A Comparative Study of Completion Challenges Facing Regular and Parallel Degree Students of Egerton University Constituent Colleges, Kenya.

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Abstract
This study purposed to identify the completion challenges faced by parallel in comparison to regular degree students in their studies in constituent university colleges of Egerton university. The study was conducted in Kisii and Laikipia university colleges which until recently were university colleges of Egerton university. The study involved 607 and 332 parallel and regular degree students in Laikipia University, 191 and 177 parallel and Regular students in Laikipia university college respectively. Also included in the study were 15 and 25 regular lecturers in Kisii University College and the Deans of students' and Academic registrars in Kisii and Laikipia university colleges. The study adopted a comparative design as it was appropriate in the investigation of different independent groups of university students. The samples were selected by use of both purposive and snowball sampling techniques and the data was obtained by use of questionnaires. The data collected was presented by use of tables and bar graphs and it was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics. The study found that fewer students in the parallel degree programme were provided with loans by HELB while the general public was not willing to fund their education. The study also established that students' welfare with regard to access to morning and evening lectures, participation in co-curricular activities and selection of courses was not catered for. The students had challenges in accessing their lecture halls, Dean of students, lecturers and libraries. This had an impact on the completion rates of parallel degree students compared to the regular students. From the findings of the study recommendations were made to HELB, university management, local administration, parents and other stakeholders on how the situation could be improved.
Key words: Completion, Parallel Degree Programme, Regular Degree Programme, Laikipia University College, Kisii University College.

Introduction
Public universities in China, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and many other countries of the world have always sought for ways of acquiring more revenue apart from their allocations from the exchequer owing to decreasing funding (Chacha, 2004; Isengoma, 2004; Qu, 2008). The public universities were therefore compelled to seek for alternative means of funding for their programmes. One of the strategies adopted by the public universities in these countries was the mounting of the privately sponsored (Module II) programmes commonly referred to as parallel degree programmes or self-sponsored programmes (SSP). The programmes according to Ngolovoi (2009) have helped public universities raise the much required revenue to run their programmes.

In Kenya Parallel Degree Programmes were first introduced in the University of Nairobi (UON) in 1998 amidst an array of resistance from students in the regular Degree Programme (Kiamba, 2004). The resistance, Kiamba further observed culminated in a strike in 2002 which led to the closure of the university for one month. Later the university was reopened and the programme implemented inspite of lack of total support for the programme from all stakeholders. The cost of tuition for a student in the regular degree programme per academic year is Ksh. 28,500 as the fees is highly subsidized by the government and the student is able to apply for loans and bursaries from the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) to a maximum of Ksh. 60,000 and Ksh. 8000 respectively (Ngolovoi, 2006). On the other hand, tuition fee for a student in a parallel Degree programme in medicine is Ksh. 450,000, Sciences Ksh. 150,000 and Humanities Ksh. 120,000 per academic year. This cost varies from one public university to another. Such comparatively exorbitant fees paid by the Parallel Degree programme students has prompted them to request for loans from HELB as the loans were initially a reserve for students in the regular programme (Ooro, 2006; Otieno, 2004). Despite the inclusion of parallel degree programmes students in the provision of loans by HELB, parents still have the highest burden of financing their children's education. The research has been carried out to establish whether such students have equal access to student loans as the students in the regular programme and whether they are able to complete their studies and, hence the essence of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The introduction of parallel Degree programmes in 1998 in public universities in Kenya alongside the regular degree programmes has witnessed unprecedented expansion and access to higher education among other benefits (Ngolovoi, 2009; Ooro, 2009). However, limited studies have been conducted regarding accessibility of students in the parallel degree programmes to financial assistance, teaching and learning facilities, and students' welfare services which are an epitome to the retention and completion rates of these students in their studies (Chacha, 2004). Since both regular degree and parallel programmes are conducted in the public universities, it was paramount to establish the challenges facing the students in the parallel degree programmes compared to those in the regular programmes.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study examined the challenges faced by parallel in comparison to regular degree programme students in regard to access to financial assistance, access to teaching and learning resources, and students' welfare and how these impacted on their retention and completion rates.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

i) To what extent have financial challenges affected parallel compared to regular students in relation to completion and retention in their degree programmes?

ii) How have parallel degree programme students' demand for access to teaching and learning resources affected their timely completion of their studies?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The challenges identified will be used by the respective institutions to review policies in regard to parallel and regular programmes in a bid to improve the quality of the programmes. The findings from the study will enable students, parents and other stakeholders to be aware of the challenges faced by parallel degree programmes in public universities and therefore seek for ways of overcoming them. The results may also help the universities in seeking for ways of alleviating students challenges and enable them to complete their studies on time. The findings will also provide useful information to the Ministry of Education and HELB to minimize wastage due to repetition and deferment of studies by students in universities due to lack of funds. The results will also be useful to the local government in providing funds and security to the university students and will be disseminated through seminars, workshops and journals to facilitate improved delivery of student's services and elicit further research in this area.

2.0 Methodology

This study employed the causal – comparative study design. This is because causal – comparative design determines the consequences of differences that already exist among groups of individuals (Kerlinger, 2000). The design was appropriate as the investigation compared challenges faced by different independent groups of university students in parallel and regular degree programmes. The research targeted parallel (module II) students, and regular (Module I) students, fulltime lecturers, Deans of students and Academic Registrars ranging from the year 2009 to 2011. Since Kisii university college had a population of 1,105 regular degree (Module I), 2,528 parallel (Module II) students and 55 full time lecturers as at 2011, a sample size of 332 regular (module I), 607 parallel (module II) students and 15 full time lecturers was considered appropriate, as this was 30% of the accessible population. On the other hand Laikipia university college had a population of 591 Regular (module I) students, 642 parallel (module II) students and 98 full time lecturers as at 2011, a sample of 177 module I students, 191 module II students and 25 full time lecturers would be appropriate for the study. The samples were selected by use of both purposive and snowball sampling techniques.

2.1 Instrumentation

Questionnaires were the main research instrument used in this study. One questionnaire was administered to the university students (USQ) who participated in the study while the other questionnaire was administered to the full time university lecturers (RULQ). The other two were administered to the Deans of students (DSQ) and Academic Registrars. (ARQ). The questionnaires were supplemented by documentation available in the university colleges.

2.2 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

A test –re-test of the questionnaire was conducted in Chuka university college since it is away from the study location and it is also a constituent college of Egerton university. The instrument was again administered to the same respondents after two weeks. The responses were scored and Pearson Product moment correlation was used to compute the correlation coefficient between the first and second scores. The Cronbach's alfa coefficient of 0.812 was found which according to Siegle (2002) was considered above the minimum reliability of 0.70 and hence the instrument was found suitable to be used in collecting data in the study. Both construct and face validity of the instrument was established to ensure that all the areas critical to the study were included in the

instrument.

2.3 Administration of Instruments

The permit for the study was sought from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology headquarters in Nairobi through the assistance of the School of Graduate Studies, Kisii University College before proceeding to the field. Using the permit and an introductory letter from Kisii University College, the researchers were able to obtain permission from the principals of the target constituent university colleges through their Deans of students and Academic Registrars to conduct the research. The university student leaders were used to identify regular and parallel degree programme students who participated in the study. The lecturers' questionnaire was given to one of them who circulated them among other lecturers until the required sample size was obtained. The Dean of students and Academic Registrars' Questionnaires were administered by the researchers. The researchers administered the questionnaires with adequate instruction and assurance of confidentiality to the participants in the study. The questionnaires were administered during weekdays and collected the same day.

2.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

Financial challenges were analyzed by use of descriptive statistics to establish the percentage of Module I students compared to Module II students who had received loans from the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). The frequency of students' sources of finance apart from HELB was calculated and presented in tables. University access challenges which comprised of access to university facilities and offices, availability of lecturers for consultation were calculated and analyzed by use of weighted means and presented in tables and graphs. A weighted mean of above 2.5 for students' questionnaire and a weighted mean of below 2.5 in the lecturers' questionnaire indicated existence of a challenge hence the need to improve the situation.

3.1 Findings of the Study

Data obtained from the questionnaires were systematically analyzed and presented as follows:

Research Question One:

To what extent have financial challenges affected parallel (Module II) compared to regular (Module I) students in relation to completion and retention in their degree programmes?

To answer this question, data were obtained from different categories of the sample using questionnaires. The findings are presented in tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Table 1

Percentage Loan Allocation to Respondents in Laikipia University College in 2011/12 Academic Year

Programme	Female allocated Loans		Males allocated Loans			
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	**%**
Regular (Module I)	90	86.5	60	82.2	150	84.7
Parallel (Module II)	61	70.9	53	50.5	114	59.7
Total	151	78.7	113	66.4	264	72.2

Table 1 indicates that more females in Module I (90%) in Laikipia University received loans from HELB compared to their male counterparts (82.4%). In Module II more females (61%) received loans from HELB compared to their male counter parts (50.5%). Overall more students in the regular (module I) programme received loans (84.7%) than those in the parallel (Module II) programme (59.7%). This shows that students in the Regular (Module I) programme received nearly twice what their colleagues in the parallel programme received (Isengoma, 2004).

Table 2

Percentage Loan Allocation to Respondents in Kisii University College in 2011/2012 Academic Year

Programme	Female allocated Loans		Males allocated Loans			
	No.	%	No.	%	Total	**%**
Regular (Module I)	109	85.8	191	93.2	300	90.4
Parallel (Module II)	138	47.3	126	40.0	264	43.5
Total	247	66.7	317	66.6	564	70.5

The results in Table 2 show great disparity in the two categories of students in loan allocations as more Module I students received loans from HELB compared to Module II students 90.4% and 43.5 respectively. This implies that Module I students were favoured by the government as they received government scholarships in addition to receiving more loans from HELB.

Table 3

Source of Funding for Students in Kisii University College and Laikipia University College in 2011/2012 Academic Year

Source of Funding	Kisii University College Module		Laikipia University College Module	
	I	II	I	II
Family Income	59.25%	53.84%	50.00	88.89%
CDF	00.00%	15.38%	10.00%	00.00%
Bursary	07.42%	23.09%	10.00%	00.00%
Harambee	29.63%	00.00%	30.00%	11.11%
Other sources	03.70%	07.69%	00.00%	00.00%

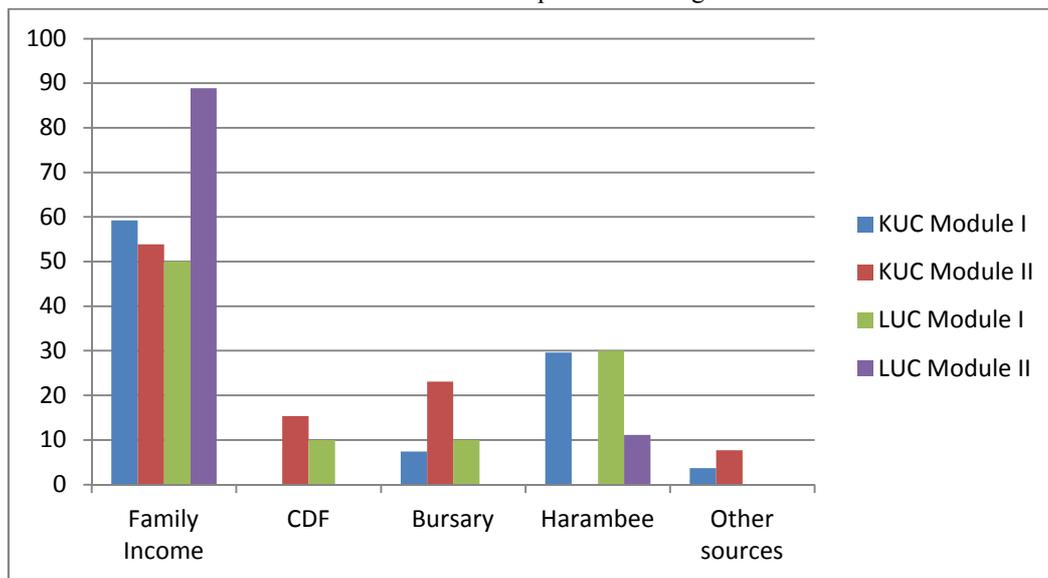This information is represented in figure 1.

Table 3 and figure 1 show that no module I student obtained fees from community fund-raising or "Harambee" and no Module I student obtained fees from the CDF fund in Kisii university college. The students from Kisii University College were however, able to obtain fees from other sources such as private sponsors and self-help groups (7.69%). Nearly the same situation was replicated in Laikipia University College as a few students in Module I and Module II obtained fees from the general public through harambees 30.00% and 11.11% respectively. This showed that Module II students shy away from the general public or were not aware of other sources of financial assistance, hence mainly relied on financial assistance from their family members. This could be attributed to the general public's attitude that Module II students were from rich families and hence could fund their education (Juma, 2006).

Table 4

Enrolment and Loan Allocation for Parallel (Module 1) Students in Kisii University College in the Academic Years 2007/08 to 2011/12

Year	Students admitted				Students allocated loans by Helb			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
2007/08	167	78.04	47	21.96	158	94.61	42	89.36
2008/09	105	65.22	56	34.78	100	95.24	52	92.86
2009/10	124	67.39	60	32.61	114	91.94	60	100.00
2010/11	370	67.77	176	32.23	365	98.64	170	96.59
2011/12	736	65.60	386	34.40	720	97.83	384	99.48

From Table 4 it is clear that there were more males in Module I compared to Module II in the academic years 2007/08 to 2011/12 in Kisii University College. This was a replica in other public universities as more males performed better than females in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE) and therefore more

males gained admission to public universities in Regular (Module I) programme (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). Module I or regular degree students received double financial help as they were fully sponsored by the government and received loans and bursaries from HELB (Ngolovoi, 2006). This was because of the notion that the Module I students were more deserving than module II students and hence were favoured in loan allocation (Ooro, 2009).

Table 5

Enrolment and Loan allocation for Parallel (Module II) Students in Kisii University College in the Academic Years 2007/08 to 2011/12

Year	Students admitted				Students allocated loans by Helb			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
2007/08	19	55.88	15	44.12	12	63.16	13	86.67
2008/09	222	65.68	116	34.32	102	45.95	87	75.00
2009/10	626	63.55	359	36.45	400	63.90	270	75.21
2010/11	745	62.62	426	36.38	437	58.66	296	69.48
2011/12	477	60.69	309	39.31	298	62.47	261	84.47

Table 5, indicates that there were more males than females enrolled in Kisii University College between 2007/08 and 2011/12 academic years. The percentage ratio of males to females was 62.38 or 2:1. This implied that communities surrounding KUC favoured the boy child education than the girl child. This also implied that the male students performed better than females in KCSE hence had the minimum university entry points (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). From Tables 4 and 5, it is also clear that fewer students in module II received loans from HELB compared to the module I students. This confirms the bias in disbursement of loans to the university students. Further, fewer males than females received loans from HELB as the average percentage of students who received loans was 58.824% and 78.166% respectively. Male students in module II programme therefore were compelled to seek for other sources of financing their education unlike female students. They therefore had more financial challenges than the female students.

Table 6

Enrolment and loan Allocation for Regular (Module I) Students in Laikipia University College in the Academic Years 2007/08 to 2011/12

YEAR	Students admitted				Students allocated loans by HELB			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
2007/08	60	51.28	57	48.72	58	96.67	50	87.72
2008/09	72	48.65	76	51.35	70	97.22	65	85.53
2009/10	93	49.73	94	50.32	89	95.57	78	82.98
2010/11	72	51.80	67	48.20	70	97.22	60	89.55
2011/12	524	53.69	452	46.31	253	99.80	318	70.35

Table 6 indicates that there was gender parity for the regular (Module I) students. This could be attributed to the types of courses that were offered in Laikipia University College. The academic years 2010/11 and 2011/2012 however showed an increase in the number of male students compared to female students. This implied that females avoided other courses that had been introduced in the university college. In Laikipa University College just like Kisii University College, there was a sharp increase in the number of Module I students who enrolled in 2011/12 academic year. This was attributed to the double intake that took place in that academic year. It is also clear from the table that more males received loans from HELB compared to females. Fewer females could have opted not to apply for loans as the parents or guardians were willing to fund their education.

Table 7

Enrolment and loan Allocation for Parallel (Module II) Students in Laikipia University College in the Academic year 2007/2008 and 2011/12

YEAR	Students admitted				Students allocated loans by HELB			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
2007/08	61	46.56	70	53.44	40	65.57	42	60.00
2008/09	56	47.46	62	52.54	30	53.57	21	33.87
2009/10	109	49.77	110	50.23	60	55.05	69	62.72
2010/11	84	48.28	90	51.72	46	54.76	42	42.72
2011/12	123	47.86	134	52.14	65	52.85	55	41.04

The results from Table 7 show that more females enrolled in the parallel degree programme than males. This could be owing to the type of courses offered in the university college or the parents and guardians willingness to finance female education. This implied that communities around LUC favoured girls' education compared to Boys' education. The results also show that more males in the parallel (Module II) programme were provided with loans from HELB compared with the females, 56.36% and 48.06% respectively. This indicates that female students in Laikipia University College in the Module II programme faced financial challenges as a number of them were not awarded loans by HELB.

Table 8

Rating of Financial Challenges by Students in Kisii University College and Laikipia University College

| | WM | | | | |
| | KUC | | LUC | | |
Item Number	MII	MI	MII	MI	Conclusion
1. Financial problems delayed enrollment	4.5	2.7	3.4	36	Challenge
2. Examinations and no completion fees balances	3.8	3.1	4.6	3.2	Challenge
3. Family Resources and delayed completion of studies	3.6	3.3	4.1	4.1	Challenge

Note: WM – denotes weighted mean KUC denotes Kisii University College & LUC Denotes Laikipia University College

Table 8 shows the rating of financial challenges by the university students. Weighted means were calculated and from the table a weighted mean of above 2.5 was obtained implying that students faced financial challenges which adversely affected the timely completion of their studies.

Table 9

Deans' of Students responses in regard to Module II (MII) Students' Financial Challenges

Question No.	SA	A	U	D	SD	Opinion
1. Financial challenge	KUC	LUC	-	-	-	Challenge
2. Females facing financial challenges	KUC	LUC	-	-	-	Challenge

Note: The acronyms: SA, A, U, D, and SD imply Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree respectfully.

In the third part of the Dean of Students questionnaire, respondents were required to choose an alternative that best described their opinion to a stated item in regard to challenges facing MII students in comparison to MI students. The results are reported in Table 9. According to the results Deans in both Kisii and Laikipia university colleges strongly agree (AS) and agree (A) that MII students in both colleges face more financial challenges than their counter parts in the regular (MI) programme which affected their retention and completion of their degree programmes.

Table 10

Academic Registrars' Responses regarding fees challenges facing MII Students

Question No.	SA	A	U	D	SD	Opinion
1. Lack of fees and Deferment of studies	KUC	LUC	-	-	-	Challenge
2. Females and fees balances	-	-	-	KUC	-	Challenge

Note: The Acronyms SA, A, U, D and SD imply Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively.

The second part of the academic Registrars Questionnaire sought to find the respondents opinion in regard to the Module II's financial challenges. The responses were shown in Table 10 above. The results indicate that the Registrars in both university colleges strongly Agreed (SA) and Agreed (A) that students in Module II programme in both universities faced financial challenges which affected enrolment in those institutions.

Table 11

Completion Rates of Students in Kisii University College

| Gender and Mode of Study | No. that | | | No. that | | |
| | Enrolled | Graduated | | Enrolled | Graduated | |
	2007/08	2009/10	%	2008/09	2010/11	%
MI Males	167	167	100.00	105	105	100.00
MI Females	47	46	97.87	56	50	89.29
MII Males	19	60	315.79	222	279	125.68
MII Females	15	27	180.00	116	106	91.38

Table 11 shows an analysis of completion rate for two cohorts in Kisii University College. The results indicate that module I female students failed to graduate in Kisii University College compared to their male counter parts. Failure to graduate as portrayed by the female students in module I meant that the students could have financial challenges or failed in some units hence repeating units in some years. Males who enrolled in MI graduated within the scheduled time compared to their female counterparts owing to the fact that males performed better than females even in the university education. Males in MII faced more challenges compared to females as there was a large backlog of students graduating in 2009/10 academic year (Table 11). Male students in MII were facing financial and academic challenges hence failed to graduate within the scheduled time due to deferments. Females in MII also failed to graduate within schedule due to financial and academic challenges.

Table 12

Completion rates of Students in Laikipia University College

Gender and Mode of Study	No. that			No. that		
	Enrolled	Graduated		Enrolled	Graduated	
	2007/08	2009/10	%	2008/09	2010/11	%
MI Males	60	68	113.33	72	56	77.78
MI Females	57	71	124.56	76	61	80.26
MII Males	61	62	101.64	56	59	105.36
MII Females	70	65	92.86	62	70	112.90

Table 12 indicates that majority of students in Regular (MI) programme in Laikipia University College who enrolled in 2007/08 graduated in 2009/10 academic year. There was an increase in the number of students who graduated which was attributed to deferment due to either failure or lack of fees in the previous academic year. In MII the graduation rates for the male students were higher compared to the female students. This could have been attributed to failure of the female students in some units or lack of fees or failure of the female students in some units or lack of fees and thus inability to graduate in the scheduled time.

Research Question Two
How have Parallel Degree Programme students' demand for access to teaching and learning resources affected their timely completion of their studies?
Data obtained from the different categories of samples were analyzed to answer this question. The results are represented in tables 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

Table 13

Rating of Students in regard to access challenges

Item Number	WM KUC		WM UC		
	MII	MI	MII	MI	Conclusion
1. Availability of books in the library	4.4	4.2	3.7	3.4	Challenge
2. Conditions of the lecture Halls	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.2	Challenge
3. Access to Dean's office	3.4	3.2	2.6	2.7	Challenge

Note: WM denotes weighted mean.
Table 13 shows weighted means to determine the existence or absence of a challenge in regard to accessibility to facilities and services in the university colleges. From the results it is evident that students in the two university colleges faced challenges in the services offered by their libraries. For the Kisii university college students, there was a greater challenge compared to Laikipia university college students as the weighted means were far more than 2.5. This meant that students in both university colleges had difficulties in doing their assignments and carrying out extra studies, although it was a less serious challenge in Laikipia University College. It was also established that MII students had more challenges compared to MI students. This could be attributed to the fact that they did not reside in the university and hence could not access the university library as required and this affected their performance and thus completion of their degree programmes.

Table 14

Rating of MII Students by Lecturers in Kisii University College and Laikipia University College

Completion of Assignments on time		WM	
	KUC	LUC	Conclusion
1. Completion of Assignments on time	2.60	2.32	Challenge in KUC
2. Access to the Library and Lecture halls	2.60	2.52	No challenge
3. Access to college bus	3.00	2.72	No challenge

Students' ability to do assignments is normally linked to availability of reference materials. Availability of reference materials for the students use was an access challenge. The results were calculated and presented as shown in Table 14. In Kisii University College the Module II students had a challenge in completing their assignments compared to the module I students, although the lecturers did not strongly agree. This was because they recorded a weighted mean of 2.60 as shown in Table 14. Thus module II students could not complete their assignments on time compared to module I students. In Laikipia university college MII students were able to complete assignments in time compared to MI students implying that they had access to library books and journals that could be found within the university library.

Table 15
Rating of the Dean of Students in accessibility to the office

Question No.	SA	A	U	D	SD	Opinion
Access to the Deans' office	-	-	-	-	LUC/KUC	No challenge

Note: The acronyms SA, A, U, D, and SD denotes, Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively.

Access to the Dean of students office implied that the students' social and psychosocial problems would be solved, thus having an impact on the academic performance of the students. In Kisii University College, it was a greater challenge compared to Laikipia University College. This was because students recorded a higher weighted mean of above 3.0 (3.4) compared to Laikipia university college which recorded to a weighted mean of 2.7 which means that accessibility to Dean of students office was a less serious challenge.

Table 16
Number of Lecturers in Kisii University College and Laikipia University College in 2011/2012 Academic Year

	KUC		LUC	
Lecturers	No.	%	No.	%
Part Time	413	88.25	208	67.97
Full Time	55	11.75	98	32.03

In the two university colleges, there were far more part time lecturers than full time lecturers (Table 16). This implied that most of the lecturers in the two university colleges were on contract. In KUC the percentage ratio of the part-time lecturers to full time lecturers was high at 88.25% and 67.97% respectively. Lecturers on part time basis tend to move from one university to another to offer their services. This made them to pay less attention to the students compared to full time lecturers. This according to Okango (2011) has led to poor performance of the university students.

Table 17
Ratio of Students to Lecturers in Kisii University College and Laikipia University College in 2011/2012

KUC	No. of Lecturers	Students	Lecturer Student ratio	LUC	No. of Lecturers	Students	Lecturer Student ratio
Part time	413	5,293	1:13	Part time	208	2,1218	1:11
Full time	55	5,293	1:96	Full time	98	2,218	1:23
Total	468	5,293	1:11	Total	306	2,218	1:07

From Table 17, it is evident that there were far more students compared to the number of full time lecturers in KUC as the ratio was one lecturer to 96 students (1:96). When the general population of lecturers is compared to the number of students there were more students. This was because the ratio was one lecturer to eleven students (1:11) (Table 17). This implied that the university still required more lecturers to cater for the deficit that is handled by the part time lecturers. In Laikipia University College, according to Table 17, the ratio of lecturers to students was better. Hence the need to employ more lecturers was not a priority. The Academic Registrars in the two university colleges agreed that Lecturers were not enough and this adversely affected students' performance and the completion of their studies.

4.0 Discussion
The purpose of this study was to assess the completion challenges facing parallel (Module II) Degree students in Egerton university constituent colleges. The findings of the study revealed that parallel degree (Module II) students faced a number of challenges ranging from financial, and welfare to accessibility to facilities and services in the university colleges. This situation impacted negatively on the completion of their studies.

4.1 Financial Challenges

According to the study, parallel Degree (Module II) students faced more financial challenges compared to regular (Module I) students and this affected their academic performance. This was because more regular degree (Module I) students received loans from Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) compared to the parallel degree students (Module II). The lather paid their own fees and did not receive financial assistance from the general public in the form of harambee and bursaries from CDF. This is because they were presumed by the general public to be hailing from rich families (Ooro, 2009). These financial challenges affected Module II students' completion rates compared to the Module I students.

The study established that more Module I students in a particular cohort would graduate compared to Module II. This was attributed to the fact that Module II students deferred studies either due to failure in some courses or financial challenges. This created a backlog of students scheduled to graduate in a particular academic year.

4.2 Students' Accessibility to Learning Resources

The rapid expansion of higher education in Kenyan public universities has had an impact on the students' access to the teaching and learning resources (Chacha, 2004). Thus students in the two university colleges in the two categories, Module I and Module II, agreed that insufficient books in the library, improper conditions of the lecture halls and inability to access the Dean of students' office for psycho-social help were serious challenges facing the students. In addition, the lecturer student ratio in Laikipia was 1:23 which was better than Kisii University College whose lecturer – student ratio was 1:96. When the ratio in the two university colleges is compared to that of private universities of 1:20 (Vice Chancellors Committee Report, 2000), it was considered inappropriate for effective teaching and learning in the university colleges. Besides, lecturers taught large classes of more than 50 students.

Thus lecturers' heavy workload, coupled with lack of books in the libraries and poor conditions of lecture halls had an adverse effect on the performance of students in the university examinations and this culminated to the deferment of their studies.

5.1 Recommendations

To minimize the challenges faced by parallel Degree (Module II) students and improve on the completion rates of their studies, concerted efforts are required from all the stakeholders in higher education sector. In the light of this, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

- The Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) should increase funds for parallel Degree (Module II) students.
- Parents, students, guardians and other stakeholders should seek for alternative funding for university Education through sponsors, CDF and welfare organizations which have not been fully utilized.
- Universities to re-examine policies on examinations and create means where students who are needy could work while studying to pay for their fees (work study programmes).
- The universities should equip libraries and provide for internet facilities to improve access to learning materials.
- The Dean of students' office should be more accessible such that students can air their grievances and receive psycho-social services.
- Universities should embrace e-learning to be able to easily access more students and reduce the problem of lecturers teaching large classes.
- The local council and administration should improve the road network and increase security to allow easy access of students and lecturers to both morning and evening classes.
- Universities should employ more qualified lecturers to improve the lecturer – student ratio.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

The researchers recommend further research on different aspects of university education and especially in the following areas:

- Challenges that public university students face in comparison to the students in private universities.
- Challenges faced by parallel Degree (Module II) students in the school based, evening and weekend modes.
- The efficiency of Module II graduates in the job market compared to module I graduates.

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Appendix 1: Analysis of Kisii University College MI and MII Students Questionnaires

	MI			MII		
Rating item No.	Σfi	Σfixi	WM	Σfi	Σfixi	WM
1. Delayed to enroll because of financial problems.	332	896	2.7	607	2,732	4.5
2. Since I enrolled for university Education family resources have been depleted.	332	1,029	3.1	607	2,307	3.8
3. I will not sit for exams if I do not complete my fees balance.	332	1,096	3.3	607	2,185	3.6
4. I am not allowed to participate in co-curricular activities because of my module of study	332	697	2.1	607	2,185	3.6
5. Insufficient books in the library hinder my ability to do comprehensive studies	332	1,394	4.2	607	2,671	4.4
6. Lecture halls are not conducive for studies	332	1,162	3.5	607	2,307	3.8
7. In most cases I am not able to access The dean of students to air my problems	332	1,096	3.3	607	2,064	3.4
8. My Lecturers are not committed enough in the teaching	332	863	2.6	607	1,457	2.4

Note: WM denotes the weighted mean.

Appendix 2: Analysis of Laikipia University MI and MII Students Questionnaires

Rating item No.	MI			MII		
	Σfi	Σfixi	WM	Σfi	Σfixi	WM
1. Delayed to enroll due to financial problems.	332	896	2.7	191	649	3.4
2. Since I enrolled for university Education family resources have been depleted.	577	566	3.2	191	879	4.6
3. I will not sit for exams if I do not complete my fees balance.	177	726	4.1	191	783	4.1
4. I am not allowed to participate in co-curricular activities because of my module of study	177	602	3.4	191	783	4.1
5. Insufficient books in the library hinder my ability to do comprehensive studies	177	602	3.4	191	707	3.7
6. Lecture halls are not conducive for studies	177	584	3.3	191	688	3.6
7. In most cases I am not able to access the dean of students to air my problems	177	478	2.7	191	497	2.6
8. My Lecturers are not committed enough in the teaching	177	584	3.3	191	5.6	2.7

Note: WM denotes the weighted mean.

Appendix 3: Analysis of Kisii and Laikipia University College Lecturers' Questionnaire

Rating item No.	KUC			LUC		
	Σfi	Σfixi	WM	Σfi	Σfixi	WM
1. Module II students attend all Lectures	15	47	3.1	25	70	2.8
2. Module II students attend all Lectures on time	15	42	2.8	25	68	2.7
3. Module II students have easy access to the morning Lectures	15	35	2.3	25	85	3.4
4. Module II students have easy access to the evening Lectures	15	44	2.9	25	63	2.5
5. Module II students complete their assignments on time	15	39	2.6	25	58	2.3
6. Module II students have easy access to the Laboratory and lecture Halls	15	39	2.6	25	63	2.5
7. Module II students have easy access to facilities Such as the College Buses and Library	15	45	3.0	25	68	2.7
8. All Module II students take the final examination at the end of the semester	15	44	2.9	25	103	4.1
9. Module II students pass the examinations well	15	44	2.9	25	68	2.7

Note: WM denotes the weighted mean.

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