

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

**ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN EAST  
AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF KISII COUNTY IN KENYA (2003-2013)**

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS IN  
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## DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my family who believed in me and has always supported me in their own special way. Thank you and God bless you.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I highly appreciate the contribution and support received by various individuals towards the successful completion of this project. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor Dr. Martin Ouma for his academic guidance and the value that he gave my study. I acknowledge the encouragement and inspiration of my family, relatives and friends who supported me in their own special way.

## **ABSTRACT**

Kenyan government has been devoted to providing primary education since independence. In 2003, the government launched the free primary education to honor its election pledge and strengthen the education system. All payments were abolished and the government committed itself to providing all necessary resources and meet expenses. After inception, about 1.4 million children were admitted in public primary schools. This increased enrollment resulting to various challenges which include limited physical facilities, congested classrooms and shortage of teachers. This study hence aims at assessing the impact of Free Primary Education (FPE) in Kisii County. The study will adopt a descriptive survey design. Stratified random sampling will be used to select the subjects for the study who comprise of Head teachers, teachers, Board Members, Committee Members and pupils from selected public primary schools in Kisii County.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>FPE</b>	–	Free Primary Education
<b>KANU</b>	–	Kenya African National Union
<b>MDGs</b>	–	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MOE</b>	–	Ministry of Education
<b>UN</b>	–	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	–	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>USAID</b>	–	United States Agency for Development

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Education is a critical element in every person's life and the community as well. It is the backbone of development as it is key to improving per capita income, foster economic growth, sustaining democracies and improving health. It is a vital instrument in breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering people. It raises productivity, output and innovation hence contributing to poverty reduction and enhance economic growth. For many families, primary education is the first step in empowering and enabling their children to take control of their lives and uplift their status. This chapter provides an analysis of the study's: background, problem statement and objectives with a comprehensive literature review on implementing free primary education in Kenya as well adopt a suitable theoretical framework to conceptualize the entire study. Additionally, this chapter will justify the applicability of this study and research methodology utilized.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Free Primary Education dates back to the year 2000 at the United Nations (UN) Summit in New York. This was a special summit as over 189 countries were represented at the UN summit by top leadership. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted as the globe's greatest promise to eradicate poverty and human deficiency at unparalleled rates through joint undertakings. There has been a deliberate systematic focus to finance, implement and monitor the MDGs. They were developed when Kofi Annan was the United Nations Secretary General with the objective of beginning a new millennium with a positive mind frame, energized and mobilized to solve world's problems.

Kofi Annan ensured that the Millennium Assembly, produces a coherent Declaration and he produced a draft document for assessment by all UN members and human public by appointing his senior advisor John Ruggie to prepare an ideal draft document in accordance with the UN Conference and Summit declarations of which all UN members states would commit to.<sup>1</sup>

The strategy was that the document's revision would be the Declaration's basis. On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2000, Koffi Annan, the then UN Secretary General launched "*We the Peoples: The Role of The United Nations in The 21<sup>st</sup> Century*," a detailed book outlining UN agenda for the century. After thorough, comprehensive deliberations at the UN Summit, the Millennium Declaration became the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and was adopted as a common framework for international development.<sup>2</sup> The eight Millennium Development Goals adopted were; improving maternal health, eradication of extreme hunger and poverty, attaining universal basic education, reducing child mortality rates, environmental sustainability, advancing gender equality and empower women, combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other communicable diseases and creating a global partnership for development.

The second MDG involved instituting universal primary education before 2015. All children were to be enrolled in schools equally and be eligible to complete a full course of education at the primary level. Education was identified as a paramount element in meeting all other Millennium Development Goals. Since Kenya gained self-rule in 1963, subsequent governments made efforts to provide universal primary education and many strategies have been drafted to attain ultimate Education for All.

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<sup>1</sup>Annan, K. A. *We the Peoples, The Role of The United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: United Nations Department of Public Information.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

As one of the strategies to accomplish this objective, successive governments attempted to implement the Free Primary Education policy. The first initiative was made in 1974 when president Jomo Kenyatta, introduced a Free Primary Education policy.

This policy, however, covered Grade One to Grade Four only.<sup>3</sup> The second attempt came in 1979 under president Moi's rule and covered the whole primary school cycle, unlike the previous initiative. However, both attempts were not successful due to lack of enough funds and poor implementation. Eventually, Kenya's third president, Mwai Kibaki was able to successfully implement the Free Primary Education policy from 2003, though there were several challenges. Kisii County which forms the case for this study has interesting facts in regards to its demographic characteristics.

Data obtained from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reveal that Kisii has a big children population as 0-14 year olds constitute 45% of the inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> 55% of Kisii dwellers have only primary level education. Bonchari and Kitutu Chache North constituencies have the highest and equal number of inhabitants with primary education at 60%.<sup>5</sup> While 17% of the county's residents lack formal education with Bonchari constituency having the highest share at 21%.<sup>6</sup> This background forms the basis upon which this research is premised to understand access to education and implementation of education policies in the County.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Free Primary Education (FPE) was initiated in Kenya in 2003 by the NARC government in line with achieving MDG number two. Despite governmental and non-

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<sup>3</sup> NS, Bogonko .(1992). *Reflections on Education in East Africa*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press Nairobi.

<sup>4</sup>KNBS .(2013). *Exploring Kenya's Inequality: Kisii County*. Nairobi: KeNBS Publication

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

governmental efforts towards FPE implementation in Kenya, disparities continue to exist particularly in rural public primary schools with regard to enrollment and educational achievement compared to urban public primary schools. When the government of Kenya declared FPE, there was a sharp influx of pupils into public primary schools with enrollment soaring to exorbitant numbers.

However, there were numerous obstacles regarding admissions, implementation, accessibility, functioning and administration associated with this initiative. Also, the infrastructure could not accommodate the large numbers of pupils. All key players including teachers and pupils were affected in one way or another. This, therefore, resulted in demand for more resources, both material, and human, to sustain the policy. The rural primary schools were confronted with myriad of implementation problems stemming from retention and effective sustainability of the initiative. This study thus aims to assess various impacts of FPE in Kisii County and the challenges to the achievements of Free Primary Education in the county.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To assess the impact of free primary education in Kisii County.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- i. To investigate the achievements of FPE in Kisii County.
- ii. To examine the challenges facing FPE in Kisii County.
- iii. To examine the strategies to mitigate challenges facing FPE in Kisii County.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study is guided by these research questions:

- I. What are the challenges of implementing FPE in Kisii County?
- II. What are the achievements of FPE in Kisii County?
- III. What are the strategies to mitigate challenges facing FPE in Kisii County?

### **1.5 Justification of the study**

This study will help the country formulate better educational policies that will improve the current status of FPE to ensure its future success. This research will also help the general public become enlightened about the impact, challenges and the achievements of FPE in Kisii County. The study will also contribute knowledge in academia and will benefit other researchers, interested in exploring further empirical research on impacts of the Free Primary Education policy. Additionally, this study will aim to provide answers to the questions of the various challenges and achievements of FPE policy in Kisii County. The significance of this study is to establish whether the FPE policy has resulted into positive or negative impacts in Kisii County.

### **1.6 Literature Review**

#### **1.6.0 Introduction**

Literature review utilizes Primary data supplemented by secondary data available from various sources. It is organized into three sections. The proceeding sections will focus on an overview of the impact of FPE, the challenges facing FPE and the analysis of the achievements of FPE in Kisii County.

#### **1.6.1 The Impact of Free Primary Education in Kisii County**

Internationally, the right to education is a basic human right covered in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Additionally, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) envisioned attainment of universal primary education as a matter of

priority.<sup>7</sup> The goal number adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Headquarters was to make efforts geared towards achieving global access to primary education prior to the year 2015. Sub-Saharan Africa records the best primary education improvement since establishing MDGs. The region achieved a 20 % gain in enrolment rate between 2000 and 2015, in contrast to 8 % between 1990 and 2000.<sup>8</sup>

It is on this basis that the NARC government in 2003 enacted the Free Primary Education policy in Kenya. Existing literature demonstrate that failure of prior attempts to entrench UPE in developing states resulted from obstacles of: declining education quality, supply-driven policies and unclear mechanisms.<sup>9</sup> Developing countries like: Sri Lanka, Chile, Singapore and Cuba, have successfully instituted universal primary education<sup>10</sup> while many African states are yet to do this. Millions of children who complete primary school have low reading, numeracy and writing skills due to prevailing poor education quality. For instance, in Mozambique, direct costs of learning materials is the main hindrance for school enrollment and retention; followed in succession by opportunity costs, poverty and low value attached to education.

The Free Primary Education was introduced in Kenya to give every Kenyan the chance to get primary education irrespective of their socio-economic background. This was achieved through instituting an extensive quality education accessible and relevant to all learners in Kenya. The Kenyan government has since been heavily investing in the primary education sector. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has some

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<sup>7</sup>UN. (2015). *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*. New York. UN publication

<sup>8</sup>Ibid

<sup>9</sup>Sifuna et al., (2009) A Comparative Analysis of Universal Primary Education Policy in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, Vol.12 No.1

<sup>10</sup>Wambui,J.(2013). *Factors Affecting the Implementation of Free Primary Education in Rural Primary Schools: A Case Study of Kikuyu Division, Kiambu County, Kenya*. Nairobi: UoN Press



key concerns on: access, efficiency, quality, equity and relevance.<sup>11</sup> Despite political goodwill to attainment of FPE, expensive costs and sharp increases in primary school pupils have delayed attainment. Psachalopoulos et al. reiterates that, sufficient schools supply provides an opportunity for FPE, but a wide array of other factors affect enrolments and retention.<sup>12</sup> They are geographical distribution of schools, parent's educational levels, private costs of education, pupils' economic and cultural backgrounds.

Immediately after the declaration of FPE by the government in 2003, there was an unexpected increase in pupil enrolment in public primary schools across Kenya including the County of Kisii. Since no additional infrastructure was put in place to cater for the extra pupils, the available were not sufficient to hold the population. As a result, classrooms in Kisii County swelled to capacity and became congested. New problems rose due to poor pre-planning and implementation of the policy. There was a shortage of furniture, lack of an adequate number of toilets, insufficient textbooks, stationery, physical space, play equipment among others all which undermine the quality standard of education.

The Free Primary Education was a relief of expenditure for parents. Before the policy was introduced, parents used to pay a lot of money for tuition and this was always a major cost in their budget. Pupils would be chased from schools due to unpaid tuition, and to some extent, this was always a headache for parents. However, with the introduction of the FPE, parents could breathe a sigh of relief since a huge burden had

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<sup>11</sup>Eshiwani, G.S, (1993). *Education in Kenya since Independence*. Nairobi: East African Education Publishers

<sup>12</sup>Psacharopoulos, G.(1973). *Returns to Education: An International Comparison*. Amsterdam: GHT Press

been lifted off their pockets. <sup>13</sup>According to MoEST, the government contributed approximately 80% of the total cost of primary education while the parents contributed about 20%.<sup>14</sup>

### **1.7 Challenges Facing Free Primary Education**

Globally, the implementation of free primary education has experienced a myriad of challenges which are both socio-economic and political in character. While there are variations in differences among countries in regards to experience of implementing FPE, several similarities are noted for instance, direct cost of learning materials and infrastructure for supporting effective implementation are common occurrence in all developing countries. Global primary challenge facing Free Primary education implementation is financing. Much reliance on donor funding among most of developing countries to fund FPE have complicated successful implementation particularly when donors pull out due to political considerations as was the case in Mozambique.<sup>15</sup>

Low levels of retention and completion of primary education particularly in Sub-Saharan are cited as universal challenges facing the implementation of FPE. A study carried out in Uganda, established that gender disparities were systemic challenges confronting successful implementation of FPE in the country particularly in rural areas.<sup>16</sup> A global household data from 42 different states indicate that children in rural places are twice likely not to be school as those in urbanized areas.<sup>17</sup>As much as the

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<sup>13</sup>MOEST. (2005).*Public expenditure review and medium term expenditure framework 2005/06—2007/08: Delivering the economic recovery strategy priorities*. Nairobi: MOEST, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup>Op cit

<sup>16</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2011) *Financing Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Meeting the Challenges of Expansion, Equity and Quality*. UNESCO Institute for Statistics: Canada.

<sup>17</sup>Avenstrup, R., Liang X. and Nellemann, S. (2004). *Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Uganda: Universal Primary Education and Poverty Reduction: A Casestudy from Reducing Poverty- What Works, What Doesn't and Why*. Washington, DC: World Bank

introduction of the FPE was a good thing to the pupils, parents, and the country in general, it was accompanied by many challenges.<sup>18</sup> These challenges arose in the implementation and sustainability of the policy due to poor planning and preparation. The government failed to make sufficient arrangements to hire additional teachers to manage the influx of pupils into schools, prior to declaration of Free Primary Education. Recommended maximum teacher-pupil ratio by the ministry of education is 1:40.

However, after inaugurating free primary level education, the ratio rose to 1:100.<sup>19</sup> This unexpected increment of pupils disoriented the already existing inadequate number of teachers in public primary schools. The few teachers found it overwhelming coping with the huge population. Assignments given to pupils were insufficient, since marking and checking became an uphill task. The FPE also faced the challenge of lack of proper management in schools. According to Ngaronga, an efficient and effective manager must be equipped with human, conceptual and technical skills to be a good organizer.<sup>20</sup> This entails the understanding of the specific procedures and techniques required to execute mandates in the process of implementing free primary education on a daily basis.

The head teachers and other senior teachers lacked required necessary skills or the experience needed to handle such a large number of pupils. In addition, they did not get any training on how to handle the crisis. Teachers need continuous professional training and head teachers need to be equipped with high standards of managerial skills in order to competently handle changes in education. A scholar, Orora argues

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<sup>18</sup>UNESCO, (2005). *Challenges of Implementing Free Primary Education in Kenya: Assessment Report*, Kenya Nairobi: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology

<sup>19</sup>Okwach, A. and George, O. (1997). *Efficiency of of Primary Education in Kenya: Situational Analysis and Implications for Educational Reform*. Nairobi: Institute of Policy Analysis and Research.

<sup>20</sup>Ngaronga, M. (2001). *PTE Revision Education Nairobi*: East African Publishers.

that, an agent of change is the individual who influences a proposed change and its implementation in a direction desirable to beneficiaries.<sup>21</sup> School managers are given the responsibility of interpreting educational policies and the curriculum to all stakeholders, sourcing and managing resources prudently for efficient implementation of education programs and policies.

According to a study undertaken by UNICEF and World Bank, pupil transfers from public to private schools and from public to public schools have been a challenge. Parents cite that, the move is in search of quality education and schools with better managerial skills. Transfer to private schools is relatively high due to the perception that instituting free primary education lowered education standards in government primary schools.<sup>22</sup> Some pupils who enrolled in a certain school may have missed out a certain period of a term hence likely to find various topics had already been taught in their destined schools. As a result, gave the remedial teaching, but were hampered by large work load as a result of overcrowded classes.<sup>23</sup>

Corruption has been a huge challenge in the implementation of the FPE in Kisii County. There are some head teachers and other officials from the Ministry of Education involved in embezzlement of school funds. According to UNESCO, some government officials are unethical and they misallocate and mismanage resources. For example, the sponsor funds that are meant to benefit pupils from low-income families are misused, causing the pupils to miss out the opportunity to attend schools. Senior officials from the ministry of education are guilty of protecting corrupt head teachers and Parents Teachers Association members (PTAs), as they normally collude to

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<sup>21</sup>Otach, O. (2008). *Abolishing School Fees in Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique*. Random House Inc.

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF and World Bank, Africa Human Development Series. *Development Practice in Education*, World Bank Publications, 2009.

<sup>23</sup>Eldah, N et al, (2005). *Primary Education in Kenya, Access and Policy Implications*, Nairobi: Institute of Policy Analysis and Research.

benefit themselves. Different internal audit reports plus complaints from teachers and parents to the ministry against some heads of certain schools and PTAs have landed on deaf ears. Many officials argue that paying teachers incentives had caused increased theft by heads of schools since they now handle large sums of money like never before.<sup>24</sup>The teaching faculty should have incentives to motivate them create a conducive environment for learning to thrive.

Many teachers feel that, they do not get what they deserve regarding their compensation. They argue that their salaries are not enough compared to the amount of work they do. The situation gets worse when the government delays sending funds required for implementing free primary education. Inadequate learning and teaching materials is observed as a major challenge as well. According to OXFAM, under the free primary education, every child is entitled to free writing materials like exercise books, pencils, rubbers, textbooks among others.<sup>25</sup> However, it was observed that five pupils were sharing a textbook hence limiting accessibility. This is a problem since pupils cannot do extra studies or homework at home, or are forced to do so in turns. There is also the issue of inadequate physical facilities.

Due to the large influx of pupils, infrastructure was always going to be a problem. It was observed that, most schools did not have enough classrooms hence led to high congestion. Alternatives had to be improvised like learning under trees or poorly constructed classrooms put up to accommodate the pupils. Toilets were not enough to sustain the numbers and water was also a challenge, leading to low hygiene. Furniture was also insufficient to cater for all the numbers and some pupils sat on the floor in order to learn.

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<sup>24</sup>UNESCO, (2005). *Challenges of Implementing Free Primary Education in Kenya*: Assessment Report, Kenya Nairobi: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology.

<sup>25</sup>OXFAM, (2003): *Kenya : one year on*. OXFAM Press Release.Nairobi: Oxford University Press.

## **1.8 Achievements of the Free Primary Education in Kisii County**

When the government introduced the Free Primary Education, its objective was to ensure that every child gets an opportunity to go to school. Many pupils had dropped out or not gone to school at all since they could not afford to pay school fees. Many others were always in and out of school due to fee balances, and some even had to take up to a whole year out of school to look for school fees. It was an issue that had exuberated poverty and illiteracy in the nation and especially among the low income earners.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the government's first achievement was the betterment in primary enrolment. The GER rose to 104% in 2003 from 92% in 2002 of the school age populace.<sup>27</sup> The enrolment of girls increased by 17 while boys increased by 18%. In fact, some of the pupils enrolling were adults. In addition, secondary school enrolment rates have also increased as a result of the policy. Therefore, the government attained the millennium development goal of universal primary education.

There has been provision of educational resources and instructional materials such as textbooks even at the lowest level. UNESCO identifies the supply of instructional materials as one of the key accomplishment of FPE program.<sup>28</sup> This has, therefore, contributed greatly to reducing the cost burden on parents, hence pupils even from the very interior rural areas have access to such materials. Though the materials are not sufficient, they are more available than before the introduction of FPE. The materials help pupils to study better and improve the general standard of education quality.

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<sup>26</sup>Muyanga, M. et al (2010). *Free Primary Education in Kenya: An Impact Evaluation Using Propensity Score Methods. Poverty & Economic Policy*, Nairobi: Macmillan Press

<sup>27</sup>GoK, (2007). *Education Sector Report*. Nairobi: Government Printer

<sup>28</sup>UNESCO, (2005). *Challenges of Implementing Free Primary Education in Kenya: Assessment Report*, Kenya Nairobi: Ministry of Education, Science & Technology. Government printer

### **1.9 Gaps in the Literature**

From the above literature review, the study has established that there is no comprehensive research on the subject of analysis of the impact, challenges, and achievements of the free primary education in Kisii County. This project will therefore investigate the impact of free primary education and examine the challenges that have been experienced at large since its introduction. The current literature also does not reveal the achievements and strides made in the county as a result of the Free Primary Education policy. Additionally, the study has revealed that disparities continue to exist in regards to gender and retention of pupils in schools. The need to reaffirm affirmative action in-regards to accessibility of FPE in rural areas is not factored in many instances particularly in Kisii County.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

In this study, contingency theory has a prominent place. Contingency theory states that an organization's basic problem is attaining rationality in this unpredictable world. Organizations are formed to achieve certain objectives, and are faced with technologies and different levels of uncertainties limiting their capacities to plan and implement actions to achieve specified desired objectives. According to James Thompson, the theory of contingency is based on principles concerned with organizations as open systems basically interdependent with environments they have limited control on yet should accomplish their objectives irrespective of changing circumstances.

The organization is charged with three levels of roles namely the technical level which is responsible for attaining processing tasks; managerial level responsible for controlling and servicing the technical level and the institutional level that is supposed

to relate the organization to the community and other institutions. <sup>29</sup>Thompson's hypothesis is that to achieve rationality and self-control, an organization should strive to protect the technical unit from contextual uncertainties through separating the resource acquisition and output disposal functions from the technical unit. Thus, there is greater uncertainty at the managerial and institutional levels since they are subject to the environment which they have little control over. The managerial level is on the other hand left to reconcile both the technical and the outside environment.

Contingency theory is important to this study as it explains the school as an organization with an open system that interacts with its environment which in this case is the introduction of free primary education. <sup>30</sup> The school which is the organization must therefore deal with its internal strategies of adaptation and adjustment as well as the external strategies or modes of interaction in order to manage the uncertainties and achieve its objectives. The requirement to import the input from the environment and to export the output denotes an interdependent relationship between the school and its environment. The interaction between the school and the environment is the process while the indicators are the impacts that result from the environment. The input here are the pupils enrolling in school because of introducing free primary education and the variables are the challenges that result from the engendering of free primary education. The output is the impact of free primary education on the pupils who for the first time get a life time opportunity to attend school and how this has affected and transformed their lives.

The theory of contingency has been challenged by critiques that its concepts are presented at a very abstract level and further criticizes that, uncertainty which is the

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<sup>29</sup>Simon, H.A.(1945). *Administrative Behavior*. New York: Macmillan.

<sup>30</sup>Smith, F. (2005). *Philosophy and Methodology of the Social Sciences*. New York: Routledge



main concept of the theory is vague. The theory is also assumed to apply to all organizations. Despite these limitations, Thompson's classic of *Organizations in Action* is rightly regarded as an influential and foundational work.<sup>31</sup> In addition, Pfeffer and Salancik's resource dependence theory builds on the insights of Thompson that, organizational behavior can be studied based on the context of the organization in question since organizations are presumed to be adaptive therefore it is justified to characterize the environment faced to explain undertaking and results of the organization. Resource dependence theory argues that an organization's patterns of dependence on resources from the environment causes external constraints and controls. Thus, the theory explains patterns of organizational behavior through references to environmental dependence.

## **1.11 Research Methodology**

### **1.11.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the study's methodological approach covering the conceptual framework, research design, study area, target population, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection instruments; their validity and reliability, procedures for data collection and analysis of data methods.

### **1.11.2 Research Design**

Research design is a road map guide of how research itself was conducted. It is a structure and plan of the study's investigation purposed to obtain answers to the research questions. The research design adopted is one which analyses a unit comprehensively and has a way of organizing data and studies an issue as a whole. In this study, the research design is descriptive.

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<sup>31</sup>Thompson, J.D, (1967). *Organizations in Action*. New York: McGraw Hill.

### **1.11.3 Data Sources**

The research data was derived from primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data was drawn from the interactive interviews and administration of the questionnaires to, pupils, teachers, parents and staff from the county government, civil societies, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in the education system. Secondary data was sourced from a collection and review of published and unpublished materials, periodicals, academic papers and journals.

### **1.11.4 Target Population**

Target population refers to a specific section of the population from which information will be availed. The available population for this research was the entire group of individuals who provided information from which generalizations and conclusions were drawn<sup>32</sup>. The sample population for this study composed of the pupils, teachers and head teachers from public primary schools, staff from non-governmental organizations, members of school management boards and school committees and the County Education Officers and the Quality Assurance Officers (QAOs).

### **1.11.5 Sampling Technique**

Purposive multi-stage sampling was employed in this study. Simple random sampling was then used to identify the respondents. In simple random sampling, each observation in the data had an equal chance of selection and once selected it was not selected again. The number of public primary schools which participated was randomly chosen and two teachers male and female were selected from the selected public primary schools. Eight head teachers were picked randomly from the each of

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<sup>32</sup>Waterhouse J, MUIR Cs, Correa, P. J (eds.) Cancer Incident in Five Continents. Lyon, IARC, 1976 ( Vol. 3, pl 456)

the public primary schools selected. Six schools board members and six school committee members were also picked randomly from the selected public primary schools for interview process. Six pupils from the selected public primary schools and three boys and three girls were also picked as respondents during the interview.

**Table 1.1 Sample size**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Number</b>
Head teachers	8
Teachers	2
Pupils	6
Board Members	6
Committee Members	6

Source: Field Data 2017

The use of simple random sampling method was applied due to the fact that it gives equal chances for selection of every element of the population hence limiting the level of biasness.

#### **1.12.6 Data Collection Instruments**

This study gathered quantitative data using self-administered questionnaires and interview schedules using the two as the research instruments. A questionnaire is a tool that is used to collect information that allows gauging for or against specific view points. It has the advantage of collecting large data reasonably quickly and is cheap. It also had open ended questions that allowed the respondents to give their opinion

and suggestions. In person oral interviews were done for the population category of the education officers.

#### **1.11.7 Research Procedures**

The questionnaires set by the researcher were first of all edited to correct any errors that may have affected the quality of responses given. They were then pre-tested on seven respondents picked randomly from the entire sample to ascertain their validity. Piloting helped in identifying any weaknesses and establishing, if the questionnaires were clear enough to respondents in order for them to respond appropriately. As Mugenda and Mugenda argue that, even the most carefully constructed instrument cannot guarantee to obtain one hundred percent validity.<sup>33</sup> For this reason piloting study was undertaken.

This pretesting was tried to evaluate the efficacy of the whole process of data collection. The estimated time of completing the questionnaire was twenty five minutes each, while face to face interviews took an average of fifteen minutes. The data collection instrument was evaluated for content validity to ensure that questions were suitable in obtaining required data. The study employed the test re test method to establish reliability of data collection instruments. Questionnaires were administered to identify respondent of pilot study 2<sup>nd</sup> time after 2 weeks. Correlations between pre-test and post test scores were measured.

#### **1.11.8 Data Analysis Methods**

The researcher made a follow-up of questionnaires that required further clarification. Coding followed thereafter to translate question responses into specific categories. Descriptive statistical analyses were done on the raw data. This included the

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<sup>33</sup>Mugenda, O. &Mugenda, A. (2003).*Research methods, quantitative and Qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: Act Press.

measurement of central tendencies (the mean), measures of variables (standard deviation) and measures of relative frequencies.

#### **1.11.9 Ethical Considerations**

In carrying out the study, respondent's privacy was greatly ensured. They were made aware of the fact that information they provided was for academic uses only. Consent from respondent was sought before the decision of the respondents to participate in the study. The respondents had a choice on whether to indicate their name or not.

#### **1.11.10 Chapter Outline**

Chapter one comprises of introduction and background to the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, study justification, literature review, literature gaps, theoretical framework, research methodology and chapter outline. Chapter two assessed the impact of Free Primary Education in Kisii County. Chapter three focused on investigating the achievements of FPE in Kisii County. Chapter four aimed at examining the challenges facing FPE in Kisii County while the Last Chapter, deals with summaries, conclusions and the recommendations.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN KISII**  
**COUNTY**

**2.0 Introduction**

This chapter investigates some of the notable achievements realized by the implementation of free Primary education (FPE) in Kisii County. The objective of this chapter is to establish some of the fundamental milestones scored by the government of Kenya towards realization of MDGs of achieving Universal Free Primary education and how that has been realized in Kisii County. This Chapter will essentially investigate if both boys and girls have been enrolled in schools equally and have been able to finish full course primary education in the County. To measure the policy achievement goal, this chapter will measure primary school enrolment, class progression up to secondary school enrolment in the County.

**2.1 Impact Evaluation of the Implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE)**

The implementation of FPE by the NARC government in January 2003 followed their 2002 Political Election promise in their Manifesto. It entailed providing chances to children previously out of primary school because of high schooling costs. As expected where a significant number of students were not in school responses were overwhelming.<sup>34</sup> In many schools, head teachers had many children to enroll beyond their respective school's capacity.

Findings drawn from this study show that majority of respondents (70%) believed that since its inception in 2003 by the NARC Government-(Kibaki regime), the FPE has

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<sup>34</sup>GoK. (2003). *Report of the Task Force on Implementation of Free Primary Education*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.

realized some notable achievements. Some of the achievement that respondents to this research highlighted included increased enrolment of primary school going children in the County. This was attributable to reduced school fees which increased primary school accessibility.

Some 10 % of the respondents showed that free primary Education in the county increased their income by reducing their expenditure burden. Whereas they used to pay school fees prior to its introduction in 2003, many school heads reported that after its introduction (FPE) parents were now more able to send more of their children to primary school. A significant 15 % of the respondents indicated that FPE brought the rapid growth in the private school sector since many parents took away their children from public schools and enrolled them in private ones'. When asked to point out the difference in the quality of education both at the county and national level, majority of the respondents (60%) opined that the quality of education had significantly improved with more people acquiring literacy skills than before. One of the respondents remarked that;

*“Free primary education has aroused up the national consciousness concerning the value of education with even old ‘Wazees’ like Maruge (Oldest students reported by Guinness World records) raising to the occasion and even pursue education. This is what a responsible government does to its citizen. Educating them”*

Limited facilities and space forced school heads to turn away several children. Disappointed parents kept on searching for schools that could accept their children. The main goal of FPE was to attain education as a basic right of all children as provided for in the 2001 Children’s Act.<sup>35</sup> At the beginning of the program in 2003,

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<sup>35</sup>GoK. (2004). *National Action Plan on Education for All 2003-2015*. Nairobi: Government Printers

the government's key undertaking was availing public primary schools fundamental teaching and learning materials for instance chalk, exercise books and textbooks and doing away with levies, charges and fees that for long ensured that several children and learners were out of school.

The immediate outcome of the FPE was upsurge in primary level school enrolment. The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) increased from 92 % in 2002 to 104 % in 2003 of schooling populace.<sup>36</sup> Girls enrolment rose from 3 million in 2002 to 3.5 million in 2003, while boys enrolment rose 3.1 to 3.7 million.<sup>37</sup> By 2006, primary schools total enrolment was 7.63 million up from a previous 7.59 million in 2005.<sup>38</sup> Some of enrolled students were adults.

These increased enrolment resulted to 55% of Kisii County residents having primary school level education only with two constituencies of Kitutu Chache North and Bonchari, having the highest share of residents with primary only at 60% each. These were some of the notable national achievements which were realized by the government upon implementing the free Primary Education.

To realize some notable achievements of FPE in Kisii County, a dichotomous variable measuring if a child of school going age attended school or not is key in verifying achievements of FPE in the county and competition rates. On average, a child basically joins class one in primary school at six years old and is expected to leave at class eight (8) aged 13. Upon this background, this chapter will analyze how general enrolment was upon the implementation of FPE and how the enrolment is now 14

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<sup>36</sup>Muyanga, M et al.(2009). *Free Primary Education in Kenya. An Impact Evaluation Using Propensity Score Methods*. Nairobi. Economia Press

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Ibid



years later in Kisii County. This will definitely inform whether implementation of FPE has been successful in Kisii County.

Statistics obtained from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology indicate that by the year 2004, exactly one year after the implementation of FPE, Kisii County recorded enrolment of 161, 217 Boys and 159, 865 Girls in primary schools.<sup>39</sup> In the same year, 22,266 and 21,503 Boys and Girls respectively joined class one in 2003 in Kisii County.<sup>40</sup> The high enrolment was realized due to cutting of education cost by the government and the parents were encouraged to take their children in primary schools. The level of completion of these children of primary education in Kisii is of fundamental significance to this study.

## **2.2 Rate of Primary School Completion in Kisii County**

From the data available in government reports, by the year 2016, the number of class eight (8) children completing primary education indicated that 10,889 Boys and 11,138 Girls were enrolled in class eight.<sup>41</sup> The above can be attributed to ability of parents to contribute financially towards sustaining children in schools in Kisii. There is a general consensus that high enrolment of pupils in primary schools and completion is due to the ability of parents to invest in education and the high subsidized cost of education by the government.

At primary school level, the General Enrolment Rate (GER) has continuously recorded over 100% in the period from 2003 to 2017. The GER greater than 100% indicates existence of over-age and under-age children enrolled in primary schools in Kisii County just as it is generally countrywide. The GER decreased by 4.2 % between

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<sup>39</sup>GoK/UNICEF.(2014). *Basic Education Statistical Booklet*. Nairobi. Government Printer

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

2009 and 2014 thus a 3.9% decline.<sup>42</sup> Although there was decreased GER for that period, the general GER county-wide increased.

### **2.3 Level of Accessibility to Education in Kisii County**

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization indicate that the greatest achievement in primary education accessibility is the increased children school enrolment numbers from 5.9 million in 2002 up to 8.6 million in 2010.<sup>43</sup> The report further highlights that Net Enrolment Rate (NER) scaled to 92.5% in 2010 thus approximately 7.5% of the primary school going-age pupils were out of school.<sup>44</sup> There was gain in numbers of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) candidates, from 540,069 in 2002 to 704,520 in 2007 but decreased to 695,701 in 2008.<sup>45</sup>

Findings drawn from previous studies indicate that many teachers accepted that completion rates of FPE in Kisii County are higher among children from educated families. A large section of teachers felt that parents with low education levels and low income are likely to encourage their children to leave school and seek employment. Higher levels of education enrolment are linked to economic growth and higher per capita income. According to Psacharopoulos, an additional schooling year in the Sub-Sahara increases salaries by an average of 7.3 %.<sup>46</sup> This translates therefore to increased income as a result of increased completion rate of primary and secondary education.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Omae, N. S. (2012). *Influence Of Selected Factors on Pupils' Access to Primary Education In Masimba Division, Kisii County, Kenya*. Nairobi. Egerton University Press

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Psacharopoulos, G and Patrinos, H,B. (2004). *Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update*. World Bank Research Papers

## 2.4 Literacy Levels in Kisii County

Another achievement realized upon the implementation of FPE in Kisii County is reduction in illiteracy levels among the population. This is reflected by the number of people who are working for pay based on their education level attainment. Data drawn from Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KeNBS) shows that a total of 276,024 people who had finished their primary education were engaged in active paid work by 2013.<sup>47</sup>

The level of numeracy and literacy skills acquired at the primary schools can predict the level of human development in Kisii County as influenced by the implementation of FPE. Studies done internationally show that pre-primary education have long term positive contributions for the learner and for the greater society at large. Generally, primary school enrolment in Kisii County progressed with FPE program introduction while enrolment has been rising from 82 % in 2000 to 89% in 2016.<sup>48</sup>

While FPE in Kisii County has increased numbers of children enrolled in school, there is a great concern that education quality has been on a declining trend. There is little empirical evidence that these concerns are grounded in form of performances in the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education. This is partly because whenever there has been a policy for increasing access, perception is quality will decline and when attention is directed to address quality, access decreases. It has been some sort of pendulum swinging; making it difficult to highlight quality gains when access is expanded.

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<sup>47</sup>KeNBS. (2013). *Exploring Kenya's Inequality (Kisii County): pulling Apart or Pooling Together*. Nairobi. GoK printer& SID

<sup>48</sup>Olwande,J et al. (2016). *Free Primary Education in Kenya. An Impact Evaluation using Propensity Score Methods*. Michigan. Michigan University Press

Upon implementation of FPE country-wide, the quality of education has greatly declined. Images of crowded classrooms has been used to drive the point that quality has declined under FPE, and indeed many assessment tests show that pupils are not reading at required competency levels.<sup>49</sup> Many parents have shifted to private academies in such of better quality, and even poor parents living in the slums utilize private schools for the poor because they perceive them to offer better learning outcomes than free government schools. In Kisii County, the enrolment of children into private schools has been an upward trajectory which has been attributed to mass influx of children upon implementation of FPE.

It is clearly evident that increases in enrolment are linked to bigger class sizes that consequently lower KCPE outcomes. This is the reason behind many parents in the county taking their children from government schools to non-government schools. The net effect of this has been the size of the private school sector has tripled while their price for education has doubled.<sup>50</sup> If they are the same parents who usually gave a lot of external support to government schools their decision to move their children to expensive private academies indicates great preference for their children's education.

## **2.5 Impact on Private Education Sector**

The increase in the size of the private education sector is commendable as it relieves the government of the burden of increasing teacher student ratio which potentially has led to increase of the country's wage bill over the years. The county government has not been able to supplement national government's efforts with enough teaching staff

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<sup>49</sup>Oketch, M., Mutisya, M., Ngware, M. et al. (2010). *Free primary education policy and pupil school mobility in urban Kenya*. International Journal of Educational Research. Vol. 49 No. 173-183

<sup>50</sup>Bold, T., Kimenyi, S.K., Mwabu, G., Sandefur, J. (2009). *Free Primary Education in Kenya: Enrolment, Achievement and Local Accountability*. Univ. of Connecticut and Brookings Institute

a move which further solidified the cause for wealthier parents to take children to private institutions. The expansion of the private education sector is greatly attributed to implementation of FPE in the country and this can be reflected in the expansion of the same in Kisii County which currently has a total of 425 private primary schools and 49 private secondary schools.<sup>51</sup>

## **2.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has established a number of notable facts concerning the achievements realized by the County of Kisii upon the implementation of FPE since 2003. Of the established facts is that 55% of Kisii populace has primary level of education only. Two of her constituencies, i.e. Bonchari and Kitutu Chache North, have the highest share of the percentage. The increase in the number of people with at least primary education is to greater extent associated with the implementation of FPE by the Kibaki government in 2003. The scrapping of school fee made it available for the majority of residents to enroll their offspring to primary schools.

Additionally, this chapter has realized that literacy levels in the county have increased exponentially due to implementation of FPE. The quantity of paid workers who completed their primary level education in 2017 by far out-numbers the number without primary education in 2003. The number of paid workers who have finished secondary education in the county currently stands at 28 per cent according to statistics drawn from the national bureau. Nyaribari Masaba constituency owns the highest score ratings of inhabitants with secondary education level at/or above 35%. The high literacy levels achieved in the county are partly attributed to implementation of FPE and a highly subsidized secondary education.

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<sup>51</sup> KPSA. (2009). *Private Schools in Kisii County*. Available at [www. Kpsa.co.ke](http://www.Kpsa.co.ke) accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> May.2017

Further, this chapter has established that due to implementation of FPE in Kisii County, private sector has greatly expanded with emergence of a number of private primary schools which have cropped-up to supplement government efforts of accessing primary education to all as enshrined in the MDGs. Although, the increased enrolment of children in private schools is termed by parents as the best alternative for their children who need to attain quality education, the number has made private schools number to increase and expand the private sector in the county.

Finally, this chapter has also noted increased general enrolment rate (GER) among Kisii County residents upon the implementation of FPE. Upon its implementation, FPE has seen 100 per cent rate of enrolment in the county for a period of 14 years. The County has seen enrolment of both underage and overage students in primary schools.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**CHALLENGES FACING FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION**  
**IMPLEMENTATION IN KISII COUNTY**

**3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the challenges that have been confronted by policy implementers and education stakeholders during the execution of the free primary education in Kisii County. The chapter will review the constraints which the government has experienced as it rolled-out the FPE country-wide and narrow the scope to Kisii County. Further, this chapter will incorporate challenges contained in the primary data obtained from the respondents who participated in this research. The challenges will be informed by the assessment of study findings established by this research. These challenges will be analyzed in a ten year period (2003-2013) to ascertain policy short-term and long-term bottlenecks.

**3.1 Procurement challenge of instructional materials for FPE**

When asked to indicate the major challenge confronting the implementation of FPE in their County majority of the respondents identified that lack of instructional materials from the ministry of education made learning highly challenged. They indicated that FPE grants disbursements were not timely since majority of schools received the funds in second or third term; hence pupils had inadequate access to textbooks in the academics in first terms. The late disbursement of instructional materials hampered adequate preparation for national examination due to late completion of curriculum. The Ministry of education had experienced great financial cut after some of the Donors who fund the FPE withdrew their assistance following graft allegations

leveled against some of the education officials including the then Education Minister Sam Ogeri.

The procurement of instructional materials for use by both Teachers and students in Primary schools was termed as time-consuming and highly cumbersome. The procedures for procuring textbooks, chalkboards, chalk and other instructional materials were termed as bureaucratic and time-consuming. Some of the respondents recommended (40%) that the government should form centralized professional bodies at national or county levels. The teachers consumed great teaching time in meetings of selecting textbooks. Similarly, head teachers used a lot of time travelling to buy books at the expense of running the schools or teaching. The recommendation for establishing professional bodies was meant to ensure effective and timely book selection and procurement.

### **3.2 Pupil Text Book Ratio (PTR) Challenge**

Another challenge confronting successful implementation of FPE was the very low Pupil Text Book Ratio (PTR) in schools. When asked to inform this research some of the problems facing the implementation of FPE some respondents remarked that one of the problems stated was it is problematic to share textbooks particularly when giving homework. Teachers and pupils suggested that the government should provide one text book per child for all study subjects.

### **3.3 Challenge of Shortage of Primary Schools Teachers**

Another cited challenge that had a great non-positive effect in delivery of Free Primary Education was the Teacher-Pupil Ratio in primary schools. This research learnt that upon the implementation of FPE, Teachers began handling classes with a population numbers exceeding the recommended levels. Some of the Teachers



remarked that they used to teach classes with 90, 70 or in some instances 100 pupils which made service delivery quite ineffective and cumbersome. In some schools pupils never got the attention they required and their interaction was quite minimal. Majority of teachers who responded to this study admitted that Teacher-pupil interactions are low hence teachers move ahead with the bright pupils while slow learners are left behind.

Minus individualized attention, slow learners perform poorly. Teachers agreed that they are not able to provide individualized attention to pupils and hence impossible to aid slow learners or special needs students. The shortage of primary schools teachers is greatly attributable to the termination of new hiring of teachers by the Government citing ballooning wage bill. The government of Kenya suspended recruitment of new P1 Teachers into labor market, a condition which worsened the delivery of education services given the very high Gross Enrolment Rates which had been registered in primary schools. Current Classroom teacher-student ratio has surged from 1:40 pupils to 1:60-90 pupils per class.<sup>52</sup>

### **3.4 Challenge of Mass Transfer of Children from public to Private Schools**

According to a study by Chuck, primary education quality has decreased with the introduction of FPE. With the introduction of FPE in Kenya most parents shifted children from government to non-public schools because of performance in public schools.<sup>53</sup> This study established that schools performance prior to Free Primary Education from 2003 was average.<sup>54</sup> 70% of the interviewees noted that majority of the schools recorded average performance before institutionalization of the free

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<sup>52</sup>Ogola, F.O. (2015). *Free Primary Education in Kenya: Addressing the Challenges*. Addis Ababa: OSSEREA

<sup>53</sup>Chuck, A. (2009). *The effects of Free Primary Education in Quality of Education in Nairobi Public Schools*. Cambridge: Pinpoint Publishers

<sup>54</sup>Ibid

Primary Education, 25% agreed that performance was good and 5% agreed that the performance was poor.

After embracing free primary education performances in public schools sharply deteriorated, 67% of respondents strongly agreed to this. 3% indicated that the performance was good; while 30% of the respondents said that they perform averagely. This is the basis upon which many parents opted to transfer their children to non-government primary schools in anticipation that in the later they were to acquire quality and personalized education.

Most of the Head teachers confirmed that most parents opted to transfer their children to private schools due to decline of teacher-student ratio. This was explained by some Head Teachers. Particularly one of the school Head from a school in Kisii County who responded to a questionnaire in this study remarked; *“The teachers have been over tasked with handling of high number of pupils in a class and therefore their productivity in as much as personalized offering of education is concerned is highly challenged. Some teachers are handling classes with more than 100 pupils which makes it hard for teachers to monitor each and every pupils’ performance. From this concern most parents with school-going children in public schools have transferred them to private institutions citing quality issues”*.

Whereas there is no harm in transferring pupils from one school to another, the time wasted for the student while transferring and integrating into the new study environment was highly costly and would later manifest in final examinations. Some of the students had to repeat classes once they were transferred to new schools particularly those who transferred to private schools. Some of the private schools were also alleged to aid pupils with poor academic records to pass their examinations

and this was a mal-practice which was transferred all through the education system since it amounted to cheating.

### **3.5 Financial Challenge Facing Implementation of FPE**

Some of studies conducted on the progress of the implementation of FPE in developing countries have singled out the challenge of financing as the most pressing of all the other challenges. For instance, Lockheed et al reported that the main issue facing execution of Free Primary education is funding. Education reforms in developing nations like Kenya have always faced financial issues hence may fail to achieve desired ends.<sup>55</sup>Low budget allocations reduce inputs quantity and quality, especially physical amenities like classrooms, learning materials, laboratories and workshops.

In Kenya the 2007 alone, development budget for 59,551 basic education institutions and 10.1 million learners was Kshs.1.28 billion.<sup>56</sup> Such a budget is insufficient to provide quality facilities in all schools for a full academic year. This one by itself is a challenge which has seen quality of Free Primary Education in Kenya significantly declining since its inception in 2003.From the government budget allocations pupils in Primary schools are awarded an equivalent of Kshs 102.50 per student for the whole Academic term lasting for an average of four months. From the breakdown of the expenditure of the amount provided for by the government this amount is far much little to sustain a pupil for a full term if at all quality acquisition of education is expected from the pupil at the final national examinations.

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<sup>55</sup>Lockheed, M., E., et al., (2010). *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries*. Washington D. C: World Bank

<sup>56</sup>Wambui, J. (2013). *Factors Affecting the Implementation of Free Primary Education in Rural Primary Schools: A Case Study of Kikuyu Division, Kiambu County, Kenya*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi Repository

The table below show the breakdown of the disbursement of 14.887% of Ksh 689.00 Billion 2<sup>nd</sup> Term, 2016 FPE Funds into account 2 (G.P.A) for the Financial Year 2015/2016 amounting to 102.50 per child into respective school accounts.

**Table 2.1 :The breakdown of the Disbursement**

<b>S/no</b>	<b>Vote Head</b>	<b>Allocation per pupil (ksh)</b>
1.	Support Staff Wages (SSW)	28.10
2.	Renovation of classrooms, repairs, Maintenance & Improvements	15.70
3.	Activity	11.60
4.	Local Transport and Travelling (LT&T)	6.60
5.	Electricity, Water and Conservancy (EWC)	9.40
6.	Telephone/Postage	1.50
7.	Environment & Sanitation	7.80
8.	Capacity Building & Meetings	14.00
9.	Contingencies (Including Sanitary Towels)	2.40
10.	Science & Applied Technology	3.20
11.	ICT Infrastructure Materials	2.20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>102.50</b>

**Source: Ministry of Education; State Department of Basic Education 2016**

According to Ntuara, Kenya needs an extra US\$ 137 million between now and the year 2025 to actualize the vision of education for all. This would enable government

to assist children from poor backgrounds thus those affected by HIV/AIDS and those from informal settlements.<sup>57</sup>

### **3.6 The Challenge of Retention and Completion of FPE**

Retention, progress and completion rates are a major challenge and a concern of the millennium goal on education. According to the 2009-2010 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) enrolment for the lowest quintile is most responsive to cost of schooling and is also affected by the level of direct and indirect costs, urban/rural residence and other socio-cultural factors such as gender. According to responses obtained from Kisii parents with primary school going children, the greatest obstacle to enrollment and retention is direct costs of learning materials and books then opportunity costs, low value to education and poverty among the many residents of the County.

Low incomes among Kisii County residents and low government financing have negative impacts on education indicators thus quality, retention, access and completion. Development of education standards and training demands support from all stakeholders. However rural areas are composed of low-income households and as such may not be able to raise levies and cash as their urban counterparts. According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011; in 2003, the proportion of 16 and 17 year olds lacking education access in Kenya was 9.1%. While 16.1% of those with access dropped out without completing primary.

Additionally, this study estimates that 45 % of 16 and 17 year olds in Kisii County attend primary school, thus they are over age, with a high risk of dropping out. Only 38% of them completed primary education. Assuming that their educational

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<sup>57</sup>Ntuara, D.K. (2014). *Factors Influencing Implementation of Free Primary Education Programme in Mbeere North District. Kenya*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi press

experiences are a reflection of the system's inefficiencies, Kenya has problems of over age children at primary level, access to schools and sustained retention rates.

### **3.7 Challenge of poor infrastructure in most of Primary Schools**

Physical facilities in most of Kisii rural schools are minimal just like it is the case in most of these schools in the entire country. Most of the classrooms are often dilapidated and sometimes non-existent in some schools. School physical infrastructures are the fundamental learning and teaching environment. Learning environment and availability of school facilities impact learning outcomes. Majority of the respondents who responded to this study indicated that most of the schools in their County were in poor state and most of them were dilapidated with most of them requiring repairs. One of the respondents remarked that;

*“Most Schools in Kisii County tend to be overcrowded with regard to small to average classroom space per pupil with extremely crowded sanitary facilities shared by pupils”. Majority of our schools do not have safe and clean ablution blocks for use by our children and sometimes they are the root cause for many of their illnesses.*

Too in his study agrees that physical assets affect moral for education; attractive environments uplifts the human spirit.<sup>58</sup> It is much easier for a teacher in a well-built neat school with proper facilities than one in a poor and unfit environment. The shortage of students' desks, congestion in classrooms and lack of adequate physical and social facilities to meet student's needs are some key problems in implementation of FPE.

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<sup>58</sup>Too, J. K. (2005). *Quality of free primary Education in Kenya, The Educator, School of Education*. Moi University, Eldoret: Moi University Press.

### **3.8 Chapter Findings**

This chapter has established a number of challenges which greatly hamper the effective implementation of FPE in Kisii County which can be generalized to reflect the policy implementation in the entire country. Procurement challenges have been cited as a great impediment to realization of effective FPE. The late disbursement of instructional materials hampered adequate preparation for national examination leading to late completion of curriculum. Even when the instructional materials were availed to pupils they were inadequate compared with the intended users. The GER had made Text book ratio to pupils quite low and this in turn challenged successful implementation of FPE in the county under study which is also the case in most primary schools in the country.

Shortage of primary school teachers made achievement of quality education a mirage. The government's policy of suspending hiring of new teachers citing rising wage bill had dealt a huge blow to the successful achievement of policy objectives of FPE. The available teachers in public primary schools were unable to cope with large classes of pupils and offer detailed concern on weak pupils hence affecting quality of education. This chapter has also noted with great concern the level of financing offered by the government. The government offers less than Ksh 150 to a pupil for a full course term which is way too much little and a challenge in itself.

Notably, poor infrastructure in primary schools has been cited by many respondents as a policy challenge which was not factored when formulating the FPE policy in the country. This chapter has learnt that most of classrooms are crowded while some schools are dilapidated with some pupils learning under trees due to lack of adequate infrastructure. Finally, this chapter has learnt that retention and completion of primary education among pupils in Kisii County is still a challenge which hampers successful

transition to secondary schools. The number of school drop-outs in the county is still alarming and a substantial number of pupils never stay to see completion of their courses.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE STRATEGIES OF MITIGATING CHALLENGES OF THE FPE IN KISII COUNTY**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the strategies that have been developed to mitigate the challenges confronting the successful implementation of FPE in Kisii County. The strategies employed in this chapter are specific to each challenge discussed in the previous chapter. Previous studies on Free Primary Education (FPE) in various regions of Kenya have shown that the policy has faced a variety of challenges since its re-introduction in 2003. Among the challenges which this chapter aims at mitigating include; low teacher-pupil ratio, overcrowded classrooms, poor and inadequate infrastructure and lack of proper sanitation facilities.

Additionally, this study observes that the quality of instruction in primary schools is no longer satisfactory among a host of other issues. This chapter explores some of the measures adopted by the government and other education stakeholders to mitigate some of the policy challenges experienced in implementing FPE in Kisii County, which can be generalized to larger national policy.

#### **4.1 Mitigating Teacher-Pupil Ratio**

A persisting teacher shortage is a serious obstacles to provision of FPE estimated to be at 31, 000.<sup>59</sup> The government is to employ some more teaching staff. The pupil ratio is currently 1:68, thus surged from 1:60 in 2008.<sup>60</sup> The ratio varies from County to County. This inadequacy makes demands recruit of more teachers despite of the heavy financial implication, the government has an obligation and ultimate

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<sup>59</sup>EFA News, A newsletter of UNESCO – Nairobi office. April – May, 2015 Issue IV.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid

responsibility of recruiting educational workforce competed to handle the dynamic current education system. The government seems not committed to teacher recruitment to address the shortfalls despite the ratio disparities.

Averagely, there is inadequacy of at least three teachers in schools found in the County. The teachers have heavy tasks of handling several different lessons and many pupils hence difficult to give individualized attention to all learners, take full control of their classes and give adequate test assignments. Majority of teachers are frustrated by poor work terms, tend to stay in the same job group for long durations and they lack adequate government sponsored training opportunities to polish their teaching skills and performance unless they sponsor themselves.

A research study by Zani and Chacha on the impact of FPE on Pupil-Teacher ratio has established that pupil-teacher ratio increased from 42:1 in 1998 to 53:1 in 2003 and rose again to 60:1 in 2006 and remained the same until 2008.<sup>61</sup> Among other recommendations, the study proposed that the government should set a minimum threshold of the pupil-teacher ratio by recruiting more teachers to meet the shortfall. Another study by UNESCO in 2005 found out that one of the major challenges facing the successful implementation of FPE was shortage of Teachers and increase of pupils creating overcrowding of classes resulting to ineffective Teacher-Pupil interaction.<sup>62</sup>

This study has discovered that it is important for the government to execute a thorough staff balancing exercise to ensure all schools have adequate teachers and also sponsor teacher training education. The government should employ additional trained teachers to resolve the shortage or hire cheaper contract teachers or engage

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<sup>61</sup>Chacha B, Zani, F.P. (2015). *The Impact of FPE on Pupil-Teacher ratio in Kuria East Constituency*. Nairobi. IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 20, Issue 5, Ver. III (May, 2015), PP 01-12

<sup>62</sup>UNESCO. (2005). *Challenges of implementing free primary education in Kenya. (Assessment Report)*. Nairobi: UNESCO.

part-time teachers specifically unemployed trained teachers. Relevant stakeholders and the government should provide regular in-service training of teachers to improve teaching skills and performance and invent methods of motivating them apart from promotions and gifting best-performers. This study argues that for free education to succeed in offering quality education, the well-being of teachers is crucial.

#### **4.2 Increasing FPE Funding**

This study has established that funding of FPE is poor and inadequate. The funds meant for FPE are poor disbursed due to administrative, logistical and technical reasons.<sup>63</sup> This study has established that the current funding for a Pupil in primary school currently stands at Kshs.102.50. Education stakeholders agree that Kenyans require at least basic education in order to engage in the socio-economic activities to develop Kenya. They are also worried about the sustainability of free primary education in its present form. This emanates from poor funding and demoralized workforce which is poorly remunerated. Oyaro observed that due to inadequate funding, for a period of five years after the introduction of FPE in 2003, the body responsible for employing teachers in Kenya - the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), only hired teachers once to replace those who had retired from the service.<sup>64</sup> The freeze on the recruitment of Teachers was partly due to unavailability of funds and lack of political will.

The government should do timely disbursement of funds for purchasing the learning material is on time and also increase the amount to ensure sufficient learning aids are purchased. Authorized flexibility in the use of funds should be allowed. For example,

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<sup>63</sup> Ogola, F.O. (2010). *Free Education in Kenya's Public Primary Schools*. Addis Ababa. OSSREA Publication

<sup>64</sup>Oyaro,K. (2008). *Kenya; Free Primary Schooling policy faces Testing Times*. Retrieved from [www.ipsnews.net](http://www.ipsnews.net) Accessed on 28/8/2017

schools without electricity bills to pay should have freedom to use the funds for alternative needs like paying ECDE teachers. Volition by parents and communities to finance resources for non-budgetary facilities including toilets should be encouraged under strict guidelines to eliminate exploitations.

### **4.3 Addressing enrolment related challenges**

In its efforts of trying to educate every Kenyan child, the Government is challenged with over-enrolment due to scramble for places since 2003, when FPE was introduced. Many parents scrambled to have children admitted in popular schools like the Olympic Primary School in Kibera constituency which enrolled more than 3000 new pupils. The situation was the same other schools countrywide delaying teaching and caused clashes between old and new parents. Over-enrolment lowers education quality caused by facility and teacher inadequacy, sitting arrangement, teaching methods, examination, and sanitation among other things. The current primary school teachers are equipped to handle at least 40 pupils, this is a challenge that requires immediate resolution. According to the Minister for Education, over 32,000 extra classrooms are needed.<sup>65</sup> The real challenge is the where to source the financing of these extra classrooms. During the financial year 2016/2017, the funding of the FPE in Kenya was Ksh 13 639 Billions.<sup>66</sup> This was against the sector requirement of Ksh 55, 663 Billion.<sup>67</sup> Although, the funding challenge is a serious threat to sustainability of FPE, the government is committed to increase budgetary allocation.

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid

<sup>66</sup> Kipsang, B. (2015). *Education Sector; The 2016/17-2018/19 MTEF Budget: Public sector Hearings*. Nairobi. GoK

<sup>67</sup> Ibid

#### **4.4 Addressing Sanitation Challenges**

One of the challenges faced in FPE implementation in Kisii County was sanitation challenge. Toilets are inadequate or lacking in schools this negatively affects young pupils, girls and the disabled .<sup>68</sup> There were reports of pupils unhealthily relieving themselves in nearby bushes. In Kisii County Teachers noted that the government should address sanitation challenges. The first thing to be done is intensifying information awareness campaigns to sensitize communities, parents, NGOs and sponsors on their responsibilities in ensuring effective sanitation facilities in Primary schools.

Specifically, they suggested that parents and society members should understand that it is their role to provide schools with washrooms and sanitary towels for girls. They should fund materials for repair of toilets to ensure that their children learn in healthy conducive conditions. In the financial year 2016/17 the government increased the provision of sanitary towels to girls with an allocation of Ksh. 400 Million<sup>69</sup>

#### **4.5 Intensifying the campaign on HIV/AIDS**

The study established that HIV/AIDS negatively impacts FPE. It had caused deaths of teachers hence reducing schools capacity to adequately handle large numbers of enrolled pupils. Similarly, HIV/AIDS has created orphans who inconsistently attend school due to lack of basic needs like food and school uniform. If they attend school, these children fail to concentrate on their studies with some dropping out.<sup>70</sup> Some HIV positive children are unable to regularly attend school because opportunistic

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup>Makau, B. Kariuki, A Obondo, and G.A. Syongo, G.A . (2000). *Harnessing policy and planning for attainment of Education For All in Kenya*. Nairobi. Research report prepared for Action Aid Kenya.

diseases affecting them. HIV/AIDS has reduced community's capacity to support schools as it kills productive members of the society, including teachers.

In this regard, this study recommends that the government should intensify its campaigns against HIV/AIDS in schools and design special interventions to support the infected and affected. Further, the government should widely distribute and publicize relevant information to assist parents, communities and schools to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic.<sup>71</sup> The government has increased the provision of antiretroviral (ARVs) to all county referral hospitals to facilitate quick access of medication to school going children particularly in Kisii County. The prevalence of the pandemic has decreased over time and HIV/AIDS school- going children have got a lease of relief and school attendance is improving each particular day. Although the war against the pandemic is a global one and one which is far from being won, the government of Kenya and community based organizations have collaborated in measures aimed at containing the spread and transmission of the disease to new individuals. This is a move which most respondents attributed to sustainable implementation of FPE.

#### **4.6 Capacity Building for FPE**

After institutionalization of FPE, the government conducted in-service training for heads of schools and school committees on its execution. They were trained on accounting, textbook selection, procurement and book keeping systems; but the training was inadequate since it did not fully prepare them for their mandates. The training focused on financial issues and failed to cover curriculum management. Teachers were not trained on multi-group and double shift teaching methods which

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<sup>71</sup>Ogola, F. O. (2010). *Free Education in Kenya's Public Primary Schools: Addressing the challenges*. Nairobi. *Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)*

they are demanded to use. Education inspectors and officers are ineffective in their duties as they are usually on fault finding missions rather than availing required professional support services.

The government and education stakeholders particularly the line ministries and sector agencies have been initiating frequent refresher courses to equip FPE stakeholders with emerging trends and sector innovations with an ultimate aim of aligning the sector with the demands of the vision 2030 and the MDGs. This study found that some attempts were made by the Ministry of Education to inform schools through circulars that failed to relay comprehensive information. Confusion is still rife over the meaning of FPE particularly, the roles of different stakeholders. In the beginning parents and teachers understood FPE system to mean children go to school and learn without buying or paying anything. Consequently, they understood that the government will provide all resources and facilities required for learning, including: chairs, exercise books, desks textbooks, buildings and their maintenance. The capacity building initiatives by the education sector is aimed at clarifying all the issues pertinent to successful implementation of FPE.

#### **4.7 Changing Perception of Beneficiaries about the Goals and Rationale of FPE**

This study realized existence of negative perceptions on responsibilities in implementation of FPE in Kisii County. School committee members, parents and teachers know the goals of FPE in enhancing literacy so as to create an educated citizenry who effectively participate in the economic, political and social development of Kenya. They see FPE as aimed at eradicating poverty to improve living standards. FPE is the bridge of the gap between the poor and the rich in terms of education

access. FPE is a means of fulfilling the Children's Act which calls for a compulsory free primary education.<sup>72</sup>

There was consensus among Kisii respondents that FPE is a key milestone in Kenya's education that opened doors for children, who would have lacked the chance to acquire education to improve their wellbeing. It gives schools the opportunity to optimize resource utilization and has motivated learning while teachers are able to use teaching skills to their best of abilities. Pupils are provided with learning material aids and are able to carry home textbooks and do their home works, revise or read ahead of teachers, making learning an enjoyable experience as they can participate in classroom discussion effectively. Similarly, pupils are given geometrical sets to enhance good performance in mathematics. There was agreement that education quality has improved and pupils no longer miss school because of non-payment of fees this consistent class attendance is helpful in meeting quality.

#### **4.8 Chapter Findings**

This chapter focused primarily on strategies that have been adopted to mitigate the challenges faced while implementing the FPE policy in Kisii County. The Chapter has revealed that the government is committed in addressing the challenge of Teacher-Pupil ratio which currently stands as 1: 68 and a current deficit of 31,000 teachers. The government has rolled out a recruitment drive for 10,000 Teachers in 2017 according to the information provided by the MoEST. The government is also seen to be increasing education funding annually and revamping the education system by digitizing the sector and the curriculum. This chapter has also established that both the government and education stakeholders have embarked on a campaign aimed at

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<sup>72</sup>RoK. (2003). *Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation*, Nairobi: Government Printers.



addressing enrolment related challenges which among others include construction 32,000 classrooms country-wide. Some of these classes will be constructed in Kisii County which is struggling with over-crowded classrooms.

The chapter has also established that among the strategies of addressing FPE challenges include measures to address sanitation problems which for long time have negatively affected school attendance particularly among the girl pupils. On that end the national government has allocated Ksh 400 Million in the financial year 2016/17 to provision of sanitary towels to school going children in order to increase retention and completion. Additionally, this chapter has revealed capacity building as one avenue where efforts are directed in-order to equip teachers and instructors with up-to-date information and techniques of education. The need to change respondent's perception in regards to responsibilities of FPE financing has been revealed as a mitigating strategy which aims at reducing negative perceptions which have riddled the implementation of FPE in Kisii County and Country-wide generally.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

A summary of study findings, conclusions and recommendations are the concern of this chapter. The findings are summarized in line with the general objective of the research which aimed at assessing the impact of free primary education utilizing a case study of Kisii County. This chapter therefore summarizes the findings of the entire study, makes relevant conclusion and proposes tailor-made recommendations to policy stake-holders which can turn around the education sector as well make the implementation of FPE sustainable.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Findings**

First, the study sought to investigate the achievements of FPE in Kisii County since the FPE was rolled out country-wide in 2003. The study focused on three districts in the county namely; Kisii Central, Gucha south and Gucha. This study has established that while the national government's first achievement was the improvement in primary school enrolment (GER) in Kisii County the enrolment also skyrocketed with 98 % increase of school-going children. The GER rose to 104% in 2003 from 92% in 2002 of the school age population. The enrolment of girls increased by 67 % while boys increased by 88%. In many schools, school heads encountered children to enroll beyond their schools capacities.

Kisii County recorded enrolment of 161, 217 Boys and 159, 865 Girls in primary schools when the FPE policy was launched. In the same year, 22,266 and 21,503 Boys and Girls respectively joined class one in 2003 in the County. The high admission was realized due to cutting of education cost by the government. Another notable

achievement realized in Kisii County established in this study was the increased rate of completion of FPE. This study has established that by 2016 a total of 10,889 Boys and 11,138 Girls were enrolled in class eight. The above can be attributed to ability of parents to contribute financially towards sustaining children in schools in Kisii. There is a general consensus that high enrolment of pupils in primary schools and completion is due to the ability of parents to invest in education and the high subsidized cost of education by the government.

Another notable achievement realized in Kisii County was the reduced illiteracy levels and increased number of literate paid workers. This study has established that a total of 276,024 people in Kisii County residents have a primary level of education only with Bonchari and Kitutu Chache North, having the highest stake. It is therefore generally agreeable that GER in Kisii County has to a larger extent increased, making education accessibility easier and affordable to hitherto illiterate populace. The increased completion rate is also attributable to investment by the government and education stakeholders to retention strategies which have led to many pupils particularly girls scaling the heights of education and primarily completing class eight.

Further, the implementation of FPE has greatly expanded the private sector. This is attributed to the expansion and the emergence of a number of private primary schools which have cropped-up to supplement government efforts of accessing primary education to all as enshrined in the MDGs. Although, the increased enrolment of children in private schools is termed by parents as the best alternative for their children who need to attain quality education, the number has made private schools number to increase and expand the private sector in the county. The implementation of FPE has opened up a total of 425 private primary schools and 49 private secondary

schools. These private institutions have opened up employment opportunities for majority of residents who have taken up jobs as teachers and subordinate staff in the private schools. The opening up of private schools is attributed to quality concerns which majority of parents in the county have held with the introduction of FPE.

Secondly, this study sought to examine the challenges that have been confronted by policy implementers and education stakeholders during the implementation of the free primary education in Kisii County. These consistent policy constraints made the implementation of the education policy ineffective. This study has established that some of the pertinent challenges hampering the successful adoption and implementation of FPE include; the challenge of procurement particularly of instruction material for FPE. The FPE grants disbursements were late as schools mostly get the funds in second or third term, causing most pupils had inadequate access to learning aids during first term. The late disbursement of instructional materials hampered adequate preparation for national examination due to late completion of curriculum. The bureaucracy surrounding the procurement of instruction materials greatly affected the national results outcome.

The very low Pupil Text Book Ratio (PTR) in schools was yet another challenge confronting successful implementation of FPE. Majority of respondent who participated in this study informed the research that there was acute shortage of textbooks and the per capita textbook distribution in the county was critically very low making learning tedious and ineffective. Compounding the challenge of low Pupil Text Book Ratio was the challenge of Pupil-Teacher ratio. Shortage of teachers in Kisii County primary schools is greatly attributable to termination of new hiring of teachers by the Government citing ballooning wage bill. The government of Kenya suspended recruitment of new P1 Teachers into labor market, a condition which

worsened the delivery of education services given the very high Gross Enrolment Rates which had been registered in primary schools. Current teacher to learner ratio is 1:60-90 pupils per class.

Another challenge established by this study is the increased mass transfer of pupils from government schools to non-public schools. With the introduction of FPE in Kenya most parents transferred their children to private schools due to poor performance of government schools. After institution of free primary education performance of public primary schools rapidly declined an opinion supported by majority of the respondents who participated in the study. 67% of the respondents strongly agreed that quality of education in primary schools declined the basis upon which many parents opted to transfer their children to non-public primary schools in anticipation that in the later they were to acquire quality and personalized education.

This research has also found that the mother of all challenges confronting the successful implementation of FPE was financial. In Kisii County, low budgetary allocation has greatly lowered the standards and quantity of education inputs, especially physical infrastructure like laboratories, workshops, learning materials and classrooms. This study has learned that a pupil is allocated a mere Ksh. 102.50 per annum by the government which caters for a myriad of pressing needs. From the breakdown of the expenditure the amount provided for the pupil by the government caters for support staff wages, renovation of classrooms, repairs, Maintenance, activity, Contingencies including sanitary towels which are far much little to sustain a pupil for a full term.

Similarly, the challenge of retention, completion and progression rates was cited as a major hindrance to achievement of FPE goals and aspirations. The greatest barrier to

admission and retention was the high costs of learning materials, poverty, opportunity costs and low value ascribed to education among the many residents of the County. Established by this study is a 16.1% drop out of pupils without completing primary school. This study approximates that 45 %of 16 and 17 year olds in Kisii are in primary school thus are over age, with a high risk of dropping out. Only 38% of them complete primary school.

Another challenge revealed by this research was related to infrastructure. Poor infrastructure in primary schools has been cited by many respondents as a policy challenge which was not factored when formulating the FPE policy in the country and one which has curtailed gains anticipated in the objectives of FPE. The school infrastructure was in dilapidated state or altogether missing making learning impossible and ineffective. This study has learned that more than four pupils were sharing a desk which is meant for two pupils creating a continuous discomfort which is detrimental to achievement of policy objectives.

Thirdly, this study sought to examine the strategies of mitigating the challenges of the FPE in Kisii County. These strategies aimed at providing solutions and long term remedies to the challenges experienced during the implementation of FPE. One of the strategies include reducing the Pupil-Teacher ratio which by far exceeds the ministry recommendations. The government is employing more Teachers to reduce the current deficit estimated at 31,000. In the fiscal year 2016/17 the government of Kenya announced for the recruitment of additional teachers in primary schools following pro-longed industrial strikes by the Teachers Union Body-KNUT. The recruitment is seen by policy stakeholders as a positive move in an effort to upgrade the implementation of FPE.

Better remuneration and better terms of service are part of the wider deal aimed at providing teachers with morale to offer quality education. This is in line with previous study recommendations which called for increased funding of FPE.

Among other strategies aimed at mitigating the challenges of FPE is the move by the government to increase the classrooms and space for learning which has seen budgeting of more than 32,000 classrooms. During the financial year 2016/2017, the funding of the FPE in Kenya was increased to Ksh 13 639 Billions in an effort geared towards addressing the challenges of infrastructure and instructional materials. Additionally, the ministry of Education has increased budgetary allocation to sanitation with the availing of additional Ksh. 400 Million for acquisition of sanitary towels for girls in primary schools. The government has also increased the allocation of more funding to the management of HIV/AIDS. The number of pupils enrolled for the provision of ARVs has increased in the county and the number of deaths resulting to the pandemic has reduced.

The government has also increased the in-service training for school heads and committee members of FPE implementation. They are trained on procurement, book-keeping, accounting systems and textbook selection. The training focused on financial issues and incorporated curriculum management practices. Teachers were trained on double shift and multi-group teaching methods which aimed at making teachers capable of handling large classes of pupils and also handling special cases of pupils. Additionally, the line ministries and sector agencies have been initiating frequent refresher courses to equip FPE stakeholders with emerging trends and sector innovations with an ultimate aim of aligning the sector with the demands of the vision 2030 and the MDGs. The refresher courses and education management practices have been tailored to suit the demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century and aspirations of MDGs.

## **5.2 Discussions of the Findings**

This study has noted that the execution of the policy without consultations, preparing teachers and inadequate regular sensitization communication with relevant stakeholders on their roles hinder FPE. Political leaders send conflicting indicators to communities by advocating that voluntary contributions and fund raisings are not necessary. There is a general misconception that ‘free’ education imply that parents are not required to be actively in school activities. This political gimmick is confusing particularly to parents which term it as sweet words to their ears but bitter to their pockets in reality.

Parents and pupils have critical attitudes towards FPE. Although the teachers work under unfriendly terms, it was advised that they must cultivate positive attitudes towards FPE for it to succeed. Some teachers kept complaining of increased workloads and among other challenges. Some are moral by abusing the over-age pupil; this affects their participation and performance. They must treat over-age pupils with respect and teach them. Parents view the provision of facilities as the responsibility of the government. Additionally, they were happy that under FPE their roles declined to only feeding and sending their descendants to school and availing school uniforms. They occasionally attend school meetings when invited.

A key finding of the study was that the commonly available learning and teaching resource was pens and pencils at 29.9% and the biggest challenge was textbooks at 7.5%. This poses a challenge given the importance of textbooks in the learning process. This can be attributed to the fact that FPE funds meant to buy textbooks, exercise books and other writing materials but end up purchasing the affordable items like pens and pencils and avoid buying more expensive items like textbooks. This shows that parents have relaxed and left the role of acquiring books to the schools.



This is a concern that requires attention from all education stakeholders in Kisii County.

Under the 2010 Kenyan Constitution, the cabinet is limited to 22 members. This raises questions about the size, roles and responsibilities of possible new directorates of the new education ministry. Some of the functions at the national level include: standards and regulations, research, information technology, policy and planning. Whereas the process of merging ministries could bring about efficiency, there is also the possibility that gained achievements in education could be lost.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The analysis of impact of Free Primary Education (FPE) in Kenya was carried out in Kisii County in the period 2003-2013. After the inception, about 1.4 million children were admitted in government primary schools in the county in the period under study. This increased enrollment resulted to various policy challenges which include limited physical facilities, congested classrooms and acute shortage of teachers. This study concludes that the key problem facing FPE is the presence of an unclear policy that fails to clarify the different roles of stakeholders, admission criteria, discipline, and methods of involving communities and parents in specific school activities. Apart from the notable challenges experienced, the policy has realized a number of tangible achievements which include increased enrolment of primary school going children in the County. This is attributable to reduced school fees which increased primary school accessibility. The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) increased from 92% in 2003 to 104 % in 2013 of the school age population. The enrolment of girls rose by 17 % from 3 million in 2002 to 3.5 million in 2013.

Generally, primary school enrolment in Kisii County has improved with the FPE program. Additionally, the enrolment of children into private schools has been an upward trajectory which has been attributed to mass influx of children upon implementation of FPE in Kisii County.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

In view of the findings and suggestions by the various respondents, the researcher puts forward the following recommendations for the FPE program to succeed in producing holistic results.

The Ministry of Education should regularly relay circulars to schools, use the mass media, ICTs and county administration to inform parents, pupils and communities of what is expected from them so as to eliminate misconceptions and ensure they act in an informed manner. The government should design effective user-friendly communication strategies for regularly informing parents, teachers, pupils and communities of what to do to ensure FPE program succeeds.

The government should hire more teachers to ensure that all schools have enough teachers, elevate those who have stagnated in some job cadre for years, provide regular in-service training to teachers to motivate them and improve teachers' terms and conditions of service. Schools should also be encouraged and facilitated to engage part-time contract teachers, especially the unemployed trained teachers.

This study recommends that parents and societies should be sensitized on obligation to ensure children attend school regularly to be educated. They should monitor FPE progress and ensure all children are benefiting. Those not admitted or drop out of school should be taken to local county education offices for action. Additionally,

more schools and extra classrooms should be constructed to cope with the increased enrolments.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) should take thorough measures to streamline implementation and contents of FPE for competitive quality education. The MoE should improve quality control in the execution of FPE to enhance a positive public image of FPE to various stakeholders including donors, parents, teachers and pupils.

Lastly but not least, this study recommends that school heads, school committees and teachers should be skilled on accounting, book-keeping and standard procurement processes. The government must deploy and recruit more inspectors to guarantee and enhance high education quality. It should also engage bursars to serve as a cluster in schools to ensure effective accounting procedures for the funds. County and sub-county education officers should monitor teaching to confirm that the teachers are using the recommended syllabus , textbooks and that quality is maintained. They should conduct in-service-training to properly equip teachers on new emerging curriculum issues and the best delivery methods.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Introductory Remarks**

**Dear Respondent,**

This questionnaire is meant to analyze the impact of free primary education in Kenya utilizing a case study of Kisii County since 2003. The findings and recommendations of the study will contribute to the knowledge based on the influence which free primary has contributed to in Kenya. In this regard, data obtained will assist in accomplishing the objectives of the study. Kindly answer the question by ticking and/or explaining. Your contribution will be much appreciated and the information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality for academic purposes only.

**PART A: BIO-DATA**

1. Kindly Indicate your Gender

Male [ ]

Female [ ]

2. Using a tick (✓) please indicate your highest academic level attained

Post Graduate [ ] Graduate [ ] Diploma [ ] Certificate [ ]

3. Which area of specialization/Professionalism/Authority are you currently serving

.....

4. Please indicate your current position in relation to school management and affairs in the table below

Category	Tick
Head teacher	
Teacher	
Student/pupil	
School Board Member	
Committee Member	

**PART B: THE IMPACT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN KISII COUNTY**

5. From your knowledge and understanding what do you understand by the concept of free primary Education

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....

6. Since its inception in 2003 by the NARC Government-(Kibaki government), the FPE has realized some achievements. Can you highlight some of the Achievement realized in your County by the FPE

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....

7. From your observation and experience, what difference in education can be pointed out since the inception of FPE both in your county and nationally in general?

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.....

.....

8. In your opinion how best can you describe changes in literacy levels in your county after the implementation of Free Primary Education? Tick appropriately

Level of literacy	Response (Tick)
Improved	
Remained the same	
Deteriorated	
Do not Know	

9. From your description above, can you kindly provide a brief explanation on what led to such changes in literacy level observed in your county

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**PART C: CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF FPE**

10. Several Challenges have confronted the successful implementation of FPE. In your opinion, which Challenge do you think MOSTLY hampers effective implementation of FPE in your county?

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.....

11. From your knowledge and understanding of FPE what opinion do you hold in regards to the following attributes of Education:

(a) School infrastructure

.....  
.....

(b) Teacher-Student Ratio

.....  
.....

(c) Tuition Fees

.....  
.....

12. Given the dismal performance of girls compared to Boys in the previous Primary school national examinations, what do you consider to be the main challenge contributing to such state of affairs in your county?

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.....  
.....

13. Kindly compare and contrast primary education offered by private schools and primary education offered free in public schools by the government in your county

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 .....  
 .....

14. In your opinion what strategies can be adopted to effectively improve the implementation FPE in your county?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

15. Indicate with a Tick your level of agreement about the following issues related to FPE. Use the scale labeled; **SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N-Neutral, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree**

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
My county has an effective policy on implementing FPE					
There is effective periodical monitoring and evaluation of FPE in my county to ensure compliance with Universal standards					
Funds meant for FPE are adequately utilized and managed					
Inception of FPE in my county has eased cost of living					
More people have opted to join school with introduction of FPE					
Challenges of FPE in my county are adequately addressed					

**THANK YOU.**