EFFECTS OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON PUPILS' PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUMULA DIVISION, BUNGOMA DISTRICT, KENYA

BY

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A research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration and Planning, University of Nairobi

2005

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other university.

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

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge with appreciation the help of those without whom the completion of this work would not have been possible. It may not be possible to mention all of them individually. I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Dr. Grace Nyagah who always found time to read through my work in spite of her busy routine duties. Her guidance, suggestions encouragement and moral support led to the completion of this work.

I am equally appreciative and grateful to all lecturers and other members of the Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Nairobi, for their encouragement in the course of my study. I also wish to thank all head teachers, teachers, and the Area Education officers (A.E.O.) in Bumula Division of Bungoma District who participated in this study.

Last but not least, I must thank my wife Risper Nasambu who provided an inspiring and conducive atmosphere during my studies. I am equally grateful to my children: Maxwell, Sarah, Rachael, Tony and Sylvia for their patience and sacrifice made during the period of this study.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated with a lot of love and appreciation to my wife Risper whose tireless efforts, sacrifice and encouragement have resulted into this work.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of Free Primary Education on pupils' participation in primary schools in Bumula Division, Bungoma District. Specifically the study aimed at accomplishing the following objectives:

1. To determine the influence of FPE on school enrolment.
2. To determine the influence of FPE on repetition.
3. To determine the influence of FPE on school drop-out.
4. To identify sources of funding for FPE.
5. To identify the hidden costs of schooling.
6. To establish the effect of FPE on facilities.

The literature review was divided into four subheadings: enrolment, repetition and premature withdrawal, funding of FPE and hidden costs of schooling.

The study used ex post facto research design. Two sets of questionnaires were designed for the head teachers and class teachers and an interview schedule for the AEO. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the study sample. The

sample consisted of 30 head teachers, 90 class teachers of standard one to three and one Area Education Officer (AEO) of the Division. The questionnaire return rate was 73.3% both for the head teachers and teachers. The data obtained was analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics of mean, percentage and frequency.

Findings show that the abolition of payment of school fees through FPE led to increased enrolments in primary schools. Between 2003, the year of removal of payment, and 2005 enrolments increased by 1351 pupils (96.1%). Although enrolments were highest in Standard One, the number of children enrolled in other grades 2 and 3 also increased, in the period 2003-2005. The study further reveals that pupils still repeat in many primary schools. In lower primary (Std 1 -3) repetition was majorly caused by lack of pupil interest in academic work, health problems and unsuitable studying conditions at home leading to poor performance hence, repetition . In upper primary (Std 4 -8) repetition was high in standard seven. Head teachers admit few pupils in standard eight in an attempt to increase their schools' mean scores in examination.

On withdrawal, the study shows that the rates recorded before 2003 were higher than those recorded after 2003. Between 2001 to 2002 1059 pupils dropped out of school compared to only 556 pupils who withdrew after 2003. Withdrawal was majorly caused by lack of encouragement by parents and peer influence.

The research findings further show schools have poor facilities. On average eight pupils shared one text book in the schools. The worst hit areas of textbooks were Geography, History, Civics, Religious Education and Science subjects where as many as 54 pupils in one school sampled shared one book in both science and GHCR.

The study also established there is overcrowding due to shortages of classrooms. Some classes are as big as 130 pupils and are therefore hard to manage and teach effectively. The average teacher-pupil ratio is 1:62. Sitting arrangements and sharing of desks is also poor with four pupils sharing a desk on average in many schools. Schools also lack libraries, laboratories and some are even missing playgrounds. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made in an attempt to make free education achieve all its objectives:-

- The government should abolish all Levies, subsidiary to school fees and instead step in directly to finance and support all school projects and activities.
- Parents should be educated on the importance of education for their children, so that all parents can send their children to school and encourage them to remain there until they complete the primary cycle.
- The government needs to decentralize disbursement of funds to schools to the district level as it has done with the constituency development fund to enable them get the money promptly.
- More teachers should be employed to reduce the high shortfall and work load to the current staff.

Further research should be done on the same topic in the entire district of Bungoma. A study should also be done on the influence of facilities on pupils' academic performance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEO: Area Education Officer

EFA: Education For All

IBRD: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

KANU:Kenya African National Union

NARC:National Rainbow Coalition

SAPS: Structural Adjustment Programmes

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE: Universal Primary Education

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Todaro (1997) says the future of every country depends more on effective development of its system of education. Bray, Dondo, and Moemeka (1975) also said that although education has always assumed an important place in African society, it is only in.the last two or three decades, and particularly since independence, that its significance has reached the high level which it has today. He continues to say that not only is education seen by governments as an essential ingredient of economic progress and a fundamental precondition which must be fulfilled before a country can regard herself as truly developed, and take her place with confidence among the other continents of the world. Accordingly, recent years have witnessed a growing concern to provide as much formal education as possible, for as many people as possible, and in the shortest time possible.

The rudiments of knowledge are acquired at the primary level of education. This level is the basis for further studies and training in many skills (Republic of Kenya, 1964, Kamunge Report, 1988 and Bogonko, 1992). According to Ominde Report (1964), education is such a very important social service that ought to be freely available to all children and to be supported out of the government's revenue. Pupil's performance at this stage will generally determine their future performance in other levels of formal education as well as in the field of work. The crucial role that primary education plays in the pupils life calls for continued evaluation and research to ascertain that access, quality and relevance are acquired (Macharia, 1992). "Poor initial schooling may lead to under qualified graduates who then become poor citizens by the fact that they have been denied their right to basic education" (Macharia1992: 91).

With the importance of primary education in mind, Kenya like most African countries has placed great importance on the expansion of education. The expansion was designated to ensure social economic growth of the country. (Republic of Kenya, 1976). The provision of free primary education recommended by the 1964 education

commission (Ominde Report) was a move towards fulfilling this aim. The report targeted free education was to begin in 1965 and be completed in 1971 if facilities and finances permitted (Republic of Kenya 1964). By 1980 tuition fees for primary education had been waived (Otiende, Wamahiu and Karugu, 1992). In addition, the need for quality and relevance of education has necessitated changes in the curriculum over the years. The present system of education consists of eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education, and four years of the university education (8-4-4). This system of education was recommended by the report of the presidential working party on the second university in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 1981). By 1985, the first batch of standard eight pupils sat for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (K.C.P.E) (Olembo, Wanga and karugu, 1992).

However, the attainment of free primary education (FPE) was short-lived and created many problems such as; shortage of teachers, handling overcrowded classes, and lack of physical facilities. After the general elections of 1983, the government declared that parents will have to buy textbooks, exercise books and equip schools

(Bogonko, 1992). The government was only to provide teachers. This policy of cost sharing was introduced by the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) as well as the recommendations of the Kamunge Report of 1988 that called for cost sharing in education and other social sectors. Schools took advantage of this and introduced levies such as tuition, activity, assessment fees, and inspection fees, which many parents could not afford forcing many pupils to drop out of school (Kinyanjui, 1973).

In 1999 the government reaffirmed her commitment to FPE in the country's Assessment Report which detailed strategies for the attainment of universal primary education. This renewed commitment was included in the development plan of 1997 – 2001, which says: "One of the governments guiding philosophies for education is the concern that every Kenyan has the inalienable right, no matter his or her social-economic status to basic education." (National Development Plan, 1997 – 2001: 133).

Kenya is party to the world Declaration on education For All accord signed in Jomtien, Thailand (1990) where countries committed

themselves to provide free education to all by the year 2015. So when the government declared free primary education in January 2003, it was only fastening her speed to meet one of the goals of EFA affirmed at Jomtien (1990) and Dakar Senegal, (2000). Furthermore, in 2001 the parliament enacted the children's act which recognizes education as a basic right to all children. The act states that it is the responsibility of parents and the government to provide education to the child (Teachers Service Commission, 2003).

The expansion of education and changes in the curriculum normally poses numerous problems. These problems are in terms of; lack of trained teachers, shortage of resources, shortage of teaching and learning facilities, inadequate skilled administrators and limited places for admission to secondary education (Daily Nation Editor, 198, October 9 p. 4-5).

As Court (1974) pointed out, mass education is likely to affect the quality of education. When enrolment expands, it becomes difficult to maintain levels of quality and efficiency. According to (Ndunguru, 1980) the pathetic school buildings and primitive living conditions of

both teachers and pupils are not conducive to a health school attainment. Ndunguru says that even though there is no mechanical relationship between the elegance of buildings and school attainment, over crowding militate against any positive effects of schooling. This same view was held by the Republic of Kenya (1988:11) which said "the resources need to be planned for properly and utilized in the effective manner to bring out efficient provision of quality and relevant education".

In 1985, the "personal communication" Ministry of Education conducted a research and observed that the number of schools does not increase with increasing school enrolment. It was observed that school compounds were inadequate for recreational use and for teaching of practical subjects like agriculture. Further, the report revealed that school administrators were under pressure from district education officers and parents to accept as many pupils as possible, whether or not they can be accommodated in the existing facilities. Thus the Ministry of Education norm of forty pupils per classroom is rarely observed.

Maranga (1993) pointed out that a review of the teaching and learning state in Kenya reveals that the provision of education is still wanting. The problem is complicated even more by the competitive examination taken at the end of primary education. The results are used to select pupils to limited places in secondary schools ("education and training", 1997).

After the release of the 2003 Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (K.C.P.E) results, Siringi and Otieno (2004) said "Although the government will not admit it, the two-year old free primary education is to blame for the dismal performance of public schools" (Daily Nation, 2004, December 30 p. 3). This same view was held by the Headmaster of M.M. Shah Primary School (Kisumu) Mr. Marcellus Lowo Okweya who said "we have had a major dip this year. This slump is blamed on free primary learning which has negatively affected teaching because of the large enrolment and inadequate facilities" (Daily Nation, 2004 December 30 p. 4)

The situation in Bungoma District in general and Bumula Division in particular was not any better. According to the information

obtained from the AEO. Many schools obtained low mean scores at KCPE of 2003. This poor performance in the division has made the researcher develop an interest in carrying out a study in this area. He wishes to investigate problems of enrolment, repetition, and early school withdrawal, education funding and hidden costs of education, in relation to free primary education.

Statement of the problem

Parents, pupils, the community and the public in general greatly value good primary education. Such good primary education enhances pupils' chances of advancing for further studies and consequently securing employment (Reynods, et al, 1996). Problems that may be created by FPE are therefore a great concern to many interest groups and may call for an investigation.

Bumula is an agricultural division relying mainly on sugarcane contracted to Mumias and Nzoia sugar companies and tobacco contracted to BAT. According to the information obtained form the Area Education Officer (AEO) most children in the region prefer working for the companies at a wage and riding bicycles (boda boda) rather than going to school. From the monthly returns of May, 2005,

the division has eighty four schools with total population of 46,468 pupils. Each school has an average of 500 pupils. The AEO said that generally teaching and learning facilities are inadequate in the division. Hence there is an urgent need to carry out an investigation on the influence of free primary education in the division on issues such as: enrolment, repetition and premature school withdrawal, education funding and hidden costs of education.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of free primary education on pupils' participation in primary schools in Bumula Division, Bungoma District.

Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:-

1. To determine the influence of FPE on school enrolment
2. To determine the causes of repetition in lower primary
3. To determine the causes of school dropout in lower primary
4. To establish the sources of funding for FPE
5. To identify the hidden costs of FPE

6. To establish the effect of FPE on facilities

Research questions

The following research questions were derived from the objectives:-

1. How has FPE influenced school enrolment?
2. What are the causes of repetition in lower primary?
3. What are the causes of school dropout in lower primary?
4. What are the sources of funding for FPE?
5. What are the hidden costs of FPE?
6. What is the effect of FPE on facilities?

Significance of the study

In their general application, the findings of the study are important in that they may be used to determine the positive and negative aspects of FPE with a view to improving education among primary school pupils. This can be achieved if the analysis will be used for decision making especially in the development of reinforcement mechanisms for the success of the programmes. In addition it is anticipated that the information will provoke other researchers to evaluate the programme to see if it has had any impact on the quality of education. The findings are a contribution to existing literature on factors influencing

education among primary school pupils and it is necessary to ascertain whether aims of FPE are being met. Lastly the findings will be used to identify the factors affecting education in the Division in particular and nation in general.

Limitations of the study

In some schools records were hard to trace. The use of fragmented information to arrive at the required data was common in schools where proper records were not kept. It was therefore hard to retrieve required data on for example enrolment, repetition, drop out and inventory of physical facilities. Some respondents were reluctant and suspicious. They only accepted to co-operate after a long explanation and promise of confidentiality. Head teachers and class teachers who had not participated in such a study before thought the questionnaire was being used to gather information on the weaknesses of the schools and the findings could be used to punish them.

Delimitation of the study

The area of study was delimited to one division, Bumula, out of the seven in Bungoma district and the findings of the study will only

be generalized to all other schools in the division and not in the entire district or the nation.

The area to be covered only included effect of FPE out of the many possible researchable areas. The study was also only delimited to head teachers, class teachers of standard one to three of the sampled schools and the AEO out of the many other teachers of other classes of Standard four to eight. Other Education Field Officers like zonal inspectors and the DEO were left out. Even pupils and parents were not involved.

Basic assumptions of the study

The researcher based the study on the following assumptions:

That free Primary Education policy had been implemented in all public primary schools in the division.

That head teachers, class teachers and field officers were the best placed to avail information on the limitations and success of FPE as they are directly involved in the registration of pupils. It also assumed that the data obtained from the respondents was accurate and formed the basis of the findings of this study.

Definition of significant terms

The following terms were defined as follows:

Absenteeism: act of failing to attend classes on some school days.

Access: Availability of learning and teaching opportunities in schools.

"Boda Boda": use of bicycles as a means of transport

Education for all: The goal and process of providing basic education to all children, youth and adults.

Enrolment: Number of pupils who register as members of a particular class or grade at the beginning of every term or year.

Facilities: educational amenities to be enjoyed by pupils. They include teachers, classrooms, educational materials, desks, libraries, laboratories, and games and sports facilities.

Free education: No fees is charged and no hidden costs that may hinder a child from benefiting from the system.

Hidden costs: indirect expenses incurred by parents in a school even if education is free. This include expenses on transport, uniform, trial tests, weekend/ holiday coaching, and lunch.

Pupils participation: Taking part in learning by pupils in the primary schools.

Performance: academic achievement of a pupil at the end of the academic year.

Premature withdrawal: dropping out of an educational institution before completing the cycle of that level. For example dropping out of school before completing eight years of primary education.

Repeat: be in one class or grade for more than one academic year.

Primary education: the first eight years of learning in the primary school. It precedes secondary school and pupils sit for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education to mark the completion of the cycle.

Promotion: Move from a lower class to the next class after completing an academic year.

Universal primary education: full enrolment of all children in the primary school age groups.

Organization of the study

The study has five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and objectives of the study. It also deals with a research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, assumptions of the study and definition of significant terms.

Chapter two, three, four and five. Chapter Two reviews literature related to the effect of FPE. There is related literature on enrolment, repetition, dropout, funding and hidden costs of FPE. It also has a conceptual frame work. Chapter Three deals with research methodology which include research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, their reliability and validity and procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter Four deals with data presentation, analysis and discussion. Chapter Five has a summary of research findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter deals with the history of free primary education, a review of related literature on the effect of FPE and a conceptual framework.

The history of free primary education

The picture of educational development in most developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America looks the same. Blaug (1979) reviewed comparatively and comprehensively this pattern and observed that in Japan and Russia, which have centralized state guided education, the base of universal primary education was achieved in 1912 and 1930 respectively. Blumenthal and Benson (1978) suggest that emphasis on primary education is both an equitable and a rational strategy for future expansion.

The history of attempts to make primary education universal in Africa is not long (Omar, 1983). Serious efforts in many countries began after independence in the early 1960s. Thirty five ministers for

education of the African member states of United Nations (UN) met in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in 1961 to review the education in Africa (UNESCO, 1961). This conference resolved to achieve a desirable educational pyramid and have basic personnel to move on to universal education of high quality that is free and compulsory, with a practical bias to reduce urban migration of school learners. Referring to the Report of the conference, Sheffield (1973) wrote: "primary and adult education was to be developed at the same time with a goal of universal literacy in 1980" (Sheffield, 1973:69).

The need for a free universal education was also stressed in 1977 during an assembly of the world confederations of organizations of the teaching professions (WCOTP). Focusing on compulsory education the assembly declared that:

> The youth of the world has an inherent right to participate in a free education system. Universal education should be made available for all children and the wealth of the world be harnessed to enable the nations provide free compulsory Education (WCOTP's Assembly; 1971:1).

The attainment of universal primary education in Kenya is a major goal in the government development. Universal primary Education (UPE) was first articulated in Sessional Paper No.10 of 1965 in which the government committed itself to eradicating ignorance, poverty and diseases (Ongwaye, 2003).

The right to education originates from the 1948 United nations (UN) General Assembly, which adopted the Universal Declaration of Human rights stipulated in Article 26, that:

- Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages (ages 6-12). Elementary education shall be compulsory.
- Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among nations, racial groups and among religious groups and shall further activities of the UN.
- Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Illiteracy, according to Gillette (1972) is a flagrant denial of a human right. Just like a right to life, education is part of human life.

Free education was therefore hoped to be going to cater for those who could not finance their education as well as curb absenteeism, improve performance and check repetition and premature withdrawal rates..

Enrolment fluctuations

In most third world countries, the greatest expansion in enrolment has occurred at the primary level since it is both the base of the educational pyramid and the level of schooling most accessible to members of the society (Carnoy, 1971). Okwachi (2003) says the large turn outs of children when schools re-opened in first term 2003 was an indication that the majority of the school age children were denied education due to unnecessary levies. Okwachi says, by declaring free primary education, the government has shown that it is ready to increase education opportunities to all and systematically revitalize this important sector. The aim of FPE is to increase enrolment in schools and curb drop outs (Mugo & Njeri, 2003). Nyagah (2003) says millions of children who had dropped out of school because of lack of fees are expected to go back to education. He says an estimated 3.3 million children between the ages of three and six had dropped out but many will be going back to class.

Repetition and premature withdrawal

A number of studies have shown the regional auspices of a school – whether rural or urban location, and level of regional development – to be important in determining repetition and/or dropout. This status is often combined with the effects of pupil's socio-economic background.

Early studies in the rural United States provide valuable insights into what appears to be one of the most important factors governing school attendance – the opportunity costs of pupils' time. Mcntire(1918) and Folks (1920) reported a strong influence of seasonal farm demands on pupils attendance. Mcntire (1918) noted that farm and housework were responsible for nearly half the absences.

Retardation in school work was found coincident with non-attendance. This was found to lead to drop outs. Reavis (1928) who also examined a number of important factors in rural United States, found distance from school to be important determining variable, and to a lesser extent, the salary, educational level, and experience of the teacher. In many developing countries distance from school and the opportunity cost of student's time are acknowledged as some of the important factors influencing attendance, and therefore repetition and dropping.

In their Indian study of elementary and middle level schools Sharma and Sapra (1971) found dropouts and non-dropouts to differ in their attendance rates. Pupils with less than a 60 percent attendance

rate were seen to be potential dropouts. In their Nicaraguan study, Jamison and McNally (1975) found attendance to fluctuate with the farming calendar in rural areas. Agricultural family status was found to be significantly related to non-attendance. This finding is further corroborated by some evidence from East Africa. Mbilinyi (1969, 1974) found regional and locational effects in Tanzania to be less important than the sex of the child, family background and the traditional social structure and stratification among peasants, and traders in the rural areas. His findings indicated that the primary school intake in Tanzania is drawn from the rich and to a certain extent middle level peasants.

From the findings of the above cited studies, we may anticipate to find that in Kenya, repeaters and dropouts are more likely to be from rural than urban schools. We would also expect more female than males to be repeaters or dropouts and more repeaters and dropouts to come from agricultural and pastoralist's families than from non-agricultural and non-pastoralists families. In Kenya, the great majority of the population, work on the land and derive most of their income from farming. It has therefore been observed that poor families who cannot afford to hire extra help find it necessary to draw children from school to work in the family farm or look after cattle (Raju, 1973).

The magnitude of repetition and withdrawal is much higher than it is often thought and despite promotion of enrolments by free education. There is evidence to show that during the 1970s, government policies acted as cause and result of much repetition and

withdrawal (Nkinyangi, 1980). The Briggs group (1973) in 1952 made enquiries into the causes of withdrawal based on the opinions of hundreds of people. They agreed that the main causes of withdrawal were:-

- The distance from home to school.
- Poor school buildings.
- Dull and boring lessons.
- Over crowded classrooms.
- Lack of school furniture.
- The need to work at home on the land or with cattle.
- School fees.
- Repetition of standards.

In 1970, a survey was carried by the education department of the University of Nairobi on the causes of withdrawal, which came up with the same findings as the Briggs group (Raju, 1972). In their Nicaraguan study, Jamison and McNally (1975) found teacher experience to have a positive, significant effect on school attendance. Larger classes (typical of some poor schools and a spreading thin of scarce educational resources) were found to have a significant effect on attendance. This finding implies that attendance figures reflect demand for high quality classroom interaction of experienced teacher and small pupil-teacher ratios.

In Kenya, large numbers of pupils were seen to drop out in standard 1 after the government 'abolished' school fees at the

beginning of 1974. This may be seen as the effect of swollen numbers and the need for school committees to charge 'building fees' to put up new facilities and provide other amenities necessary to meet the enrolments explosion (Ministry of Education, Annual Report, 1974). While the popular demand for schooling has risen, there is mounting evidence that rapid expansion has created a new set of formidable problems:- rising unit costs (Coombs, 1968), and educated unemployment (Shiffield, 1967; Kinyanjui, 1972; and Stewart, 1976).

The 1971 and 1974 World Bank education sector working papers (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) (IBRD) 1971, 1974) also lamented that as enrolments expanded it became difficult, often impossible for educational systems to maintain quality and efficiency. Facilities like classrooms, equipment and teaching materials did not keep pace with the expanding number of pupils. Teacher training lagged behind and the qualification and experience of the teaching force declined. This created serious problems in organization, planning, evaluation and supervision needed to meet the challenge of expansion. The cumulative effect of all these factors was reflected in higher dropout and repeater rates.

There is also increasing polarization in access and promotion based on social class. This is seen in social – economic profiles of drop outs, repeaters and successful pupils, and in the fact that middle and upper class are over represented in their education. These inequalities are further aggregated by differences in the quality of

teachers' education, facilities and other inputs between schools serving different geographical areas and income groups (IBRD, 1974). Shiffield (1971) observes that primary school pupils who either dropout before the end of the cycle or fail to go to secondary schools are rising in number in Africa. The problem with them is that they are unable either to find a job or places to be admitted in secondary schools. In Kenya it is estimated that less that half of those who enter primary school complete the cycle and those reaching standard eight, approximately a quarter go to secondary (court and Ghai, 1974, Rado, 1974, Raju, 1973). There are also high repetition rates at virtually all grades in the primary schools (King; 1974).

To support these early scholars, Otieno,Oduor and Yusuf (2005) said that the Kenya National Association of parents was outraged that more than 340,000 pupils who sat last years KCPE would miss form one places. The association said:

> It is wrong for the Minister for Education, Prof. George Saitoti to talk about more than 300,000 pupils missing form one places without offering alternatives. We would hate to see a lot of standard eight drop outs who have nothing to do. It is shame that our government does not have a concrete plan for the large number of children graduating from primary schools (Otieno, et al. 2005:4).

There is good evidence and sound arguments in regard to premature withdrawal from schools as a serious waste from the point

of view of both child and parents and government. Withdrawal is a total loss of effort and resource. A child who withdraws may have deprived a child who would have persevered of a place (Gadgil, 1955). It becomes necessary therefore to establish the level of repetition and withdrawal in Bumula division since FPE was introduced in 2003 with an aim of finding a solution to the problem.

Funding of free primary education

Expenditures on education constitute the largest and often the most rapidly growing component of public expenditure in most developing countries (Coombs, 1968). Public expenditure on education has grown at a faster rate than total public expenditures, public revenue or national income (IBRD, 1971). A comprehensive World Bank (IBRD) study of thirty developing countries shows that between 1960 – 1965, for example the share of education in public expenditure increased in average from 13% to 15%. In the same period, public expenditure in education rose from 3% to 4% of gross national product (GNP) (IBRD, 1971). A further analysis of thirty African countries for which data was available for the period 1960 – 1973, shows that the share of education in the public expenditure of those countries increased on the average from 15% - 19% (UNESCO, 1976).

In Kenya, education budget grew 100%, pushing the increase to 14% (development plan, 1970 – 1971, 1974 – 1978). If education will grow at the same rate, then the whole of the government's budget

would be taken over by education in matter of 10 – 15 years ("what is the future of Kenyan schools", 1976). This pattern reflects high social demand for education and also as a reflection of the planners and politicians perception of the importance of education in development. Studies in both developed and developing shows a positive relationship between a persons earning and type and amount of education received (Helmchen, 1980)

According to the statistical abstracts of the ministry of education of 2002/03, parliament approved a supplementary budget of about 2.5 billion to fund FPE. The Nation team (2003) said that each pupil was to get kshs.406 annually for activity, maintenance, tuition, support staff wages, electricity, water, telephone, postage and other expenditures. The Minister for Education Prof. George Saitoti made it very clear that the money was to purchase materials that are core to learning and nothing else like uniform and shoes. He further revealed that the government had been able to solicit support from donors and agencies like the World Bank and oil producing and exporting countries (OPEC).

A consideration of the distribution of expenditure in education by individuals is an important compliment to the discussion of the distribution of public expenditure. Before primary education was made free, poor farmers spent their meagre income a year to educate their children. Sometimes parents were forced to withdraw their children from school due to lack of fees (Kinyanjui, 1974). The study

therefore intends to investigate the effect of government funding in education on school enrolment in Bumula division, Bungoma district.

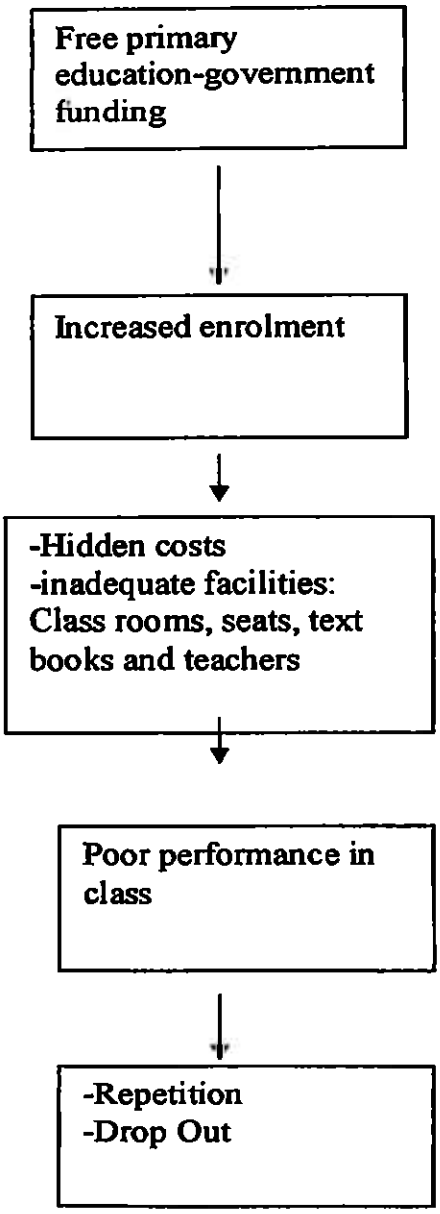
Hidden costs of education

Each step taken to increase participation in primary education, like the lengthening of the cycle in 1984 to eight years in primary education, four years in secondary education and four year in university education (8-4-4) and the declaration of FPE in 2003 has had serious and sometimes un anticipated implications for school financing and instruction (Ministry of Education, 1985). While education policies affecting school expansion are made at national level, much of the onus for carrying out government policies directives is borne by local communities and parents who must raise funds for school facilities and equipment. Elisha (1984) says education is not free. He mentions the money for weekend and night coaching and building fund. The situation is worsened when a child repeats because it means additional outlays to scarce financial resources (Nkinyangi, 1980b). These similar sentiments were expressed by Mulinge (1984) who observed in his study on FPE in Machakos district that although free education had increased enrolment in lower primary school, some of the problems it was intended to solve still remains. The major problems according to him were; dropping out of school, absenteeism, repetition and low performance in academics. Mulinge concludes that the abolition of school fees did not improve access to all for a seven

years primary education and retention of those who enroll in Kenya. He continues to say that with free education, schooling became more expensive and it costs parents more than it used to be. That there are cases where parents paid as much as Kshs.500/= per pupil to cater for swollen classes. Other levies according to him included activity fees, examination fees, mocks and trial tests, watchman salaries and charges on desks. Mulinge suggests that there is need for more coherent government thinking on matters pertaining to primary drop-out, absenteeism, poor performance and repetition. He argues that removal of fees has not offered a solution to these problems as it was expected. Instead, it has tended to heighten the problems. That Kenya does not have a mass education. Primary education is not universal and a very small proportion of the school age proceeds to standard seven. A big proportion of those who enroll into standard one every year drop out, some even before reaching standard four. This current study therefore attempts to verify these findings and conduct further research in this area to find a solution to this disturbing issue of rising cost of education.

Although theoretically little has been noted on positive aspects of free primary education a gap exists on how FPE has been beneficial to primary school pupils. Most of the previous studies were looking at the negative aspects of free primary education; a gap exists on how achievements of FPE can be increased while limiting the failures of the policy. Hence the study seeks to fill this gap.

Fig. 1: Conceptual frame work of the study



The above framework shows the relationship between the variables s created by FPE the model illustrates that the introduction of free

The above framework shows the relationship between the variables s created by FPE the model illustrates that the introduction of free primary education in the public primary schools led to increased enrolment. Increased enrolment in turn led to hidden costs of schooling and inadequate facilities such as class rooms, seats/desks, text books, teachers and games and sports facilities. The result of hidden costs and inadequate facilities were poor performance in academics hence repetition and drop out.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, their validity and reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

Research design

Borg & Gall (1989) define research design as procedures used by the researcher to explain relationships between variables to form subjects into groups administer and analyze data. This study was conducted as an ex-post facto study. An ex post facto research deals with research variables that have already occurred and thus they can not be manipulated or be deliberately arranged through the intervention of the researcher (best and Kahn, 1989). The study involved the variables of enrolment, repetition, drop out, education funding and hidden cost of schooling. These variables are independent and not manipulatable. These effects of FPE have already occurred and therefore cannot be changed, altered or prevented from occurring. One can only achieve evaluation not by manipulation of the variables but selecting of individuals in whom the variable is present, absent and or weak or strong.

Target population

Mulusa (1988) defines target population as a group or category which has one or more characteristics common and has been selected

as a focus of study. It is also known as the "universe" and it is this group that a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research.

The target population for this study consisted of 84 head teachers (all heads of the 84 primary schools), 252 class teachers of Std. one to three (each school has at least a class teacher for each class) and the AEO. According to the information obtained from the Bungoma District Education Officer (DEO) the district has seven divisions one of which is Bumula. The Division has 84 schools and a population of 46,468 pupils according to the monthly returns of May 2005. The subjects consisted of 30 Head teachers, 90 class teachers of standard 1-3 and the A.E.O. because they are directly involved in the registration and management of education. Class 1-3 was chosen because FPE was introduced in Std One in 2003 and now this cohort is in Std Three.

Sample and sampling procedure

A sample is a smaller part of the population, which is carefully selected to represent all the main traits of the whole population. Sampling is a means or techniques used in selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as a representative of that population (Borg & Gall, 1989).

According to Ary (1979) the inclusion of at least 30 subjects of the accessible population in a descriptive study is adequate. A total of 30 primary schools were randomly selected for the study. The researcher used these 30 schools only so that data collected could be

manageable taking in consideration that both class teachers of standards one and three, head teachers and the Area Education Officer were used. To select the 30-sample schools from the population, simple random sampling method was used because the target population is homogeneous (only day mixed public schools). The names of all the schools were written, mixed in a basket thoroughly and then picked 30 sample schools. The head teacher and only one class teacher in each school was selected purposively because they have interacted with pupils closely. In total 30 head teachers and 90 class teachers were used in the study. This enabled the researcher to get the information required as compared to other teachers in schools. In addition, one divisional education officer was selected purposively because he is the only AEO, in the area and is able to provide vital information on the challenges of FPE.

Research instruments

The main research instrument in this study was the questionnaire. It was chosen because it helped the respondents to give answers even to sensitive questions especially as they were not required to indicate their names. Three sets of questionnaires were designed by the researcher: an interview schedule for the Area Education Officer (A.E.O), a questionnaire for the head teachers and the class teachers of Standard 1-3.

AEO's interview schedule

The AEOs questionnaire had 8 items. These items were designed to elicit the AEO's personal background, number of schools in the Division, pupils enrolment, staffing, preparation of teachers to handle FPE, sources of funding for FPE, challenges of implementing FPE and proposals for dealing with the challenges. Two types of question items were presented in the questionnaire: structured and unstructured. In the structured question, several options were given among them which the respondent was expected to choose what he/she thought was the correct answer. The unstructured items required the respondent to give a brief explanation.

Head teachers' questionnaire

The head teachers questionnaire had 25 items. These items were designed to elicit the head teachers' personal background, school facilities, pupils enrolment, staffing, dropout of pupils, repetition, a likert scale rating the implementation of FPE and problems faced in implementing FPE. Two types of question items were presented in the questionnaire; structured and unstructured. In the structures questions, several options were given among them which the respondents were expected to indicate the one that refers to his/her case. The unstructured questions needed an explanation or reference to school records.

Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire had 8 items designed to elicit the teachers' personal background, major causes of repetition in lower primary dues still paid by parents, major causes of premature withdrawal in lower primary, opinion on the hidden costs of schooling, gender that drops out of school mostly and a likert scale rating the implementation of free primary Education. The questionnaire items were also of two types: Structured and unstructured. In the structured form, several options were provided from which the respondent was expected to indicate the one he/she feels is the correct answer. Unstructured questions required brief explanation.

Instrument validity

The study applied content validity. This validity shows whether the test items represent the content that the test intended to measure (Borg and Gall, 1989). Content validity ensured that the instruments had covered all the areas to be examined. A supervisor in the Department of Educational Administration and Planning reviewed the questionnaires and made adjustments. They were further ascertained through the results of the pilot study. In the pilot Study, the whole procedure of the research was carried out on four head teachers and twelve class teachers of standard 1-3. The AEO was not piloted because he was the only one to be used in the main research. These subjects were randomly selected from the sampling frame.

The pilot study was undertaken in order to get an overall appraisal of the questionnaires. In the try out instruments, the researcher was able to identify those items that were either unclear or open to misinterpretation. Such questions were rephrased in order for them to elicit the desired information during the main study. Respondents who were involved in the pilot study were excluded from the main study in order to control extraneous influence on the findings due to their prior knowledge of the information being sought by the questionnaire.

Instrument reliability

- Reliability is an index of the degree to which the instrument measures the same attributes over a period of time. It is related to the precision of the measuring instrument. A precise or reliable measure will give exactly the same reading on different occasions provided that the attribute being measured does not vary in value (Vernon, 19674). This means the scores obtained in the 2 halves of the test items in the questionnaire should be the same on different occasions the test is given to the same subject. The pre-test assisted in determining the accuracy clarity and suitability of the instrument (Mulusa, 1989).

Data collection procedures

The researcher applied for and acquired a research permit from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. After getting this permit permission was sought from the D.E.O. Bungoma District to

visit the selected schools for introduction and distribution of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were self administered that is they were presented to the respondents by the researcher, instructions given and the respondents just filled in the gaps or ticked where applicable.

Completed questionnaires for the main study were collected after two weeks to give them enough time to familiarize themselves with the questionnaire before filling. Clarifications were made where necessary and the purpose of the study was explained in the simplest language possible so that they can provide correct information.

Data analysis techniques

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentage mean and frequency using the Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS). In analyzing enrolment and dropout, percentage was used to establish comparisons between years. For enrolment, the year of take off of the study (2001) was the year from which the first percentage increases were based. From this year percentage increase for 2002 (over 2001 figures) was calculated. Percentage increases for the rest of the preceding years were similarly based on the figures for the preceding year. This way, the year to year percentage increase for the selected years was arrived at. Percentage increase was compared on pre 2003, 2003 and Post 2003 to test for fluctuations in enrolment trends.

On drop out, the number of withdrawals with regard to gender was expressed as a percentage of the whole class for the particular

year. This was done for the grades 1-3 in all the selected years. A pre 2003 and post 2003 comparison was done to test for any impact of FPE on this variable.

Frequencies were recorded in certain cases, for example, in the area of classrooms, laboratory and library facilities, and teaching staff. Percentages were used to analyze data on cause of repetition, causes of withdrawal and hidden costs of schooling.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the data collected in the study. The chapter is divided into three sections; questionnaires return rate, demographic data of respondents and analysis of data on enrolment, repetition, drop-out, education funding, hidden costs of education and facilities. This data was collected from the, head teachers, class teachers of Standard 1-3 and AEO.

Questionnaire return rate

The researcher sent out 30 questionnaires for head teachers, 90 for class teacher and 1 for the AEO. Twenty two head teachers and sixty six teachers returned the questionnaires, a return rate of 73.3%.

Analysis of demographic data of the respondents

The data presented in this section was obtained from completed questionnaires from head teachers, class teachers and A.E.O. in the selected schools of Bumula Division, Bungoma District. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the demographic data of the head teachers and class teachers as follows:

Head teachers' demographic characteristics

The gender of head teachers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Gender of heads in the selected Schools

N=22

Gender	Frequency	Percent
MALE	19	86.4
FEMALE	3	13.6
TOTAL	**22**	**100.0**

The findings indicate unfair distribution of head teachers on the basis of gender. Majority of them (86%) are males. There are only three female head teachers in the 22 studied schools constituting only 13.6%.

Administrative experience of the head teachers

The administrative experience of head teachers is presented in table 2 as shown.

Table 2

Head teachers' experience

N=22

Experience (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
Under one year	1	4.5
1 – 3	7	32.0
4 – 6	9	40.9
7 – 9	3	13.6
Over 9	2	9.0
Total	**22**	**100.0**

Majority of the heads teachers are experienced administrators. About sixty four percent of them have an experience of 4 and over 9 years. This means the heads are capable of handling the increased enrolment and government funds in the schools.

Demographic characteristics of class teachers

The gender of class teachers is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Gender of class teachers

N=66

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	31	47.3
Female	35	52.7
Total	**66**	**100.0**

From the table, it is shown that female teachers were more than male teachers in being class teachers of standard 1 to 3. Females were 52.7% while males were 47.3%.

Findings of the study

The findings of the study are reported under: - Fluctuation in enrolment, Repetition, Premature withdrawal and state of facilities.

Fluctuation in enrolment

The study looked at three levels; standard 1 – 3 in trying to arrive at yearly total enrolments. Standard 1 – 3 were chosen because they are mainly affected by newly registered beginners who join school at the start of the year. This way the total enrolments for pre 2003, (year of introduction of FPE) and post 2003 years were extracted. The study covered 2001 – 2005.

In the presentation of the findings, three periods, that is pre 2003, 2003 and post 2003 are compared. Pre 2003 period include 2001 -2003, and post 2003 include 2004 – 2005.Table 4 given below shows total class enrolment between 2001 – 2005.

Table 4

Total class enrolment between 2001 – 2005 in the sampled schools

N=22

	Year/ Sex										
	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		Total
Standard	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	831	756	805	814	1044	991	1044	1014	1072	1040	9411
2	802	725	784	782	849	850	919	912	992	938	8553
3	758	656	706	692	883	856	859	893	956	936	8195
Total	2391	2137	2295	2288	2776	2697	2822	2819	3020	2914	26159

Pre 2003 Enrolment

2002/2001 period

Enrolment increment was experienced in different schools before 2003. The total enrolment for 2001 was 4528 pupils and the enrolment for 2002 was 4583 pupils in the sampled schools in Bumula Division.

Therefore the increment in total enrolment of 2002 over 2001 was 55 pupils (1.2 %). For the males, enrolment decreased by 4.0 %. For the females, enrolment increased by 7.1% as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Enrolment increment by gender and total in the period 2002 over 2001

N=22

Gender	Enrolment increment	Percent
Male	0	0
Female	151	7.1
Total	151	7.1

The findings show that only girls' enrolment increased in the period 2001 to 2002 as shown in the Table 5 above. Female enrolment increased by 151 pupils between 2001 to 2002.

As regards class enrolment, the findings are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Class enrolment increment 2002 over 2001

N=22

Class	Enrolment increment	Percent
1	32	45.0
2	39	55.0
3	0	0
Total	**71**	**100.0**

From the table Std 2 had the highest enrolment increment of 39 pupils (55.0%). It was followed by Std 1 with an increment of 32 pupils (45%). Std 3 enrolment dropped by 22.5%.

Enrolment for the period 2003 over 2002

The period witnessed greatest enrolments in nearly all schools (See Table 7).

Table 7

Enrolment increment by gender and total, 2003/2002

N=22

Gender	Enrolment increment	Percent
Male	481	10.5
Female	409	9.0
Total	**890**	**19.4**

The total enrolment for 2002 was 4583 pupils and enrolment for 2003 was 5473 pupils. Therefore total increment in enrolment was 890 pupils (19.4%). Males increased by 10.5% while females by 9.0%. More boys enrolled than girls. As regards class enrolment many pupils enrolled particularly in Std 1 as education had been declared free in 2003. Other grades also experienced high rates of enrolment. (See Table 8).

Table 8

Class enrolment increment, 2003/2002

N=22

Class	Enrolment	Percent
1	416	46.7
2	133	15.0
3	341	38.3
Total	890	100.0

Post 2003 enrolments

The high increments of 2003 over 2002 were repeated. Std 1 had the highest enrolment although the enrolment of other grades was also high (see table 9).

Table 9

Enrolment increment by gender 2004/2003

N=22

Gender	Enrolment increment	Percent
Male	46	0.8
Female	122	2.4
Total	**168**	**3.2**

The total enrolment for 2003 was 5473 pupils and enrolment for 2004 was 5641 pupils. During this period enrolment increased by 168 pupils (3.2%). Male increment was 0.8% while for the female it was 2.4%. As regards class enrolment the findings are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Class enrolment increment in the period 2004 over 2003

N=22

Class	Enrolment increment	Percent
1	23	13.6
2	132	78.6
3	13	7.7
Total	**168**	**100.0**

From the table Std one had the highest enrolment increment of 46.7% Std 2 had an increment of 38.3 % while Std 3 had an increment of 14.9 %.

Enrolment in the period 2005/2004

As shown in Table 11 the 2005/2004 period enrolment were also high like those of 2003 – 2004. Increments were witnessed in virtually all the grades.

Table 11

Enrolment increment by gender 2005/2004

N=22

Gender	Enrolment increment	Percent
Male	198	3.5
Female	95	1.7
Total	**293**	**5.2**

The total enrolment for 2004 was 5641 pupils and enrolment for 2005 was 5934 pupils. Hence overall change in enrolment between 2004 – 2005 was 293 pupils (5.2 %). Male enrolment increment was 3.5% while female increment was 1.7 %. As regards class enrolment increment the findings are shown in table 12.

Table 12

Class enrolment increment in the period 2005/2004

N=22

Class	Enrolment	Percent
1	54	18.4
2	99	33.8
3	140	47.8
Total	**293**	**100.0**

From the table Std 3 had the highest enrolment increment of 47.8 %, std 2 had 33.8 % while Std 1 had 18.4 %. From the findings, enrolment fluctuated between increases and decreases. However a pronounced increase in enrolment was witnessed during and after 2003, the year FPE was introduced. Male enrolment was slightly more than females' enrolment. This was particularly evident in the post 2003 period. Nkinyangi (1980) argued that parents were biased in providing education to their children and favoured males to females.

In summary, it is evident that free primary education has resulted in increased enrolments.

Repetition

Although free primary education promoted enrolments, the findings of the study show that some pupils still repeat in various classes. Asked to state classes in which pupils mostly repeat, the head teachers gave the following responses as shown in table 13.

Table 13

Classes that pupils mostly repeated
N=22

Class	Frequency	Percent
1	2	9.1
2	0	0
3	1	4.5
4	3	13.6
5	2	9.1
6	2	9.1
7	19	86.4
8	14	18.2

From the table, pupils repeat virtually in all the grades except in Std 2. However they mostly repeat in Std 7 given by 86.4% respondents.

Asked to give the reason why pupils mostly repeat in Std 7 the head teachers gave the following responses to account for this scenario (see Table 14). From the table it is evident the need for high mean scores in national examinations and better positions in the division made head teachers to deny some pupils places or chances in std eight. This reason was given by 68.2 % of the head teachers. The findings indicate many schools still screen pupils in an attempt to do better in examinations.

Table 14
Head teachers' responses on pupils' repetition
N=22

Response	Frequency	Percent
need for high mean score	15	68.2
adolescent influence	1	4.5
child labour	2	9.1
cultural influence	1	4.5
poor teaching	4	18.2
aged pupils	1	4.5
peer group influence	1	4.5

As regards the major cause of repetition in lower primary the class teachers gave the following responses as shown in table 15.

Table 15

Major causes of repetition in lower primary according to teachers

N=66

Response	frequency	Percent
Lack of pupil's interest in academic work and therefore poor performance in exams.	61	92.4
Health problems	60	90.9
Unsuitable studying conditions at home leading to poor performance in exams.	60	90.9
Lack of encouragement by parents to study hard.	58	87.9
Poor facility in schools	41	62.1
Constant absence due to financial problems leading to poor performance.	26	39.4
Poor teaching in schools	21	31.8

Ranked first in importance as a major cause of repetition was lack of pupil interest in academic work and therefore poor performance in

examination given by 92.4% respondents. A pupil who has no interest in learning will not take his/her school work seriously. This will lead to poor performance in class and the child may be forced by the school administration to repeat in order to improve before can be promoted to the next class.

The second in position as a major cause for repetition were health problems and unsuitable studying conditions at home given by 90.9%. Some pupils repeat because they could have been sick. A child may also repeat due to health problems of his/her parents or guardians. Such problems make a pupil to be absent from school and in turn cause poor performance.

Poor studying conditions at home come mainly as a result of poverty. Many parents, particularly who are not employed or do not have a reliable source of income can not give their children materials and facilities required for reading such as study rooms, light and textbooks (Mbilinyi, 1969, 1974). The respondents said that lack of adequate facilities lead to poor examination results. Lack of encouragement by parents was ranked 3rd with a percentage of 87.4

while the fourth in importance was poor facilities in school with a percentage of 62.15%.

In the 5th position was constant absence due to financial problems leading to poor performance with a percentage of 39.4. This means schools still charge certain levies which parents pay. These have been termed as "Hidden costs of schooling", and pupils who do not pay them are sent home forcing them to be absent from school for a certain duration leading to poor performance and hence repetition. However, out of 66 teachers, 83.3% said pupils are not sent home if they fail to pay the dues in time. It is only 11.7% who said pupils are sent home if they fail to pay. From this finding, majority of the schools do not send pupils home over payments. They have heeded the government's directive that no child should be denied access to education or sent home over any payments. According to the information obtained from the A.E.O, the government and donors are the financiers of FPE. Each pupils gets Kshs. 406 annually to cater for activity, maintenance, tuition support staff wages, electricity, water, telephone, postage and other expenses.

Hidden costs of schooling

From the foregoing paragraphs, hidden costs still exist in schools. Class teachers were asked the levies parents still pay. From the number of times the various expenses were mentioned, a rank ordering was done and they emerged as follows in order of importance (Table 16).

Table 16

Hidden costs of schooling as reported by teachers

N=66

Levy	Frequency	Percent
Feeding schemes	50	75.8
Building funds	36	54.5
Activity fee	0	0
Mock and trial tests fee	50	75.8
Examination fees	35	53.0
Dues on night study	19	28.8
Equipment levy	6	9.1
Watchman wages	2	3.1

From the table, important charges given by 75.8 were feeding schemes (breakfast and lunch) and mock and trial tests fee, as shown from the table.

Other charges not listed but mentioned include desks, uniforms, learning materials, field trips and holiday coaching.

Poor teaching as a cause of repetition was given by 31.8% respondents. Other causes given include child labour, screening of pupils, lack of money for secondary education, circumcision, congested class, death of parents, indiscipline, natural calamities and understaffing

From this analysis, it is evident that lack of pupil interest in academic work and therefore poor performance in examination is major cause of repetition in many schools in Bumula Division, Bungoma District.

Premature withdrawal rates

The findings are presented in the order of pre 2003, 2003 and post 2003. Withdrawal rate is calculated for three periods: pre 2003, 2003

and post 2003 as a percentage out of the total withdrawal within the five years. Total class withdrawal is shown in Table 17 below.

Table 17

Total class withdrawal between 2001 to 2005

N=22

Standard	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
1	96	103	73	70	39	56	33	41	33	38	582
2	98	99	60	64	46	85	99	71	47	61	731
3	97	97	107	95	45	65	34	32	24	42	638
Total	291	299	240	229	130	206	166	145	104	141	195

The table shows pupils still withdraw from many primary schools.

2001-2002 period withdrawal rates

The findings of period 2001 – 2002 are presented in table 19 as shown below. From the table, total withdrawal was 1059 pupils (54.3%). For males it was 531 (27.2%) while for the females it was 528 pupils (27.1 %)

Table 18

Withdrawal Rate by Gender in 2001 -2002

N=22

Gender	Withdrawal rate	Percent
Male	531	27.2
Female	528	27.1
Total	1059	54.3

2003 period withdrawal rates

Table 19

Withdrawal rate by gender n 2003

N=22

Gender	Withdrawal rate	Percent
Male	130	6.7
Female	206	10.5
Total	336	17.2

As shown in the table above total withdrawal in 2003, the year of free primary education was 336 (17.2 %). Male withdrawal was 130 (6.7 %) while female drop out was 206 (10.5 %).

2004-2005 period withdrawal rates

During this period, total withdrawal was 556 pupils (28.5 %). Male withdrawal was 270 pupils (13.8 %) while female withdrawal was 286 (14.7 %) (See table 20 below)

Table 20

Withdrawal rate by gender in 2004-2005

N=22

Gender	Withdrawal rate	Percent
Male	270	13.8
Female	286	14.7
Total	556	28.5

From the above tables withdrawal rate was high during the 2001-2002 period in which 1059 pupils (54.3 %) pupils dropped out of school. This rate greatly decreased in 2003 to 17.2 % meaning FPE retained many pupils in schools. Withdrawal rate even after 2003 was low (28.5 %) compared 54.3% of 2001-2002.

As regards sex withdrawal, more girls dropped out of school at an average percentage of 17.4%, compared to the percentage of boys of 15.5%. Therefore free primary education has not completely stopped

premature withdrawal in primary schools. Class withdrawal rates are shown in Table 21.

Table 21

Class withdrawal rates, 2001 – 2005

N = 22

Class	Total withdrawal	Percent
1	582	29.8
2	731	37.5
3	638	32.7
Total	**1951**	**100.0**

The findings show Standard two had the highest withdrawal rate of 37.5%. It was followed by Standard three with 32.7% and Standard one with 29.8%

Causes of withdrawal

Asked to choose possible causes of withdrawal from a given list the respondents gave the following responses as shown in table 22.

Table 22

Causes of withdraw in lower primary in Bumula Division Bungoma District

N=66

Cause	Frequency	Percent
Lack of encouragement by parents	57	86.4
Peer influence	54	81.8
Need for domestic labour	52	78.5
Health problems	50	75.8
Unsuitable condition for studying at home.	49	74.2
Decision that school work not be beneficial	45	68.3
Fear of failing examination	28	41.5
Fear of punishment by cruel teachers	14	20.6
Pregnancy among girls	9	12.3
Financial problems	6	7.9

From the ranking of the responses, lack of encouragement by parents was a major cause of withdrawal given by 86.4%. Children may not know the value of education unless encouraged by parents and friends. Lack of parental support may cause withdrawal. In the 2nd and 3rd positions were peer influence and need for domestic and family labour given by 81.8% and 78.5% respectively. Families which cannot hire

labour may occasionally withdraw pupils from school to work on the farms. Mcntire (1918) and Folks (1920) observed a strong influence of seasonal farm demands on pupils' attendance in the rural United States, saying it is responsible for nearly half the absences.

Other causes given by respondents were: bad company, natural calamities, gender imbalance, poverty, lack of role models, rebel conflicts, lack of teaching facilities and child labour.

Asked on the gender that drops mostly out of school, 9.2% respondents said males while 90.8% chose females. The reasons for choosing females were: - pregnancy, fast maturity, early marriage, fear exams, health problems and peer influence.

State of facilities

In measuring the success of any education system, once can not over look the importance of facilities afforded by the system as indicators of its strength. During this research, the following indicators were assessed: - class rooms and seats, library, teaching personnel, games and sports facilities and text books. Other facilities like rulers, exercise books and geometrical sets were also considered.

Classrooms and seats

Many schools are experiencing shortages of facilities. Most of the schools (95.5%) had inadequate classrooms. Although classrooms were permanent (90.9%) that is built of bricks or stones with iron sheet roofs, 54.5% class rooms had earth floors and 40.9% unplastered walls. Pupils in more than half the schools have to water the floors to curb the dust or smear the floors with cow dung weekly. One school had mud walls, which is dangerous because they can collapse especially during the rain season. Equally dangerous were uncemented brick walls in 40.9% of the schools which can easily also crack and collapse.

Although 59.1% schools have wooden windows, there were 18.2% schools with no windows at all. This means pupils in these schools greatly suffer during the rainy and windy seasons, when they actually sometimes heap in one corner for shelter. Nevertheless nearly all schools have at least a door on the classrooms except one which did not have any door at all. Thirty one percent schools have doors on all the classes, meaning majority of the schools lack doors.

On sitting facilities the findings indicate that 49.8% of the schools had an average of between 8-18 desks per class in an average class size of 70 pupils. It was only one school (1.4%) which had an average of 34 desks in one class of about 70 pupils. Sitting patterns differ from one class to another and from school to school. Sharing patterns ranged from 3-6 pupils per desk in Std. 1-3 (Table 23). The table shows that the minimum sharing patterns recorded was 3 pupils per desk in all the three classes (Std. 1-3) and the maximum recorded pattern was 6 pupils per desk again in all the grades. Taking any sharing of four and over pupils per desk as overcrowding, there was over crowding on desks in 85% of the schools in standard 1, 80% Std 2 and 70% Std 3. The findings therefore indicate inadequate seats.

Table 23

Sitting arrangement per desk, per class

N = 22

Number of pupils per desk	Class/percentage of schools		
	STD 1	STD 2	STD 3
1 Pupil	-	-	-
2 Pupils	-	-	-
3 Pupils	15.0	20.0	30.0
4 Pupils	60.0	60.0	55.0
5 Pupils	20.0	15.0	5.0
6 Pupils	5.0	5.0	10.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Note: Dashes indicate the absence of a sitting arrangement.

Library facilities

The findings indicate that only two (9.1%) schools have a library building. From the findings 44.6% of the schools had library books ranging from 501 – 2000 which was between average and very good and 55.4% schools had books ranging between 250 – 500 which was below average.

Library facilities are essential in any education system.. They assist pupils to broaden their perception in various topics in the process of learning.

Laboratory facilities

All schools did not have a laboratory. This means teaching of sciences in these schools is purely theoretical.

Teaching personnel

To achieve good performance in all grades, we need adequate, trained and experienced teaching force. The research revealed that most schools had trained teachers. Out of 200 teachers found in the 22 schools, 50% were P1, distributed in all schools, 9% were P2 found in

12 schools, I % were untrained, found in 2 schools and 40% were also distributed in 21 schools. Although the grade distribution varied from one school to another, almost the whole teaching force is trained. The major problem facing the teachers is then unequal teacher-pupils ratio. Since classes are not unequal, some teachers handle bigger classes while others handle smaller classes. The teacher-pupil allocation ranges from as low as 30 pupils in one school to 130 in another school. Eighty percent of the schools had an average class enrollment of 50-130 pupils per class. This means in many schools the normal teacher pupil ratio of 1:40 is rarely observed, thus affecting the teacher pupil contact and full control of the class. As indicated on the establishment of the teachers, 72.5% of the schools had between 6-9 teachers handling 8 classes or may be more than one stream. The records obtained from the A.E.O portray a worse scenario. The division has 84 public primary schools with a total teaching force of 745 teachers against 46,468 pupils.the3re is a shortfall of 490 teachers (1202 streams-745 teachers). The teachers training and their number in the studied schools is as shown in Table 24.

Table 24

Professional qualification of teachers
N=22

Grade	Frequency	Percent
P1	100	50
P2	18	9.0
ATS	80	40
Untrained	2	1.0
Total	**200**	**100.0**

Note: P1, P2 and ATS are grades acquired based on ones level of education but after passing a college examination or an interview. ATS I is the highest grade in this grading. It is equivalent to Job group 'M'.

Sports and games facilities

All schools offered some games and sports including football, volleyball and netball. However, only 90.9% schools had a football pitch, 9.1% schools are missing, 90.9% schools have a volleyball

pitch, 9.1% schools are missing and 86.4% schools have a netball pitch, 13.6% schools are missing. The findings indicate that some schools do not offer physical education and training to their pupils. The two schools (9.1%) which do not have a football ground may not be taking out pupils for P.E. which is a compulsory subject in all schools.

Provision of textbooks and other learning facilities

About seventy seven percent of the schools provide pupils with geometrical sets, and rulers and all schools (100%) provide exercise books to pupils. As it was earlier revealed by the A.EO, each pupil receives Kshs. 406 yearly, part of which is used for tuition.

The sharing of text books ranged as high as 20 pupils per English book, 20 pupils per Kiswahili book, 20 pupils per mathematics book, 54 pupils sharing Geography, History, Civics and Religious Education (GHCRE) book, and 54 pupils sharing science book (see Table 25). Patterns differed from class to class, and from school to school. However in English, Kiswahili and Mathematics, about 90% of the schools had a sharing ratio of between 2-6 pupils per book in all

classes except in one school with a ratio of 20 Pupils per book in standard 1-6 and a ratio of between 12-15 in Std 7-8. This finding indicates that most schools have used the money they are given by government to purchase text books in these subjects. As regards GHCRE and science, although about 60% of the schools have a sharing ratio of between 2-4 pupils per book, the highest sharing rate of 54 pupils per book is found in standard 5 GHCRE and science in one school (4.5%). Almost 30% of the studied schools have a sharing pattern of between 7-20 pupils per book in these two subjects. This implies most of the pupils in these schools rely on teachers notes as the books are not enough for them.

Table 25

Sharing of text books per subject

	SUBJECT														
	ENGLISH			KISWAHILI			MATHS			GHCRE			SCIENCE		
STD	AV.	LR	HR	AV.	LR	HR	AV.	LR	HR	AV.	LR	HR	AV.	LR	HR
1	8	3	20	8	3	20	8	3	20	12.7	2	45	12.7	3	45
2	8	3	20	8	3	20	8	3	20	15.5	2	48	15.5	3	48
3	8	3	20	8	3	20	8	3	20	11.4	2	50	11.4	3	54
4	7.5	2	20	7.5	2	20	7.2	2	20	11.4	2	50	11.4	2	50
5	7.5	2	20	7.5	2	20	7.3	2	20	12	2	54	12	2	54
6	6	2	15	6.5	2	15	7.3	2	20	6.7	2	15	6.7	2	15
7	6	2	15	6.5	2	15	7.3	2	20	6.7	2	15	6.7	2	15
8	4.4	1	12	4.7	1	12	5	1	15	5.4	2	10	6.4	2	10

KEY

AV- Average

L.R- Lowest recorded

H.R- Highest recorded

From the study, facilities were measured in terms of adequacy or inadequacy of classrooms, classroom sizes, over crowding, the provision of exercise books, rulers and geometrical sets. The size and quality of teaching force, library, and laboratory and games facilities

were reviewed, and sitting patterns, that is, the sharing of desks among pupils in the various classes were also observed.

The findings show FPE led to increased enrolment. However pupils still repeat and withdraw from many primary schools. Schools were also seen to be lacking teaching and learning facilities.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The government introduced free primary education (FPE) as a move whose objective was to increase enrolment and retention of those enrolled until they complete the primary cycle of eight years. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of FPE on enrolment, repetition, drop out and facilities. Data was collected by using a questionnaire designed for head teachers, class teachers and AEO.

Findings show that the abolition of payment led to increased enrolments in primary schools. Between 2003 – year of removal of payment, enrolments went up by 1351 pupils. Although enrolments were highest in standard one, the number of children enrolled in other grades; 2- 3 also increased in the period 2003 – 2005. Standard One enrolment was 6205 pupils, Standard Two enrolment was 5460 pupils and Standard Three enrolment was 5385 pupils. Free primary education therefore greatly improved enrolment in Bumula division, Bungoma District.

Pupils still repeat in many primary schools. In lower primary (Std 1 - 3) repetition was majorly caused by lack of pupil interest in academic work and therefore poor performance in exams, health problems and unsuitable studying conditions at home leading to poor performance, hence repetition. In upper primary (Std. 4 – 8) repetition was high in standard seven. Head teachers admitted few pupils in standard eight in an attempt to increase on their mean scores in examination.

Withdrawal rates recorded before 2003 were higher (1059 pupils) than those recorded after 2003 (556pupils). In 2003 withdrawal was 236 pupils. Therefore the research reveals that free primary education significantly reduced withdrawal. Withdrawal was majorly caused by lack of encouragement by parents and peer influence.

Females were seen to be the most dropping out of school at an average of 17.4%.

Schools have poor facilities which deteriorate year after year. The worst hit area of textbooks was GHCRE and science subjects where as many as 54 pupils shared one book in one school sampled. On average 8 pupils shared one text book.

There is overcrowding due to shortages of classrooms. Some classes are as big as 130 pupils and are therefore hard to manage and teach effectively. Sitting patterns and sharing of desks is also poor in which case as many as 4 pupils shared a desk. Schools lack library, laboratory and some are missing playgrounds. There is also an acute shortage of teachers. The average teacher: pupil ratio is 1: 62.

Conclusions

Although FPE increased enrolment in the schools, some of the problems it intended to solve still remain. The major problems are repetition and drop out. Not all pupils enrolled are retained until they complete the primary cycle in Bumula Division. Parents still pay for levies such as building and harambee fund, desks and examination money. They also buy additional reading materials. Education is not yet universal since education is not free and compulsory (not all school age children are in school).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be made in an attempt to make free education achieve all its objectives:-

1. The government should abolish all levies charged in schools and directly finance and support all school projects and activities. This will ensure all school age children go and remain in school to create universal education. The government should assist in the construction and maintaining classrooms, libraries, laboratories and provide desks.
2. Parents be educated on the importance of education for their children, so that all parents can send their children to school and encourage them to remain there until they complete the primary cycle.
3. Primary education is made free and compulsory and parents failing to take their children to school should be taken to a court of law.

4. The government should decentralize to the district level the disbursement of funds to schools, to avoid delaying or even missing to send money to some schools.
5. Staffing should be improved to reduce the high shortfall of 490 teachers in the division and work load to the teachers.

Suggestions for further Research

The study did not involve parents and pupils. Hence the researcher makes these suggestions for further research.

A similar research can be done in the entire district of Bungoma .

A study should also be done on the influence of teaching and learning facilities on pupil's academic performance.

Lastly a study also be done on the challenges of free primary education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

HEAD TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of free primary education on teaching and learning. You can greatly contribute to the attainment of this goal by giving honest information.

The information you give will be treated as confidential and will be used for the purpose of this study only. You do not need to write your name in the questionnaire.

Answer the questions by putting a tick in the brackets or explaining where necessary.

Part I. **Demographic background of the respondents**

1. What is your sex?

   Male ( ) Female ( )

2. How long have you been a head teacher in this school? ----------

   ---

Part II. **School quality**

3. Do you have a library? Yes ( ) No ( )
4. What is the approximate number of library books? ----------

---

a) less than 250 (very poor) ---------- **(tick correct answer)**

b) 251 – 500 (poor) ----------

c) 501 - 750 (average) ----------

d) 751 – 1000 (good) ----------

e) 1000 – 2000 (very good) ----------

f) Over 2000 (excellent) ----------

5. Do you have laboratory facilities? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes, what is the quality of the equipment? **Tick correct answer**

(a) well equipped _____

(b) averagely equipped _____

(c) under equipped _____

6. Are classrooms adequate or inadequate? Yes ( ) No ( )
   a) adequate ----------
   b) inadequate ----------
7. What is the nature of the classrooms? Yes ( ) No ( )

(a) Permanent _____ Yes ( ) No ( )

(b) Temporary _____ Yes ( ) No ( )

8. What type of roofs does your school buildings have? **Tick correct answer**

(a) Iron sheets _____

(b) Grass thatched _____

(c) Others (specify) _____

9. What floors does your classrooms have? **Tick correct answer**

(a) Cemented

(b) Earth

10. What kind of walls do your classrooms have? **Tick correct answer**

(a) Cemented brick walls

(b) Uncemented brick / stone walls

(c) Mud walls

11. What type of windows do your classrooms have? **Tick correct answer**

(a) Wooden

(b) Glass

(c) None

12. State: (a) the number of rooms with doors.

_____

(b) The number of rooms without doors.

_____

13. What is the average classroom enrolment? ----------

---

14. How many teachers do you have on your staff? ----------

---

15. Indicate the number of teachers under the following categories?

1. SI ---------- 2. PI ----------

--

3. P2 ---------- 4. P3 ----------

---

5. P4 ---------- 6. Untrained ----------

--

7. Others specify ----------

---

16. What is the average number of desks per class ----------

---

17. What is the average number of pupils per desk in the classes -------

---

CLASS	NO. OF DESKS	AVERAGE NO. OF PUPILS PER DESK
1		
2		
3		

18. What is the number of textbooks per class and average number of pupils sharing each book.

CLASS	SUBJECTS				
	ENG. AVE. SHARING	KISW. AVE. SHARING	Maths. AVE SHARING	GHCRE AVE. SHARING	SCIENCE AVE. SHARING
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

19. Are pupils provided with:

1. Exercise books..... Yes ( ) No ( )
2. Geometrical sets..... Yes ( ) No ( )
3. Rulers..... Yes ( ) No ( )

Part III School Records

20. Enrolment Before free education.

2001

CLASS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
1			
2			
3			

2002

CLASS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
1			
2			
3			

Enrolment after free education

2003

CLASS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
1			
2			
3			

2004

CLASS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
1			
2			
3			

2005

CLASS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
1			
2			
3			

22. Withdrawal in relation to sex /class.

2001

SEX	CLASS			
	1	2	3	TOTAL
M F				
Total				

2002

SEX	CLASS			
	1	2	3	TOTAL
M F				
Total				

After free education.

2003

SEX	CLASS			
	1	2	3	TOTAL
M F				
Total				

2004

SEX	CLASS			
	1	2	3	TOTAL
M F				
Total				

2005

SEX	CLASS			
	1	2	3	TOTAL
M F				
Total				

23. In which class do pupils most repeat?

(a) Tick the class

Class 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

(b) Explain why

.....

.....

.....

24. How do you rate the achievement of free primary education?

a) Very good

b) Good

c) Fair

d) Poor

e) Very poor

25. Do you have any problems with implementing free primary education? Yes ( ) No ( ).

If yes, list the problems down.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you.

Appendix II

CLASS TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of free primary education in teaching and learning. The goal shall be attained if you contribute to it by being honest with the information required.

The information you give will be confidential and will be used for the purpose of this study only.

Please tick the appropriate answer or fill in the blank spaces.

Part I. demographic background of the respondent

1. Your sex: male ( ) female ( )

Part II General Information

2. Do you consider any of the following as major causes of repetition in the lower primary schools? (Tick them).

a) Constant absence due to financial problems leading to poor performance. _____

b) Health problems _____

c) Lack of student interest in academic work and therefore poor performance in exams. _____

d) Poor teaching in schools _____

e) Lack of encouragement by parents to study hard. _____

f) Unsuitable studying conditions at home leading to poor performance in exams. ___

g) Poor facilities in schools and this poor performance in exams._____

h) Other reasons, list them down _____

3. Choose the levy Parents have to pay (tick where applicable)

a. Building and Harambee fund _____

b. Activity fees _____

c. Equipment levy _____

d. For feeding schemes _____

e. Dues on night studies _____

f. Examination fees _____

g. Mock and trial tests fees _____

h. Charges on watchmen salaries _____

i. Others (list them down) _____

4. Are pupils sent home if they fail to pay any of the above levies in the time required?

Yes _____ No. _____

5. Which among the following (if any) do you consider to be major causes of premature withdrawal from lower primary school?

a.Failure to pay at all or in time due to financial problem.

_____

b) 2. Health problems _____

a.Fear of punishment by cruel teachers. _____

b. Peer group influence _____

c.Need for domestic and family holdings, labour _____

d. Lack of encouragement by parents _____

e.Fear of failing exams _____

f. Unsuitable conditions for studying at home _____

g. Decision that school work will not be beneficial in future life.

_____

h. Pregnancy among girls _____

i. Other causes (list them down)

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. The abolition of primary fees made schooling more expensive.

Yes _____ No _____

7. Which gender mostly drop out of school and why? (Male) (Female)

_____

8. How do you rate the implementation of FPE?

a) Very good

b) Good

c) Fair

d) Poor

e) Very poor

Thanks for your cooperation

Appendix III

INTERVIEW FOR AREA EDUCATION OFFICER

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of free primary education on teaching and learning. You can greatly contribute to the attainment of this goal by giving honest information.

The information you give will be treated as confidential and will be used for the purpose of the study only.

You will answer the questions by choosing from the choices read to you by the researcher or explaining where necessary. Please.

1. What is your gender?

   Male ( ) Female ( )

2. (a) How long have you been an Area Educational Officer in this Division?_____

   (b) How many public schools do you have in the division?_____

3. (a) Is school enrolment high or low?

   Low ( ) High ( )

(b) What is the total pupil enrolment in the division?

_____

4. (a) Are schools adequately staffed? Yes ( ) No ( )

(b) If No, what is the total number of teachers in the division and the short fall?

(i) Total number of teachers. _____

(ii) Short fall _____

5. Are the teachers adequately prepared to handle free Primary Education?

Yes ( ) No ( )

If No, what steps are being taken to prepare teachers to handle FPE?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What are the sources of finance for FPE?

a) Government ( )

b) Parents ( )

c) Donors ( )

d) Others specify ( )

7. List any challenges facing the implementation of FPE

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What are your proposals for dealing with the challenges?

_____

Thank you for your co-operation.