education nor for a growing numbers of students (April 7th, 2018).

While renting outside the CBD may be cheaper, it has its draw back. “My cost of transport has risen as I have to connect buses to reach campus” said Stud # 4a (April 17th, 2018). “I often miss some lectures or get home late because I trek to and fro college” said Stud # 5a (April 19th, 2018). It is against this backdrop that 14% of students cite it as the third leading financial challenge to students’ decision to access and attend SSPU. “To some extent, the rising cost of transport and FCV context has also prevented us visiting our beloved families during semester breaks thereby creating an emotional rift between us and our families” Stud # 2b (April 6th, 2018).

Data in Table 2 also show that 10% of students cited the recruitment procedure as ineffective and exclusive in approach. “The higher education admission system has used TV, FM radio or newspapers and notice-board to recruit students for over three decades” (Adm # 1b - April 5th, 2018; Adm #2a - April 24th, 2018). Students have argued that the approach was in favor of the urban-folk and middle-income groups compare to geographical, first-generation and low-income students who are often less exposed to such facilities (Stud # 1a - April 11th, 2018; Stud # 4b - April 10th, 2018).

The response in Table 2 revealed that 8% of students identified work-family-study balance as a challenged. This is particularly true for non-traditional students who normally pay higher than regular students because of private admission. “The fee structure for ‘private admission’ students is high than those of the ‘general admission’”. It is increasingly a dissatisfier” said, Stud # 3a – April 25th, 2018). Stud # 5b interjected “I feel like I am being punished to return to college” (April 15th, 2018). Stud # 5a questioned “How can we maintain a work-family-study balance in a broken economy?” (April 19th, 2018).

Strategies to Improve Challenges Facing Out-of-state Students

The third research question sought to identify strategies to improve economic challenges affecting out-of-state students’ decision to access and attend South Sudan public universities. These recommendations were drawn from focus group discussions, individual interviews, observation and document analysis.

First, government should provision financial aid (grants or loans) to make SSPU more accessible, affordable and equitable for all, particularly for the most marginalized groups. However, until return, resettlement and reconstruction are fully achieved, government should ensure effectively disbursement of state subsidies, and encourage corporate institutions to make financial contribution towards human capital investment.

Second, government should fast-track the construction of modern campuses, compatible to the needs of all categories of the learners so as to increase and improve boarding, teaching and learning facilities.

Third, public universities singly or in partnership with corporate institutions provide affordable transport to students to increase the ease of transport for students, particularly for those who live outside the CBD.

Four, public universities should re-brand to make their institutions and programs become more competitive, recruit widely and demystify the fact that higher education was an elite project. This could be achieved by using an integrated approach, where both traditional systems such as outreach to schools and communities and social and digital media are used side by side in the dissemination of information on available vacancies.

Finally, NCHE should review the tuition fees structures for non-traditional students also known as “private admission”. The parallel structure charged for this category is exorbitant and based on public university’s discretion. This is an assault on life-long education policy itself, national goal to widen access and close intergenerational gaps. Parents should also be encouraged to return to school.

4. Conclusions

The study examined how students struggled with the rising net cost of participation in SSPU in FCV situation. Although the findings revealed that SSPU system have exhibit resilience over the last five decades, wartime institutions of higher learning were overwhelmed and struggling to provide education services to all citizens. Wartime interventions provided by government tend to favor the military while those provided by humanitarian institutions by-pass students because they are not merely called displaced civilians. The groups of learners adversely affected are low-income, female, geographical, first-generation and non-tradition students. The found that students’ net cost was rising faster than family income. The emerging middle-class families were reduced by inflation to low-income. This has threatened to undermine access, ability to pay and inclusive growth. For a country that has known no peace for half a century, rising inequalities could fuel the risk of further conflict or exacerbate pre-existing fragility and violence circumstances. There is, therefore, need for government to prioritize peace and educational policy makers to fast-track human capital development to fight ignorance and poverty and to ensure shared prosperity for all.

5. Recommendations

Based on the summary and conclusions drawn from the research questions, the study makes the following recommendations:

- Government at all levels should provide adequate public spending to increase access for all
- Government should play a lead role mobilizing financial and social support to make access affordable and equitable for all, particularly those from marginalized groups.
- Government should balance tuition capping with adequate and regular subsidies to unable universities effectively and efficiently meet their organization goal
- All parties to the lunch voucher program should reform the feeding project to make it more sustainable in the middle and long term
- Admission departments should integrate both traditional and digital media to attract potential candidates, market their institutions and program to increase students access and attainment
- Universities should create bursaries and work-study opportunities to support

6. References

- Akresh, R., Bhalotra, S., Leone, M., & Osili, U. O. (2017). First and Second Generation Impacts of the Biafran War. *NBER Working Paper No. 23721*. www.nber.org/papers/w23721
- Akresh, R. & De Walque, D. (2008). Armed conflict and schooling: Evidence from the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series No. 4606*.
- Babbie, E.R. and Mouton, J. (2001). *The Power of Social Science Research*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Babyesiza, A. (2015). University governance in Post-conflict Southern Sudan 2005-2011: The nexus of Islamic new public management and neo-patrimonialism. *Springer*.
- Boeiji, H. (2013). *Analysis in qualitative research*. London: Sage Publication.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed method research (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S.A., & Alkassim, R.S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics* 5(1): 1-4
- Diwakar, V. (2015). The effect of armed conflict on education: Evidence from Iraq, *The Journal of Development Studies* 51 (12) 1702-1718.
- Hodgkin, E. & Thomas, E. (2016). Education and conflict in South Sudan. *Humanitarian Practice Network*. <http://odihpn.org/blog/education-and-conflict-in-south-sudan/>
- Johnson, H.F. (2016). *South Sudan: The Untold Story from Independence to the Civil War*. I.B Tauri.
- Justino, P., Leone, M., & Salardi, P. (2013). Short- and long-term impact of violence on education; The case of Timor Leste. *The World Economic Review*, 28(2) 320-353.
- Krejcie, R.C., & Morgan, D.W. (1970). -Determining Sample Size for Research Activities, *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.
- Laws of South Sudan: *The Higher Education Act, 2012*, Ministry of Justice, Republic of South Sudan.
- Lebo, M.I. & Weber, C. (2015). An effective approach to the repeated Cross-sectional design *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (1) 1-274
- Mamdani, M. (2016). *Who is to blame in South Sudan*, Boston Review.
- Mayai, A. T. (2017). The Impacts of war on schooling in South Sudan, 2013-2016. *The Sudd Institute*.
- Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (2013). State of Higher Education in the Republic of South Sudan Statement of Performance of the Ministry of Higher Education in 2012 Presented to the National Legislative Assembly.
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Budget Book, 2015/16. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning - Government of South Sudan.
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Budget Book, 2016/17. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning - Government of South Sudan.
- Orr D. (2015) A Comparative Study on Cost-Sharing in Higher Education—Using the Case Study Approach to Contribute to Evidence-Based Policy. In: Curaj A., Matei L., Pricopie R., Salmi J., Scott P. (eds) *The European Higher Education Area*. Springer, Cham DOI https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-20877-0_51
- Oywak, S.O. (2019). Left out from the very start: The dilemma of access for students from low-income families in South Sudan public universities *The Journal for Africa Interdisciplinary Studies* 3(1) 4-15.
- Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Seale, C. (1999). *Quality in Qualitative Research: Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(4), 465-478.
- Pherali, T., and Sahar, A. (2018). Learning in the chaos: A political economy analysis of education in Afghanistan *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 13 (2) 239-258.
- Ross A., & Willson V.L. (2017) One-Sample T-Test. In: *Basic and Advanced Statistical Tests*. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam DOI https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6351-086-8_2.

- Rouse, C. E. (2017). The economics of education and policy: Ideas for a principles course
Journal of Economic Education, 48 (3)229-237.
- Salmi, J., & Bassett, R.M. (2014). The equity imperative in tertiary education: promoting fairness and efficiency.
International Review of Education, 60 (3), 361-377.
- The University of Upper Nile. *The 2018 Statistic Outlook*. The University of Upper Nile
- The University of Juba. *The 2015/2016 Statistic Outlook*. The University of Juba.
- UNESCO (2017). We can make higher education equitable and affordable for: Six ways to ensure higher education leaves no one behind. *UNESCO Policy Paper* 30.
- United Nation General Assembly (2016). Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *Seventieth Session Agenda Item 15 and 16*.
- Vega, L.M., & Bajaj, M. (2016). The right to education in protracted conflict: Teachers' experiences in non-formal education in Colombia *Globalization, Societies and Education*, 14 (3) 358-373.
- Weldeegzie, S. G. (2017). Growing-up unfortunate: War and human capital in Ethiopia. *World Development*, (96), 474-489.
- World Bank. 2018. *Maximizing the impact of the World Bank Group in fragile and conflict- affected situations (English)*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated>.