

FREE PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION:

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE BY TEACHERS AND PRIMARY
SCHOOL CHILDREN FROM LOW- INCOME GROUPS. A STUDY OF
KAKAMEGA DISTRICT.**

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RURAL SOCIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)**

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.

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DECLARATION

THIS IS MY ORIGINAL WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE.

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29/10/03

DEDICATION

To my parents, my late father whose virtues of kindness, forgiveness and love I have benefited forever and to my mum, her thirst for my education I will never forget.

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ABSTRACT

Universal free primary education had been a campaign manifesto of the NARC government, and although Kenyans had been promised this since independence, for many, this they thought, was a mere vote-catching statement as had been the case when previous governments used it to win support. When the government launched the programme with a bang, many Kenyans were still doubting Thomases and unprepared for it. Public response in order to gain from the pronouncement was overwhelming and class enrollment swelled beyond existing facilities. While the teachers having been demotivated by the previous government's failure to implement their terms of service were despondent. Almost a year since the programme was realized some communities are still evidently ambivalent about its success. Schools having received children some of them who were neither adults nor children, others with scanty literary having dropped out previously due to the demand for levies by schools had not coped up fully with the situation. The parents misconceived free education to include free uniform, shoes and even lunches for their children.

Where's community development encourages participation on the part of the communities, politicians have misused the essence of the program to label teachers who encourage parents to fully participate and own the programme as being anti Government. The teachers have as a result become afraid and accommodated the situation with latent grudge. Many schools still conduct classes in abandoned buildings and tree shades while logs are used in place of desks. The funds provided by the government are for specific items and do not cover construction and expansion of physical facilities. In many cases these funds

delay in reaching schools so that the need for parents and community participation is still called for.

The study has brought out the effects of free education on enrolment, performance, teachers' efficiency and the general attitude of the parents, towards free education.

The observations made were collected through contacts with parents, pupils, teachers and members of the community. The area in focus is Ikolomani Division of Kakamega District which, although densely populated, suffers from low income and low school participation.

The information given here is not exhaustive but it is an attempt to highlight the level of participation and response by the stakeholders as beneficiaries in the government efforts to eradicate ignorance.

The plan to introduce free primary education was noble and timely especially as an attempt to fight ignorance and poverty. It would have been, however, prudent for the government to fully prepare the stakeholders to own and appreciate it in order to ensure their full understanding. This would have assisted in removing the current residual doubts by some stakeholders about its success.

As stated in this report although brief, is quite telling and further research may reveal the situation observed here being evident in other areas of the country. Education planners and implementers of the programme will hopefully find this information valuable for innovative adjustments within the programme for better results.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFA	-	Education For All
UPE	-	Universal Primary Education
KANU	-	Kenya African National Union
UNESCO	-	The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
DDP	-	District Development Plan
PTA	-	Parents Teachers Association
ILO	-	International Labour Organisation
WCEFA	-	World Conference on Education for All
MPET	-	Master Plan for Education and Training
LDC'S	-	Lowest Developed Countries
G8	-	8 Great Wealthy Nations from the Developed World
US	-	United States of America
UN	-	United Nations
GOK	-	Government of Kenya
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
PAR	-	Participatory Action Research
PRA	-	Participatory Rural Appraisal

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The trend in levies for Education has attracted global concern especially in the third World countries.

Oxfam and Action Aid have proposed a compact for Africa known as Education For All (EFA). This is part of a global action plan to deliver on the promise of the compact. The compact which was adapted at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000 envisages partnerships between States, Civil society and the International community to achieve good quality free basic Education for all African children by 2015 (EFA Report 2000).

The efforts by both the local and International forums to achieve this goal are however being frustrated by the expectations of levies by schools.

The EFA report further points out that in many African States, like Chad, Mozambique and Ethiopia, fewer than half of the children who enter School get to the final grade. In 14 other countries, more than one third of the children who start school drop out before completion. All dropout rates may be related to school levies. In Kenya all school levies have been waived and the Government is offering free education in primary schools. This waiving of levies has affected community participation in school management.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

Education was started and substantially developed by the white Missionaries who came to Kenya. Their efforts were backed up by those of the Colonial Government. At Independence, communities were encouraged to establish schools while the Government provided both learning materials and teachers. The Communities have to date continued to provide the physical structures for Education. In 1984, the government introduced the cost sharing policy and the burden of provision of resources for Education was passed on to the communities while the government paid salaries for the teachers.

Although in social services sector, cost sharing between the state and the communities had been practiced since colonial times, its intensification from the late 1980's put heavy pressure on communities and poor households. It is not difficult to visualize a relationship between the decline in School enrolment on one hand and the inability of households to pay school levies. (Republic of Kenya, 1997) The cost sharing policy of Education mainly focused on levies.

Sessional paper No.10 of 1965 on African Development endorsed Education as a tool to fight poverty, ignorance and disease, which were considered the three major enemies of development.

Keller (1980) in his report points out that this paper was the call to action.

It was expected as a result that both the Government and the people would enthusiastically seize the opportunity and take the challenge.

While self help was admitted to be indispensable in this pursuit, the paper emphasised that it must be planned and controlled. It stated: "Self help in

on parents. Primary Education therefore was far from being free and is still
beyond the reach of the poorest strata of the society
(Munira, 1990, I).

Over all the reactions, and counter reactions, on free Education, the World is
now applauding Kenya for offering free primary education. The National
Rainbow Coalition (NARC) Government, which came to power on December
29th 2002 had many priority areas to put in place. To fulfil its promises, this
Government not only gave the political will to free education but also made
funds available for it. This is one of the achievements of the new Government
so far. Even with this achievement, a lot has to be done to make this free
education successful and sustainable. The Government's efforts are still
continuing.

His remarks while addressing a gathering at Kihumbuini Primary School,
Nairobi. Alipui the UNICEF Country representative lauded the government's effort
to fulfil the provision of the children's Act. He challenged Kenyans to
remember marginalized children in the free Education implementation
process. He urged them to pay particular attention to children with special
needs. He also noted the special requirements of children orphaned by
HIV/AIDS.

He said, "Kenya's free primary education policy is a measure that should now
respond even if only partly to education, care, socialization and emotional
needs of these children. Our success will be incomplete until our primary
education policy meets the needs of these children. (UNICEF 2003)

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A lot of effort has been put in place by both the International and local community to enhance education but these efforts have been frustrated by the expectations of levies by schools.

This study will establish the effect of the withdrawal of these levies on the teachers and the education of the children from low-income groups.

The UNESCO general conference of 1970 formulated a set of recommendations which placed additional stress on the need for long-term educational reform and new strategies. It established an International commission of educational development whose report "Learning to be," was tabled at the general conference of UNESCO in 1972. Basic education was seen as the attempt to meet the needs of substantial portions of the population with no access to even minimum educational opportunities (Sifuna 1990,3).

Disturbing as the current state of African Education is, the outlook for the future is one of further deterioration. Demographic pressure is more intense in sub-saharan African than any other developing region.

The 6-11 Cohort will double in size by 2015 leaving Africa with the highest school age dependency ratio in the world. If current enrolment trends continue, Oxfam (EFA Report, 2000) projects that the number of children out of school will rise to 51 million by 2005 and 57 million by 2015- the target date for Universal Education. Unless these trends can be reversed, Africa will account for over three quarters of all children out of school in the world by 2015 (EFA Report, 2000).

The report further points out that sub-Saharan Africa is not the only developing region facing severe problems in education but it is the region in

which progress towards the goal of education for all has been slowest and most uneven. In fact sub-Saharan Africa is not closer to achieving education for all than it was a decade ago. Enrolment rates are lower than they were in 1982 and illiteracy is increasing. The report notes that in the absence of a concerted national and international effort to resolve this crisis in education, the human foundations for Africa's recovery in the 21st Century will not exist. According to National poverty eradication plan, (Kenya 1999-2015), the burden of cost-sharing on poor households is especially heavy and poor families are responding by enrolling fewer children or allowing them to drop out of school before completing their primary education.

In order to run school affairs, school committees had introduced levies which varied from school to school. Despite the governments ban on school levies in primary school in order to achieve universal primary education, levies were still charged in one form or another. There has been an increase in population in Kenya but the number of children who attend and are retained in primary school has been dwindling.

These declining numbers are occasioned by levies expected by the schools in order to give education.

Under the headline "New Rule on School Fees", the *Sunday Standard* 2nd December, 2001 reported that the former President reversed the order by the Ministry of Education to charge fees in Public Primary Schools. The newspaper further reported that although the government had abolished fees in 1974 in the first four classes and in all the classes in 1979, it introduced cost sharing in 1985, when the 8.4.4. system of education was adopted. Enrolment improved, after fees were abolished the same paper reported.

The *Sunday Nation*, 29th July 2002, under the Blackboard commentary a problem in Nyeri was featured where parents were up in arms against the introduction of additional Kshs.80.00 levy for the education staff to inspect schools. They expressed concern that such extra levies would occasion drop out by children from households which were already overburdened by other levies, Ikolomani, the area of this study is classified by the (National poverty Eradication plan, Kenya, 1999 – 2015) as being poorer compared to Nyeri district. This locale will therefore find it easier to participate in education when it's free.

The following questions arise: -

- (a) Does the withdrawal of school levies cause an increased enrolment rate?
- (a) Does the withdrawal of school levies contribute to poor performance in examinations?
- (a) Does teachers' efficiency go lower when levies are withdrawn?

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this study is to examine the impact withdrawal of levies has on the teachers and primary education of primary school children from low-income groups. The specific objectives arising from the overall purpose are:-

1. To establish the contribution of the withdrawal of levies to enrolment of schools in Ikolomani Division.

1. To investigate the effects of withdrawal of levies on performance in examinations.
1. To examine the extent to which the withdrawal of school levies has affected the teachers effectiveness.
1. To make recommendations for policy makers on sustainability of free education.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

1. Primary education is the foundation to all higher learning and as the Universal Primary Education (UPE) objectives stated in part: -
“Education has the aim of laying a foundation for further training and work.” This gives this study mandate to investigate the importance of free education and its effects to communities.
2. There are evident reports of higher enrolment rates on the onset of free education. The study seeks to identify the relationship between the enrolment and the withdrawal of levies in primary schools in Ikolomani Division.
2. Ikolomani Division stands out as the poorest of the poor compared to other divisions in the district because economic activities are minimal (Kenya DDP 2002). This situation threatens participation in education as low income is evident in the locale and the inhabitants cannot participate fully in education. There is need to assess how withdrawal of levies has benefited the community at large and the effects it has on the running of the school programmes.

2. There have been bans and presidential decrees prohibiting the user fees in primary school since time immemorial. The Kenya Government has officially started catering for primary education. There is need to study the situation in order to examine the possibility of sustaining this endeavour by the Government of Kenya.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is on the impact the withdrawal of levies has on teachers and the education of primary school children from low-income groups. Specifically, the study will examine the impact of these levies on primary school children from low-income groups.

From the outset of colonial administration in Kenya, the financing of primary education has been a source of almost continuous controversy. It was the subject of numerous reports by official commissions and private, individuals and groups, of innumerable memoranda within the administration of debate in the legislative council and of often-bitter public discussion. Probably no issue except land has been more thoroughly and repeatedly discussed than education. Unfortunately in the case of education the discussions have led to less than substantial results.

Primary education was caught up in the evangelising, zeal of the missionaries leading eventually to the break away from churches that gave rise to the independent schools movement (Gaven- 1970:1)

2.1 PRIMARY EDUCATION IN KENYA

In his speech to the workshop on "Education for pastoralists and nomadic Communities"(2002), the then Permanent Secretary for Education Prof. Kepton stated:

“These innovative approaches cannot however be prescribed from the center at National level. There has to be an initiative to study the local problem and give advice that is best suited for a particular locale. What is required at central level is to address the rigidity of the education system by ensuring that the legal and policy framework facilitates the innovations and that quality of the education provided is assured. Each innovation should be the one found most suitable for locality”.

Government of Kenya policy which is based on two cardinal concepts in the notion of education for all lays emphasis on:-

- (i) Quantitative improvement through increased relevant and high achievement.
- (ii) Quantitative growth through initial enrolment in schools (World Conference on Education for all Integrated commission (WCEFA 1990), this international concern for Kenya and indeed the rest of the third world indicates that both achievement and retention is not fully realized.

The Master Plan for Education and Training (MPET 1999) notes that the Ministry of Education statistics show that primary school Gender and Enrolment (GER) declined from 95% in 1989 to a mere 79% in 1995. This decline in percentage GER is indicative of the problems at the level, levies included.

The international declaration and agreement for which Kenya is a signatory including the Jomtien Education For All (EFA) Declaration on the rights of the child stipulate:-

In line with the National Development philosophy; every Kenyan has an inalienable right to basic welfare provision including access to education.

Government of Kenya has an obligation to provide opportunities to all Kenyans to participate fully in the development of the country and to obtain a decent standard of living (MPET 1999).

The National Poverty Eradication Plan (2001) states that the average cost burden for the household Kshs.4,730 (Kshs.3,725 in rural and Kshs.1,415 in the urban areas) The sum, if it could be afforded by a poor rural household at the poverty line would represent nearly four months total income. Poor households infact economise by spending less or withdrawing their children from school.

2.2 OBSTACLES TO FREE EDUCATION

Many scholars appreciate the obstacles that hinder education attainment especially at primary school level.

Kanbargi (1988) notes that many children fail to attend school due to poverty. In his sample of 49 children only 6 had one or more years of schooling.

Although he does not bring out levies as a specific element of poverty, which hinders education attainment, he gives a point of departure to the general reasons that make children fail to attain education i.e. poverty.

Zani (1993) notes that some parents are unable to take their children to school due to accompanying costs of school, which they may not be able to meet. She appreciates that most of children actually fail to attain education because of these costs.

Agnelli (1986:17) puts emphasis to the rural areas where she acknowledges that poverty and the seemingly fewer opportunities to development as factors

that push children from rural to urban areas. This push indicates that there is drop out occasioned by need and hence migrations from rural to urban areas.

One of the most serious problems in many countries is the high drop out rate and the poor quality of education (Boyden and Bequele 1988: 6). This drop out again in many of the countries is caused by the expectation of levies.

Mendielievich (1979:9) points out that parents could view their children's school attendance as a waste of time. Such parents would probably be those who do not attend school themselves and again unable to meet the cost involved in educating children.

Due to low-income, some children engage in activities to back up the family income. Mendielievich (1971:5) notes that those who work during their childhood years have no chance of going to school, and obtaining qualifications that might help them escape from the state of poverty.

2.3 FREE EDUCATION AND MEDIA

There has been a great deal of discussion in the media about education. In Kenya the East Africa Standard reported a controversy under the headline "Controversy simmers over school fees in Kenya, Nigeria." It said in part:

"Following a directive from President Moi, the Government has begun audit queries in all of Kenya's public primary schools. Ministry teams will be sent to check on the distribution of textbooks and anything related to school levies, and fees. Parents and other stakeholders have welcomed the move saying most schools never account for money paid to them" (East Africa Standard, 1st Feb, 2002).

In Nigeria, 'This Day' (Lagos, 1st Feb, 02) reports a row has erupted over decentralized school financing in Nigeria's Imo state, with one editorialist alleging that the state government has given school Heads "a very free hand to run public schools as their personal enterprise. Levies are being imposed in the name of anything that Heads can think of. Exam fees vary wildly from school to school and admission fees are being charged illegally.

The Internet (<http://www.caa.org.au/oxfam/advocacy/debt/g8july001.htm>) also featured Oxfam international Advocacy under the headline 'G8: "Falling the worlds children"' in July 2001. It said the debt burden of the poorest countries helps keep children out of school. School fees made education an unaffordable luxury for the world's poor. But the G8 has failed to tackle the education crisis. Debt relief is not deep enough and Aid levels are falling. The worlds richest Nations should launch a global initiative to abolish school fees and get all the world's children into school. For millions of the world's poorest children, school fees means access to education is not a human right but unaffordable privilege.

According to this report a new Oxfam report in Tanzania shows how official and unofficial charges for schooling are preventing children from going to school.

Oxfam is urging the G8 to agree to launch a global initiative to abolish school fees and get all the world's children into school.

The Internet (Ibid) further gave an over view of the global education crisis. It was reported that 125 million primary school age children are enrolled in school and of the ones who do go to school, many only attend for a few years

but not enough to learn how to read, write and count properly. In the least developed countries (LDC's) the drop out rate before 5th grade is 68%.

It was further reported that in reality, the principle that education should be free and compulsory as stipulated in the universal declaration of human rights and the terms of the convention of the rights of the child, is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Parents, the report added, paid official government school fees (for registration, tuition and examinations): levies imposed by schools and parent teacher associations; informal payments to teachers; payment of uniforms, books, pencils, meals, transport and community contributions such as payments in cash or in kind for school construction and maintenance. In sub-Saharan Africa the report said, the cost of getting a child through primary school could represent more than one quarter of the annual income of a poor household. In Nepal the poorest fifth of the population spends more than 40% of an average household income to send one child to primary school.

There is now a broad consensus that school fees for education are inequitable and prevent the poorest children from attending school, the report says. In the 1990's the World Bank actively promoted school user fees, now the Bank's official policy is not to promote fees. The US congress has passed legislation that compels the US Executive Director of the World Bank to block any World Bank loan that promotes user fees in education and health. But school fees will continue to prevent children from attending school until World Bank helps countries develop plans to end and until there is a concerted effort by donors to close funding gap for basic education as part of a global initiative to get all the world's children into school.

The internet:

(<http://www.unesco.org/Education/efa/efa-weej/globalcampaign/shtml>)

also focused the education Webmaster for UNESCO in which Anne Jellema, the advocacy coordinator organized a week long campaign in which EFA organized a global campaign through various events. During this Action week community groups were mobilized to send messages through events. The events centred on HIV and levies are a major threat to universal education. In Kenya the slogan "drop school levies now" was used to pass the message to the public through matches, posters and presentation of petitions to the Minister of Education, Kenya.

The new government of Kenya has introduced free primary education to fulfil its campaign promise.

This is a problem with the triple numbers giving less room to accommodate the pupils. Exercise books are also a major problem in that many of the children have nowhere to write.

In Kihumbuini primary school (Nairobi, Kenya), the children learn in two sessions, morning and afternoon. They also use wallboards to write and sit on the mats provided by UNICEF. There are fears that these makeshift classes and the small number of teachers may compromise the quality of education (World News Focus 2003).

A combination of factors including poverty, social problems, child labour, displacement and lack of schools and teachers in slum areas have combined to keep Kenyan children out of classrooms the report says. The tens of thousands of average children including street children or those who dropped out of school to work and now wish to return to finish their schooling need to

be catered for urgently. While statistics on their numbers are not yet available, preliminary figures show them to be enormous. In the Mukuru slum of Nairobi only about 500 out of the 1000 new students who enrolled in schools since the beginning of the year were of normal school going age. It's tricky how to handle them.

Meanwhile many of the children from marginalized areas are not even making it near a classroom and while some schools are genuinely full, others do not want children without correct uniform or those who are untidy. Many rural schools also lack basic amenities such as toilets and running water (UNOCH Integrated Regional Information Network, 2003)

2.4 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTION REVIEW.

As we have noted earlier, education is a key stepping stone to development and all the world's children must be educated if the development agenda will be realized. " It is not that we should simply seek new and better ways for managing society, the economy and the world. The point is that, we should fundamentally change how we behave." (Vaclar Havel, 1992 in Chambers 1997; 210).

From time immemorial, third world states have believed that they are unable to and on their own and successfully sustain projects. Communities have ended up hoping that donor aid will arrive thereby doing nothing about their own situations. According to (Ibid) PRA confronts the dominance of uppers. Done well, PRA generates synergies; the three pillars – methods, behaviour and attitudes and sharing and partnership, reinforces each other: participatory training sets the style for participation in the field; and the adoption of the

behaviour and principles of PRA. Empowerment is through identifying the weak and enabling them to gain skills, confidence and knowledge.

This state of communities and the belief that they need external intervention especially in meeting their basic needs should be discarded. Rather than expect the government to pay levies and do everything for the communities they should learn self-reliance through PRA.

Chambers notes that PRA has often been regarded as a one-off activity. But for many practitioners it affects and is part of stages in processes, which lead to and empower community-based organizations. The need for new and transformed organizations at the group or community level has been increasingly recognized by NGO's and governments and has increasingly become the reality.

They can have many functions such as savings and credit, income earning activities, natural resource management, maintaining group or community solidarity, preparing proposals and negotiating with outside agencies. They can maintain group or community solidarity and negotiating power in relation to threats. They can deal with other community-based organizations. They can mobilize countervailing power to meet and match the power of the hierarchies of NGO's and the state.

It would therefore be good for the communities to seek empowerment rather than end for levies. They need to sustain the government's efforts by providing other facilities through self-help projects. Most communities were already familiar with the Harambee spirit to assist them to grow. As the founding father of Kenya said in his speech on the first Kenyatta day, " We must work hard and constantly towards the greatest possible degree of self-

reliance. We cannot and must not always rely on outside aid it is not good for the economy or for the morale of the country, to be greatly dependant on ourselves, since assistance, which itself may be influenced by changes in policy or personnel” (Jomo Kenyatta 1964) He further warned Kenyans from relaxing before the toil that is to come asking them to work harder to fight Ignorance, Sickness and Poverty through the spirit of Harambee.

This spirit was encouraged by the former president Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. At independence, Kenya adopted the national motto of harambee, which traditionally rallied members of community to work together in mobilizing resources for national development.

Building on this aspect of the African culture, the people joined hands with the government to set up projects and to improve their own welfare. As a result, thousands of projects have been undertaken in all areas of national development.

Education is perhaps one sector which has benefited most from this Harambee.

Through this spirit of self help, the government has forged a useful partnership with Non-governmental organizations, communities, families and individuals in the provision of Education” (Moi TD 1997).

This calls cannot surely be ignored and while the trend in self-reliance should be taking base, more people are instead expecting free services.

The PRA emphasis is on active involvement by respondents, the outsider as a learner rather than teacher and qualitative prioritizing or ordinal ranking of variables and options, instead of the quantitative measurement of them. It enables people to express and analyse the realities of their lives and

conditions, to plan themselves what action to take and to monitor and evaluate the results (Chambers & Blackburn 1996: in Ellis F. 2000:193)

The government is the outsider and has come up to solve a crisis, but surely where is the participation of the different communities?. The rural are poor but being classified near disability is not proper.

In correcting the prejudiced view of poor rural people as culpably improvident, lazy, fatalistic, ignorant and stupid. (Chambers 1983.107), the empowerment of these people against such prejudices would go a long way in making them self-reliant. At the moment the government has only helped them to be empowered against those who ask for levies. It will be doom when many of the rural households will now expect more donor aid in all sectors including higher education.

Chitere and Mutiso (1999, eds) point out that the roles of Action Research is to broaden the knowledge base and skills of change agents in matters such as project management, local leadership and organization, and to impart to them the necessary people-orientation which could help them in mobilizing and working with members of communities where they are located.

It may be better for the communities to understand their problem and participate in combating it rather than abandon the whole situation to a government that is wanting in many other areas.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 Social democratic theory

The social democratic theory as propounded by Theodore W. Schultz (1972) states that skills and knowledge are forms of capital. Capital investment in

humans could have the same effects as capital investment in machinery. If more resources were spent on education, the productivity and efficiency of the workforce would increase and the extra money spent would soon be repaid by the extra contribution made to the economy (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995,733).

This theory explains the government's effort to offer free education as lack of education pulls backwards the economic growth of a country.

Shultz claims that his theory was illustrated by American agriculture, where farms with a less educated workforce were not as productive as those with a more educated work force because all economic productivity depends a lot on education.

2.5.2 Theory of cultural deprivation

This theory was developed from the portrayal of working class subculture as substandard version of mainstream middle class culture by Peter Townsend (1970). It states that the subculture of low-income groups is deprived and deficient in certain important respects and this accounts for the low educational failure on the children and their family, their neighbourhood and the subculture of their social group. The so-called culturally deprived child is deficient or lacking in important skills, attitudes and values, which are essential to high educational attainment.

The child's environment is not only poverty stricken in economic terms but also in cultural terms. The following quotation from Charlotte K. Brooks is typical of the picture of the culturally deprived child, which emerged in Britain and USA in the early 1960's.

“ He is essentially the child who’s been isolated from those rich experiences that should be his. This isolation may be brought about by poverty, by meagreness of intellectual resources in his home and surroundings by incapacity, illiteracy or indifference of his elders or of the entire community. He may have come to school without ever having had his mother sing him traditional lullabies and with no knowledge of nursery, rhymes fairy stories or the folklore of his country.

He may have taken few trips- perhaps the only one the cramped, uncomfortable trip from the lonely shack on the tenant farm of the teeming, filthy slum dwelling - and he probably knows nothing of poetry, music, painting or even indoor plumbing.”(Friedman, 1976 p. 121)

This theory can be used to explain the study, as the culturally deprived child is that from the low-income bracket. Children whose background depicts a poverty stricken situation cannot be able to pay for education and hence; the deprivation in values, attitudes and skills.

This renders such children unable to attain educational expectations because they are either out of school physically, or are able to attain partial school attendance due to the problems associated with low income. Infact such children generally have no cultural intellectual base and resources vis a vis family background. They are therefore not able to appreciate education so much such that, they are likely to carry out self elimination from school.

2.5.3 Cultural capital theory

The theory was propounded by Pierre Bourdieu, (1977) and argues that children from the working class’ failure is the fault of the education system and not working class culture. According to Bourdieu (1977) the major role of

the education system is the cultural reproduction. This does not involve the transmission of the culture of society as a reproduction. This does not involve the transmission of the culture of society as a whole as Durkheim argued but instead the reproduction of the culture of the 'dominant', classes'.

These groups have the power to 'impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate' they are able to define their own culture as 'worthy of being sought and possessed'. And to establish it as the basis for knowledge in the education system. Bourdieu (1977) refers to the dominant culture as 'cultural capital' because, via the educational system it can be translated into wealth and power. Cultural capital is not evenly distributed throughout the class structure and this largely accounts for class differences in educational attainment. The educational attainment of social groups is therefore directly related to the amount of cultural capital they possess. Possession of cultural capital privileges middle class children who arrive at school equipped with the code to decipher the message of the dominant culture. These underlying rules like grammar in language are what Bourdieu calls *habitus*, the rules of the game to succeed.

The theory stipulates that expectations of the system of education vis a vis levies do not favour those from the lower class. To be able to run, the design of the system expects children to have uniform, buy books, pay tuition and other school oriented levies. The uneven distribution of cultural capital including different social backgrounds therefore become absolute determinants of who keeps pace with school expectations. The low-income groups referred to in the study can be classified among the American as the working class who have no contribution in the designing of the system of education and hence being

placed under a costly educational system which fails to appreciate their roles and societal social placement. This is why they are the ones in Kenya who applauded most on the government's ban on levies in schools and hence free education.

2.5.4 Communitarian theory

Etzioni, (1995) in this theory asserts that there should be a call to restore civic virtues, for people to live up to their responsibilities and not focus on their entitlements of society. He further claims that this could be done through building shared values, habits and practices that assure respect for one another's rights and regular fulfilment of personal, civic and collective responsibilities (Etzioni, 1995 pg. IX, 255).

According to this theory, the answer to 'moral reconstruction', for which Etzioni proposes a 'five fold programme', says in part: -

"National governments need to allow 'social webs' to develop and to empower them to make contributions to maintain their own communities. This would bring people of all backgrounds together who by expressing a 'civil commitment', would build community and foster mutual respect and tolerance."

He asserts that communities will work only if people have a commitment to good behaviour rather than being forced. As a result citizens need educating, praising when they act well and frowning upon when they don't.

When we look back at community development, empowerment to self reliance is a key factor. The theory suggests that rather than the government doing things for communities, it would rather empower the spirit of hard

work and commitment as a way of empowering communities to grow into responsible entities. Moral reconstruction, the theory asserts, will help in ensuring self-empowerment and positive attitudes towards work and self-reliance rather than the wish to have things done for free.

2.6 HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were used to guide and predict the findings of the study.

H₁

School levies determine enrolment rates in schools.

H₂

Withdrawal of levies contributes to poor examination results.

H₃

Withdrawal of school levies lowers teachers' efficiency.

H₄

Free education encourages uncontrolled age limit.

H₅

Free primary school education reduces parents' participation in school activities.

OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES.

The factors below were measured in the study.

1.LEVIES

- Tuition fee
- Building fund
- Pupils lunches

- Teachers tea
- Watchman's levy
- Harambee contribution
- Holiday couching.
- Others

2. ENROLMENT RATES.

- No. of pupils per class per year.

3. EXAMINATION RESULTS

- Mark sheets
- Broad sheets (pupils marks per class per test)

4. TEACHERS' EFFICIENCY.

- No. of assessment tests per week/term
- No. of remedial classes in periods
- No. of co-curricular activities undertaken per term.

5. CONTROLLED AGE LIMIT.

- Ages between 6 -13 years for primary school.

6. PARENTS PARTICIPATION.

- No. of times the parents visited the school per term.
- No. of projects undertaken by parents.
- Levies paid for by the parents.

7. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS.

- Age
- Parents occupation
- Gender
- Level of education

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

This section gave an elaborate outline of the research and data collection plan. The study sought to address the following areas in this section: scope of the study, sources of data, data collection techniques tools and analysis.

3.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

School levies were withdrawn all over Kenya. The effects are felt most in the rural areas and especially the teachers and the low-income groups. Our focus of this study was Ikolomani Division of Kakamega District. Ikolomani is divided in 4 zones namely East, Central, North and South.

It has 62 primary schools mostly mixed day schools save for Eregi and Musoli Girls schools which are boarding. It is the smallest Division in land size covering 142.9 sq.km and a population of 43,306 men and 48,789 women. The rate of literacy is 62% while that of poverty is 10.1% (Kenya Census Report 1999). The study covered a case study of three public primary schools in the Division, to get a feel of effects of withdrawal of levies especially in the rural Kenya of low-income groups. The Division is devoid of private primary schools.

This is due to the fact that the population is mainly rural and is characterized by low-income. This justifies for this study, as all the schools are public and

fully dependant on government intervention as far as levies are concerned.

For the low-income the following indicators were used:-

- a) Type of housing i.e. mud walled and grass thatched.
- b) Size of farm in acres
- c) Income

The 3 study schools were specifically selected due to the following reasons:

1. They are in most remote areas in the division and so they qualify as rural schools characterised by low income.
2. Accessibility to other roads is poor as the area is characterised by bad roads and the river Isiukhu that separates the zones in the division has no bridge following heavy rains which have been evident in the area.
3. The Division is Homogenous.
4. All the schools are Public primary schools characterised by the same experiences.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

A case study of the following three primary schools was done.

1. Mwikhomo Primary School
2. Mumbetsa Primary School
3. Shimanyiro Primary school

3.2.1 Sampling procedure

Singleton (1988:137) defines sampling design as that part of research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation. In this study, sampling was specifically done to suit the design of a case study. Purposive sampling was

used, as it was the most appropriate for the study. This design was used to select the schools and the respondents. This was due to the justification below: -

Selected schools

The division under study namely Ikolomani is homogeneous and the schools are basically day mixed schools, which means any area selected would be representative of the whole division. Many other schools in the central and the south of the division are inaccessible due to poor muddy roads systems and the inherent rains that go on most of the year. The bridges connecting the zones on river Isiukhu were washed away by those rains making it impossible to cross from one zone to another. It became reasonably easier to therefore select the schools along the Kakamega—Bukura road which would be representative of the whole division. School registration is done in November the previous year and so all the 55 cases studied were selected from those who particularly came to school when free education was introduced.

Teachers

All the teachers in the study schools were given questionnaires, and out of the 37 teachers given the questionnaire, 32 of them responded and were used to gather the data which was representative of the whole division.

Key Informants

All the heads of the study schools were interviewed as key informants. The area education officers and the administrator were also interviewed. The ten parents

interviewed were selected around each study school, using the indicators of low income as depicted in the scope.

3.2.2 Primary data

This was the principle tool of data collection and two sets of the questionnaires were used. In the study, primary data was obtained by using the following tools and techniques:

(a) Questionnaires

The questionnaires contained both open ended and closed ended questions. They were administered to both the pupils and their teachers in the study schools.

(b) Key Informants

In depth interviews with key informants were conducted using interview guides. This method was chosen because key informants had access to other information of interest and helped in the understanding of the respondents. This method also gave room to the checking of all the information and avoiding of misunderstanding of questions.

The key informants included

1. District Education Officer
2. Assistants District Education Officer in charge of the division under study
3. Zonal inspector of schools under whom the three study schools fall
4. Assistant chief whose area of jurisdiction includes the three schools under study
5. Head teachers from the three schools studied.
6. Parents within the area of the study schools.

3.2.3 Secondary data

Documentary sources were also an important source of data. In this respect, an in depth search of class registers and records from the District Education Office on enrollment and teacher –pupil ratio was done. Mark sheets for the past examination results and school timetables from study schools were also useful. There was also data from other available readings to back up the study.

3.2.4 Methods of data analysis

In this study both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data was used. All answers were summarized and analyzed before making conclusions. Simple tables were also used for explanation and comparison. The qualitative aspect focused on the data collected from the key informants which was used alongside the quantitative data. While the quantitative data was presented through descriptive statistical (simple methods concerned with organizing and summarizing data to make it more intelligent (Singleton 1988) This was done through the presentation of frequency tables and graphs representing percentages which were backed up by thematic description of relationships between the figures and the intended findings of the study

3.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study were limited to three cases only. This was due to the fact that the area suffers poor infrastructure for example the bridges connecting the zones were all washed down by the overflowing banks of River Isiukhu

Many of the roads in the area were impassable especially by vehicles due to the heavy rains that are evident in the area almost throughout the year.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the findings of the study. This is done by giving the response from all the respondents namely teachers, pupils and the key informants, who are stakeholders in the implementation of free education.

4.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

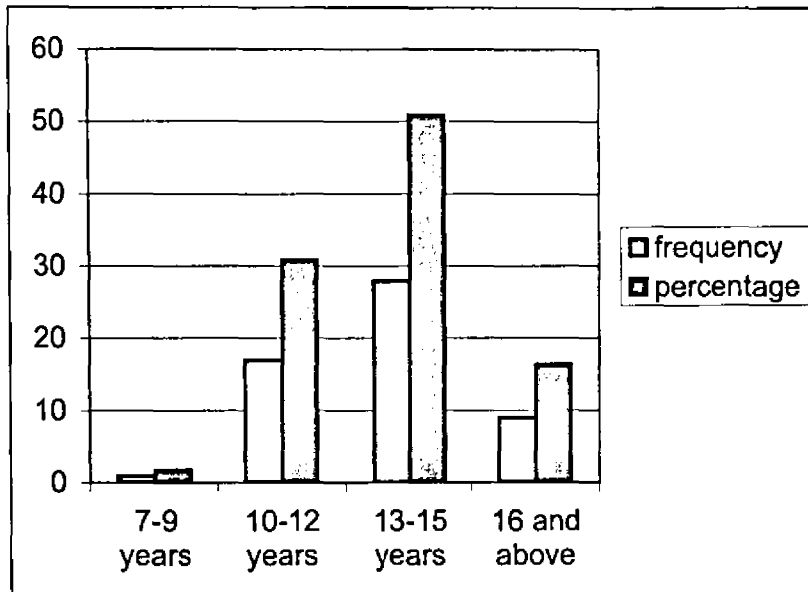
4.1.1 Age

In this study 28 (50.9 %) of the pupil respondents were aged between 13-15 years, 17 (30.9%) between 10-12 years,9 (16.4%) above 16 years while only 1(1.8 %0 was between 7-9 years of age. This information is presented in Table I below.

Table 1- Age of pupils

No of years	Frequency	Percentage
13-15 years	28	50.9
10-12 years	17	30.9
16 years and above	9	16.4
7-9 years	1	1.8
Total	55	100

Graph 1- Age of pupil respondents (Derived from table 1 above)



4.1.2 Age limits

These ages depict that most of the pupils are not within the acceptable age limit for lower primary, which is represented by 78% of the respondents.

The acceptable age limit is 6 years for class one. This shows that free education has rendered age limit irrelevant. Many of the respondents were teenagers meant to be completing primary school or already in secondary school. Having stayed out of school for a long time, this information is in agreement with that of parents who although are below 50 years old, acknowledge that many of their children are old for primary school going age.

This is also in agreement with the head teachers of the primary schools who were interviewed and acknowledged that they had problems with average children whose placement in lower primary was beyond acceptable age. This trend is in line with Townsend (1970) who stated in cultural deprivation theory that the subculture of low-income groups is

deprived and deficient in certain important respects and thus accounts for the high education failure on the children and their families, their neighbourhood and the sub-culture of their social group. The children mentioned here were deprived of the right of education due to their inability to pay and hence causing low attainment.

4.1.3 Parents' occupation

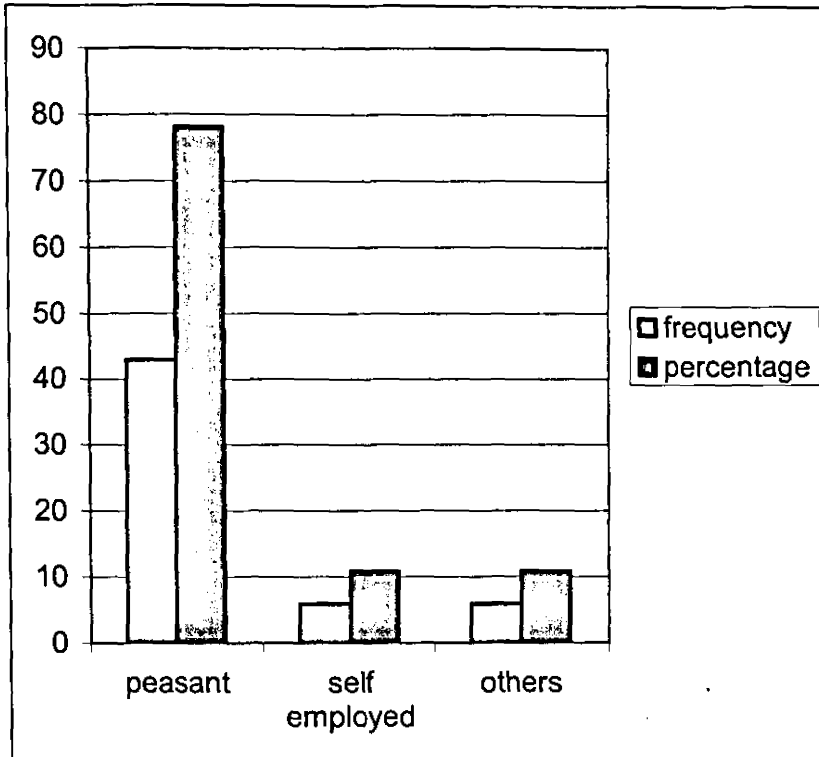
From the findings of this study, 43 (78.1%) of the female parents were peasants, 6 (10.9%) were self employed while another 6 (1.0 %) did several unspecified commercial activities. On the other hand, 29(52%) of the male parents were peasants, 12 (21.8%)do other things, 8(14.6%) do not do any job while 10.9 % are self-employed.

Table's 2A and 2B below show the parents occupation.

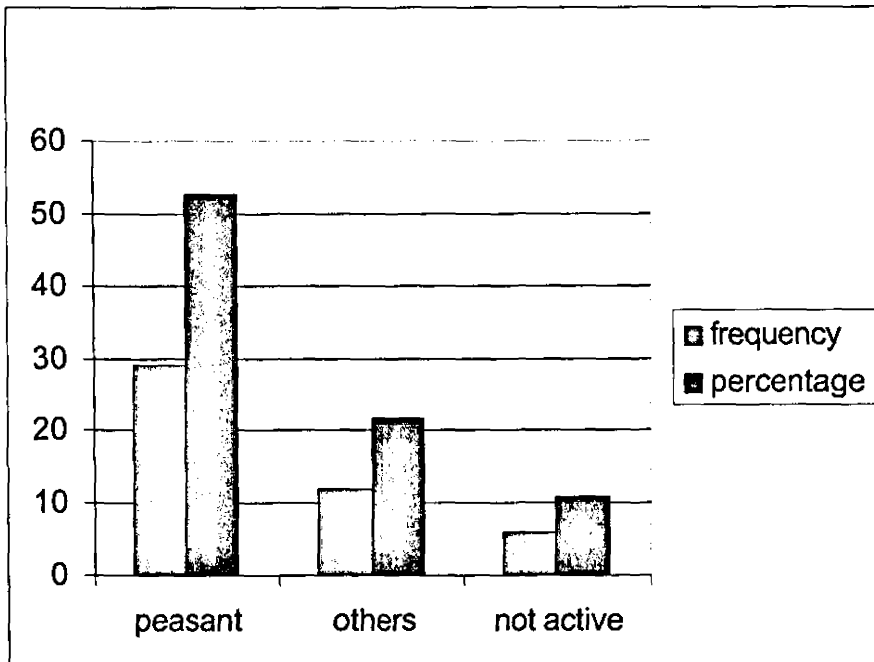
TABLE 2A: Parents occupation

FEMALE			MALE		
OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	%	OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	%
PEASANT	43	78.2	PEASANTS	29	52.7
SELF EMPLOYED	6	10.9	OTHERS	12	21.8
OTHERS	6	10.9	NOT ACTIVE	6	10.9
TOTAL	55	100	TOTAL	55	100

Graph 2a: Parents occupation (Females) (Derived from table 2 above)



Graph 2b: parents occupation (males)(Derived from table 2 above)



From the findings of the study the parents are basically peasants. Peasantry is associated with low income, which explains why the children were not taken to school and had actually given up until free education was introduced. The situation of low income is applied within the theory of cultural capital as propounded by Bourdieu (1977) who claims that cultural capital via educational system can be translated into wealth and power. Peasants have no cultural capital and hence the inability to achieve a high attainment in education, and hence lack of wealth and power.

4.1.4 Family size

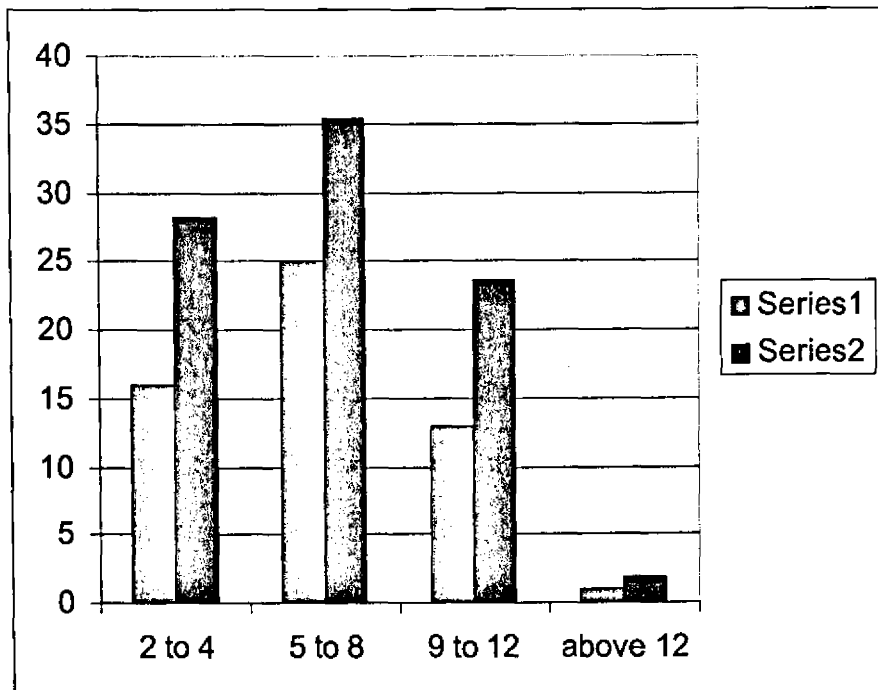
This study shows that 35.4% of the children were between 5-8 in their families; 28.2% were between 2-4 in their families 23.6% were between 9-12 in their families while only 1.8% were above 12 in their family.

The table below shows the number of children in families of the pupil's respondents.

Table 3 –family size

NO OF CHILDREN	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
2-4	16	29.1
5-8	25	45.5
9-12	13	23.6
Above 12	1	1.8
TOTAL	55	100

Graph 3: Family Size(Derived from table 3 above)



From table and graph 3 above it is shown that many of the families have an average number of 6 children. The numbers are a direct indication of inability of parents to cope with the strain of life such as that of feeding the

children, hence going to school becomes a luxury as many would prefer activities that supplement family income. This is a factor that has contributed to high enrolment, after free education but could also translate into absenteeism for those who have to assist at home. As stated in the literature review the aim of free education was to provide school opportunities especially to the poor communities. The argument was that payment of fees tended to prevent a large population of the children from attending school. This means that even with large families, free education will cater for education and help the poor to attain education.

4.2 ENROLMENT

The findings of this study show that out of the 32 teachers interviewed, 31(98.8%) said that they had many new pupils in their classes while only one (3.1%) did not have. These new pupils are an indication of higher enrolment. This information also agrees with findings from key informants, which indicated that the enrolment had improved in all the study schools. Improved enrolment was evident in all schools in the division, as the whole division had registered an average improvement of 11.1% up from the year 2002 enrolment. This was also indicated by the high numbers of enrolment from 24,140 pupils in 2002 to 26,962 pupils in 2003 in the whole division.

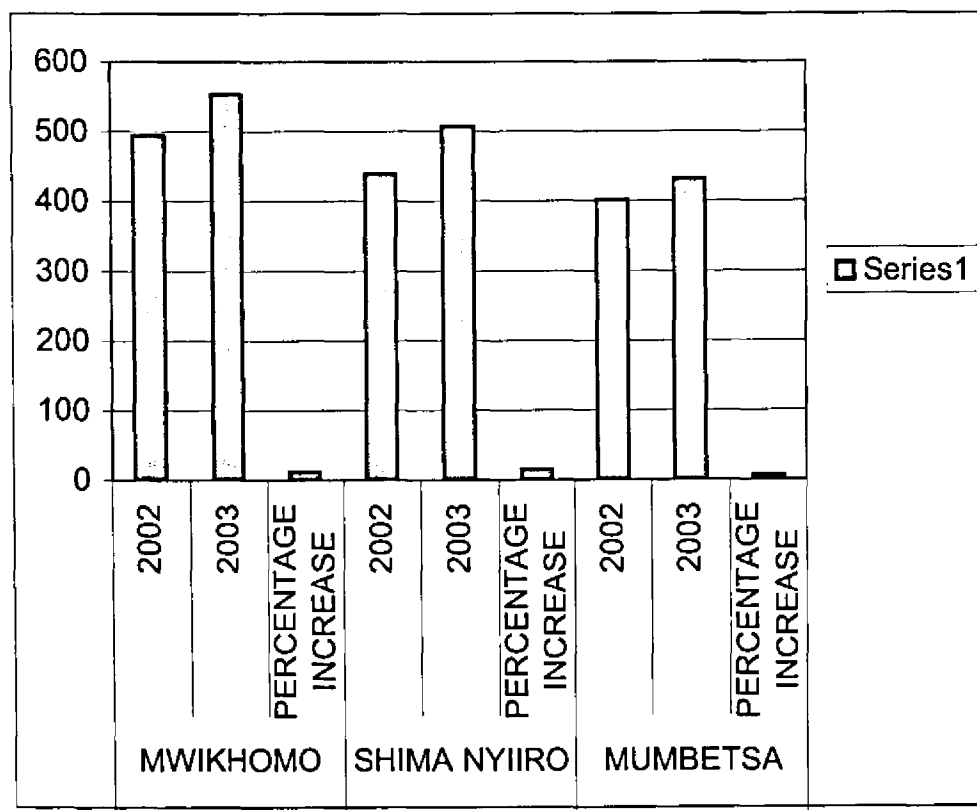
Table 4 below shows improved enrolment per school and the whole division as at September 2003.

Table 4: School Enrolment as at September 2003

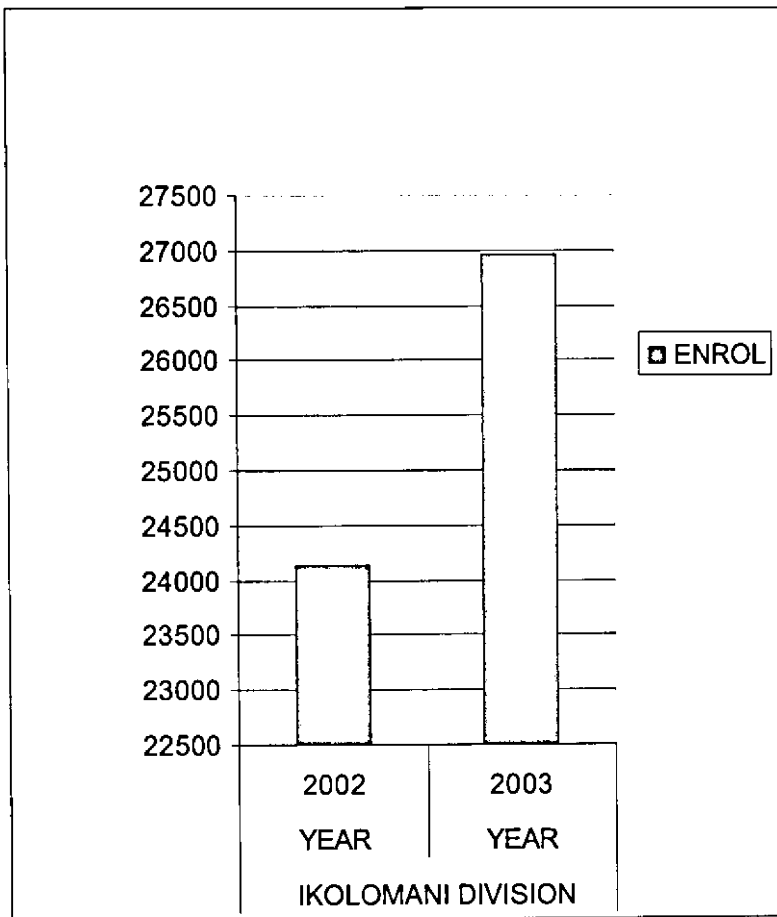
Mwikhomo Primary school			Shimanyiro Primary School			Mumbetsa Primary School			Ikolomani Division		
2002	2003	% Increase	2002	2003	% Increase	2002	2003	% Increase	2002	2003	% Increase
495	554	11.92	439	507	15.49	402	432	7.46	24,140	26,962	11.69

Source: Division Education office (Ikolomani Division, 2003).

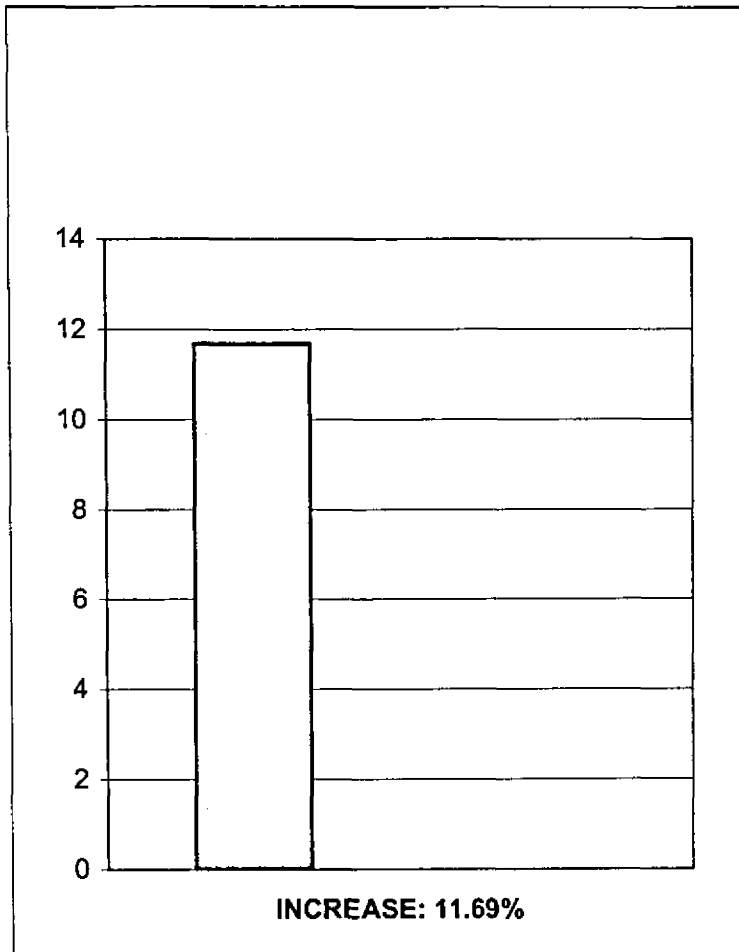
Graph 4a: School Enrolment in the three study schools in 2002 and 2003(Derived from table 4 above)



Graph 4b:Enrolment for Ikolomani Division 2002 and 2003(derived from table 4 above)



Graph 4c: Percentage increase in enrolment for Ikolomani Division year 2003 compared to year 2002(Derived from table 4 above)



This improved enrolment means that more teachers were needed as well as extra classrooms should be built. This may also be related to the inefficiency of teachers because the more the pupils, the more the work and therefore the less input on the part of teachers.

Although enrolment had gone up generally all schools also suffered massive transfers and criss-crossing from one school to another. This meant that although the level of enrolment was high, other pupils went away from public schools to join the private schools.

This was caused by the fears that high enrolment would compromise the quality of education. The enrolment improvement was therefore not just increasing the existing numbers but was generally filling up places which were left vacant by children who went on transfer especially to the academics.

4.3 PUPILS ASSESMENT

The teachers mark sheets showed that there was higher mean mark in all the sampled marks of the tests undertaken during year 2002 than those undertaken in the sample of the year 2003. This was represented by a mean mark of 57% in the year 2002 while for the year 2003, it was 50% marks. The mark sheet showed that while the highest mark in any given test in the year 2002 was 82% there was 73% for the year 2003. The lowest achieved mark for the year 2002 was 26% while the one of 2003 was 22%, the lowest ever even for the last five years.

Table 5 below shows the drop in achievement represented by mean percentages for the years 2002 and 2003 respectively.

TABLE 5: Pupils assessment results in percentage marks for 2002 and 2003

YEAR	MARKS ATTAINED IN 3 TESTS	HIGHEST MARK	LOWEST MARK
2002	57	82	26
2003	50	73	22
% DROP	14%	12%	18%

Source: Teachers mark sheets for Mumbetsa, Shimanyiro and Mwikhomo primary schools (2003.)

Graph 5: Pupils assessment results in percentage marks for 2002 and 2003

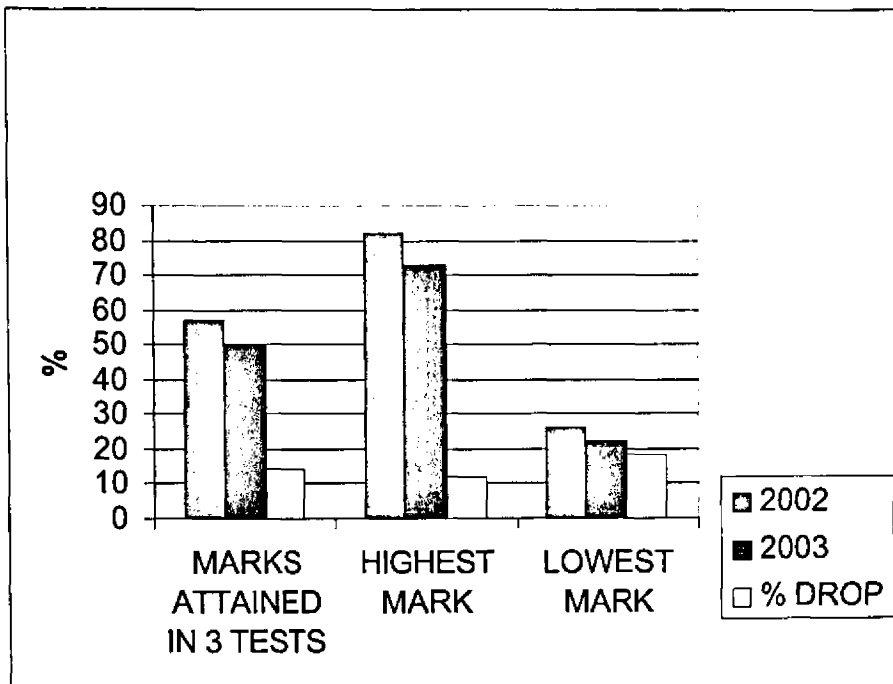


Table 5 and graph 5 indicate that the children’s performance dropped. This depicts poor results in examinations, which may be related to higher enrolment and lower teachers morale and commitment. This table is also indicative of the pupils responses which showed that 39 out of the 71(54.9 %) spent their holiday time helping in the shamba, 24 out of the 71(33.8 %) help in the house 4 out of 71 (5.6 %) work for pay 3 out of 71 (4.2%) do other duties while only 1 out of the 71 (1.4%) undertake school related endeavors like studies. This shows that if these pupils were given time to study they would probably perform better and so the trends of achievement would change positively even with free education. This again can be explained by the pupils’ response on why they perform poorly. Of those who perform poorly, 21.8% said they do so because they do not know how to read and write, while 10.9% indicated they had out of school for a long time, 10.9% because they did not prepare, 5.5 % because they were sick and 3.6

because they had just joined school, while another 3.6% did not respond. This indicates that many of those who joined school because of free education were illiterate and had adversely affected their performance. This information is in agreement with the parents' response which showed that the children had actually never been to school. The head teachers also expressed concern about these children whom they felt needed special teaching sessions as they had not even done early childhood education to learn counting and alphabets.

The shift in performance and achievement is also related to teacher's efficiency through the remedial classes given whereby 41.9% gave extra work, 23.3 % tell them to work hard, 25.6% teach them and 9.3% do other things. These shows that remedial classes are not effective and its through remedial that pupils can improve their performance especially that many of those who come from the village with little academic input and therefore need extra class assistance to compete with the rest of the pupils.

4.4 TEACHERS EFFICIENCY

Free education has brought down teachers' efficiency in assessment. It was noted in the study that between January and March 2002, 68.8% of the teachers gave a maximum of between 7-9 tests, 25% gave a maximum of between 5-7 tests and 6.3 % gave a maximum of 3-5 tests. In comparison to the year 2003 when 9.4% gave between 7-9 tests, 18.8 % gave between 5-7 tests and 65.6 % gave between 3-5 tests. This is an indication that the number of tests decreased and so it is evident that the level of assessment had dropped.

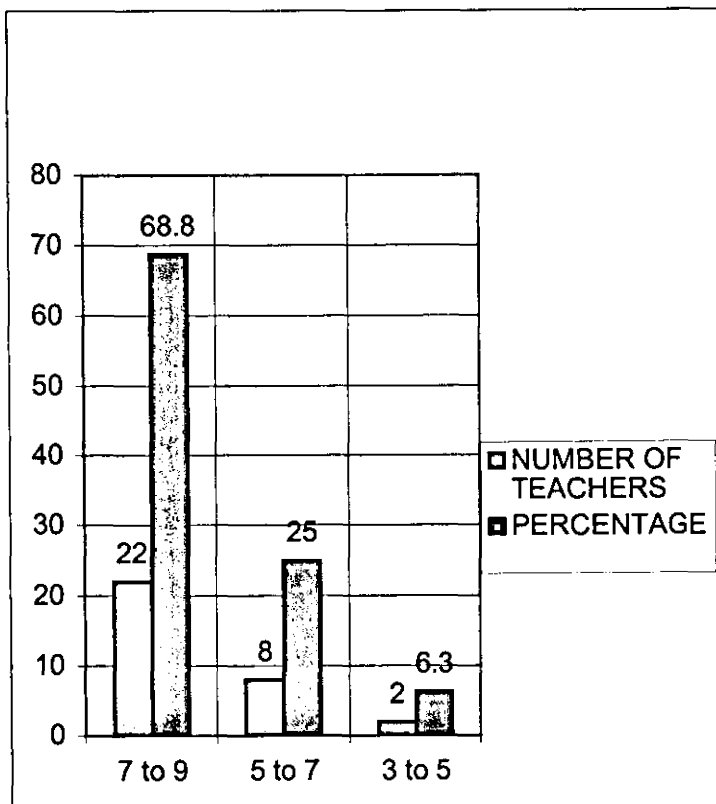
The information on assessment for 2002 and 2003 January to March is in table 6 below.

Table 6: Assessment of pupils.

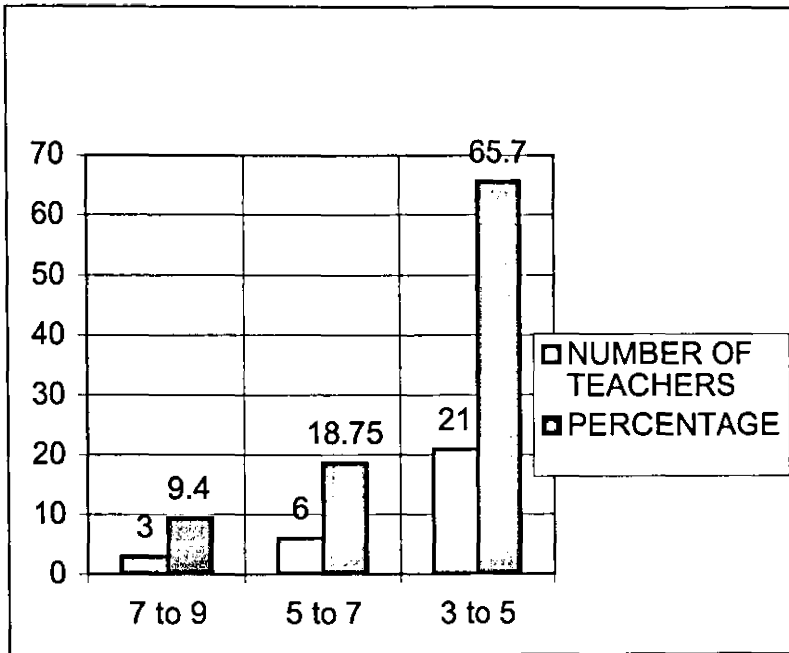
NUMBER OF TESTS				
	2002		2003	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
7-9	22	68.8	3	9.4
5-7	8	25	6	18.8
3-5	2	6.3	23	71.8
TOTAL	32	100	32	100

Source: Teachers' mark sheets from Mwikhomo, Shimanyiro and Mumbetsa primary schools(2003)

Graph 6a :Number of tests given by teachers in 2002(Derived from table 6 above)



Graph 6b: Number of teachers giving tests in 2003 (Derived from table 6 above)



This shows that whereas in the year 2002 there were more teachers giving a higher number of tests in term one, it was the reverse in year 2003 when the minimum tests were given by the highest number of teachers. This is an indication that there was a drop in assessment when the free education was started.

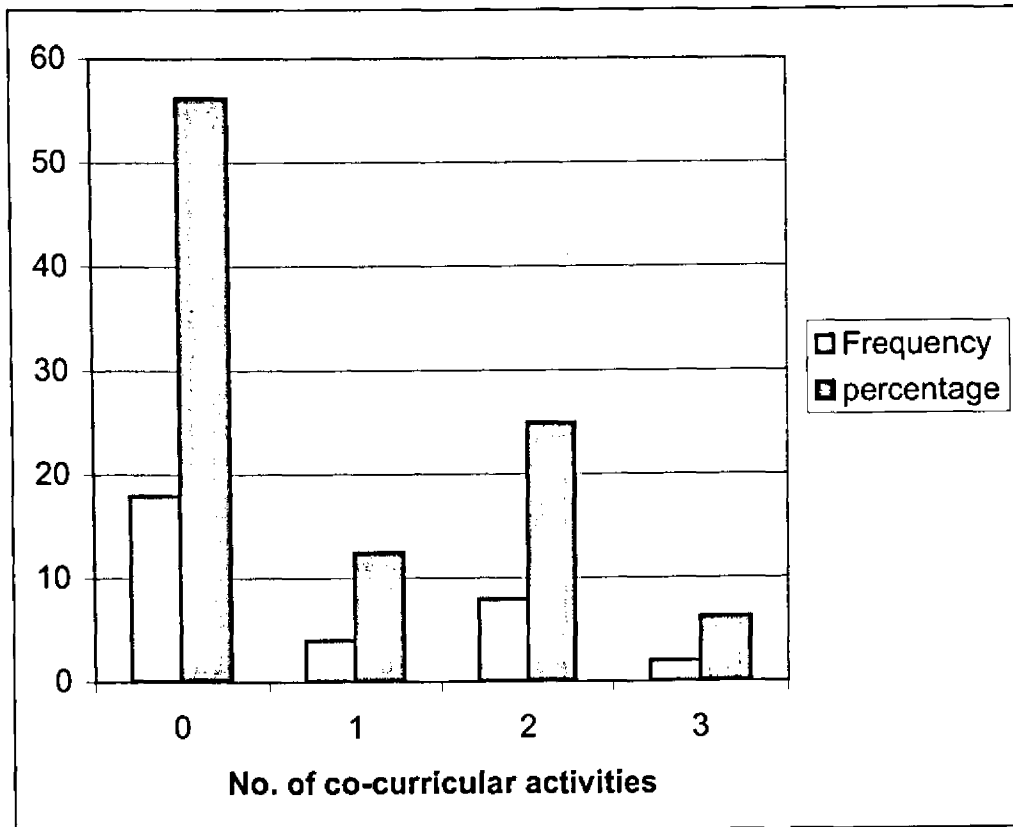
Free education has lowered teacher's efficiency. The drop in performance is a direct indicator that all is not well with the teachers. Another factor that determines teacher's efficiency is the participation in co-curricular activities like games, music drama, dance etc. The schools under study take part in only one to three co-curricular activities. On the other hand, a minimal number of teachers take part in these activities. The teachers who do not take part in the activities said that were overworked and not motivated to do extra duties in the schools.

Table 7 below depicts teacher's participation in the activities.

Table 7: Teachers participation in co-curricular activities.

No. of co-curricular activities	Frequency	Percentage
1	4	12.5
2	8	25.0
3	2	6.3
None	18	56.2
Total	32	100

Graph 7: Teacher's participation in co-curricular activities(Derived from table 7 above)



In the Table 7 and Graph 7 above 18 (56.2%) of the teachers said they did not participate in the co-curricular activities, 8 (25.0 %) participated in 8 activities and 4 (12.5 %) took part in 4 activities while only 2 (6.3 %) took part in 2 activities. These findings show that there is reduced teachers involvement in school activities. Another factor that depicts efficiency is the extra work done either in remedial or during weekends. The same information is also represented in the responses that indicate that 56.3% do not teach while 43.7% teach and the 43.7 % who teach the majority teach the fewest lessons .It also shows that among the few who teach 21.9% teach one or two lessons, 6.3 % three or four lessons and 3.1 % four and six lessons. Of those who do not teach during the weekend or after 5.00 o'clock ,33.4% attributed their performance to heavy workload while 9.45 attributed it on low motivation .

Table 8 below shows the pattern of teaching after 5.00 clock and /or on weekends.

Table 8: remedial classes

GIVE REMEDIAL CLASSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	14	43.8
NO	18	56.2
TOTAL	32	100

Graph 8: Number of teachers who gave remedial classes (Derived from table 8 above)

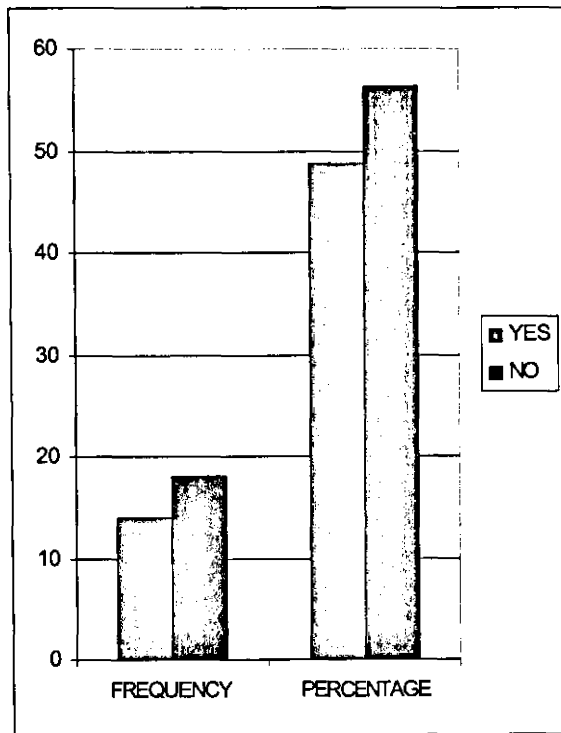
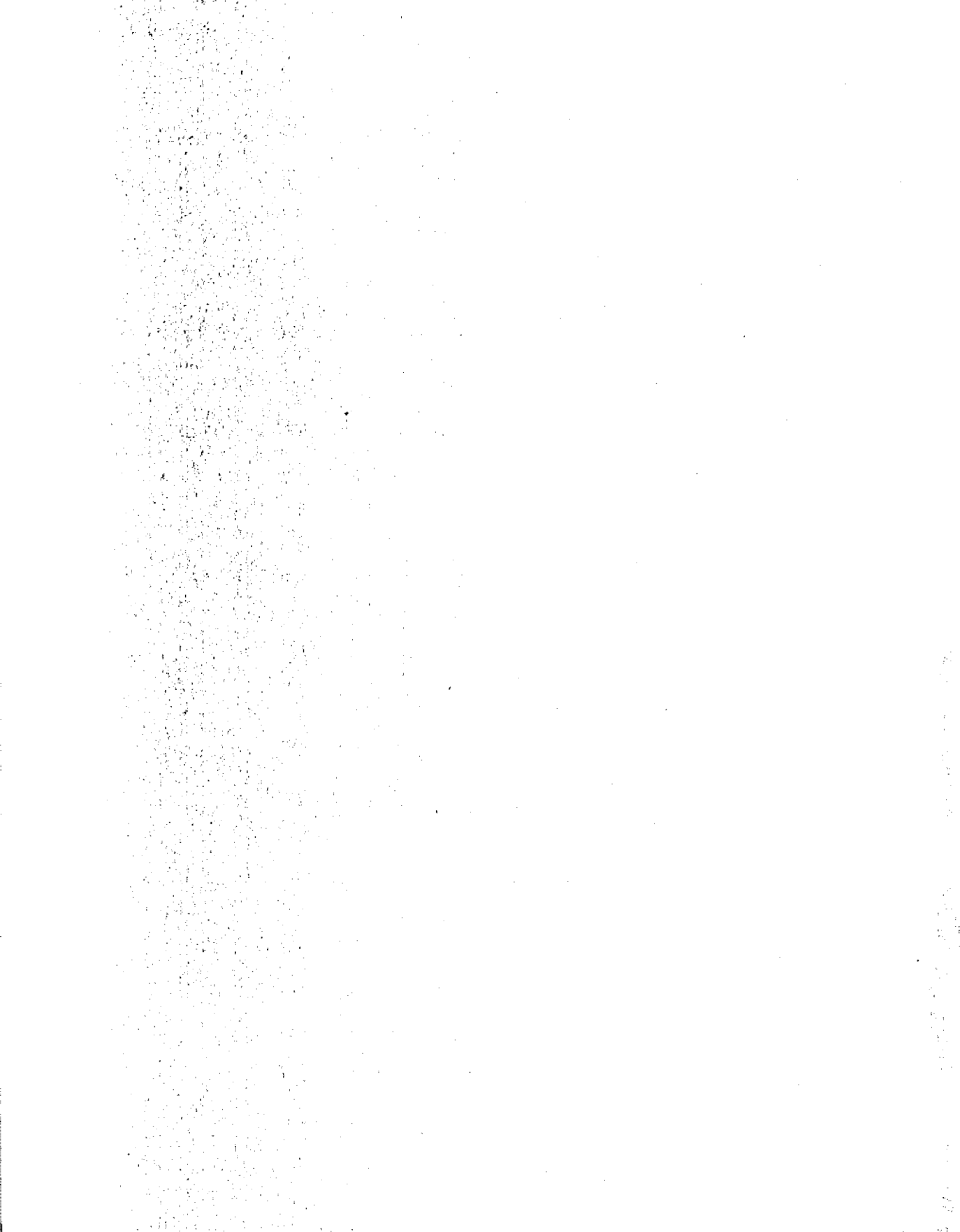


Table and graph 8 above depict that teachers do not give remedial classes. This was also pointed out by the area education officials who felt that teachers need to be motivated for proper teaching. This same information is backed by the response represented in 96.6% of the teachers who felt that free education had increased their workload. From these findings, one can conclude that free primary education has lowered the teacher's efficiency.



AS PARENTS TAKE DECISIONS ON PRACTICE

The study also found that 77 out of the 43 teacher respondents (30%) felt that parents should implement government efforts in providing free primary education. 100% of teachers should take their children to school while 97.7% of parents should coordinate with the teachers. This creates a general impression that teachers are dissatisfied with the parental contribution and expect more to contribute more. On the other hand it also shows that teachers are dissatisfied with free primary education and therefore may be a hindrance to its success. As indicated elsewhere (literature review) communities should make attempts to create a clear program and work for the program to succeed.

Table 9 highlights the willingness of teachers as parents participation

Table 9: Teachers' willingness to participate in school activities (as parents)

Response	Count	Percentage	Frequency
Willing to participate in school activities	1	2.3	100
Not willing to participate in school activities	2	4.7	100
Willing to participate in school activities	3	7	100
Not willing to participate in school activities	4	9.3	100

4.5 PARENTS PARTICIPATION IN FREE EDUCATION

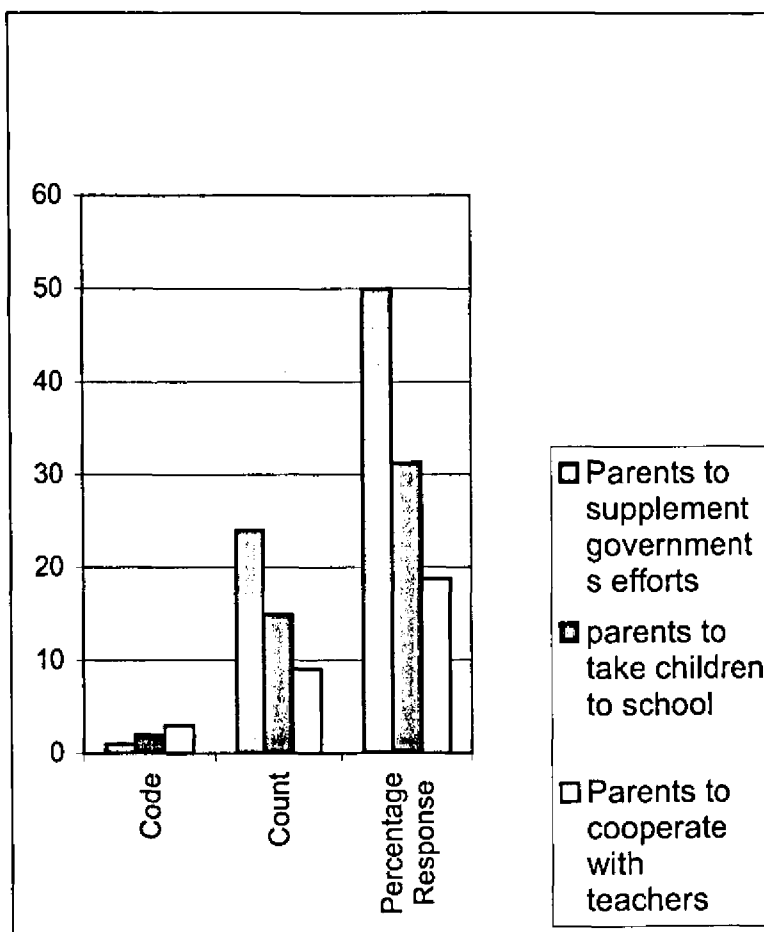
This study established that 24 out of the 48 teacher respondents (50.0%) felt that parents should supplement governments efforts in providing free primary education 15(31.3 %) said parents should take their children to school while 9(18.8%) said parents should cooperate with the teachers. This creates a general consensus that teachers are dissatisfied with the parents' contribution and expect them to contribute more. On the other hand it also shows that teachers are dissatisfied with free primary education and therefore may be a hindrance to its success. As indicated elsewhere (literature review) communities should fully participate in order for the programmes in order for the programs to succeed.

Table 9 below brings out the feelings of teachers on parents participation

Table 9: Teachers views on parents' involvement in free education

Category Level	Code	Count	Percentage Response
Parents to supplement governments efforts	1	24	50.0
Parents to take children to school	2	15	31.3
Parents to cooperate with teachers	3	9	18.8
Total		48	100%

Graph 9: Teachers views on parents' involvement in free education (derived from table 9 above)



This is also in agreement with the parents' response which indicate that they had not been supplementing the efforts of the government since free education was offered.

The education office also agreed that parents' participation had been put on the hold as some politicians had made them believe that any contribution to school was wrong.

As stressed earlier, parents' participation would positively help them to own the program and identify with it as both the beneficiaries and the implementers. The

situation now is that of off loading a burden from the parents but they are not working closely with the teachers to realize better results. One key informant indicated that some parents failed to send their children to school over the holidays after complaining that the syllabus had not been covered as the school was understaffed. When the teachers agreed to give holiday classes free of any levies only two pupils from the candidate class turned up (see case in appendix). The teachers then abandoned the plan as the parents had failed to urge their children to come to school.

Table 9 above shows the low parent participation in school activities. The key informant parents indicated that they only visit schools when they are called upon especially when materials are being supplied so that they can witness to ensure accountability of the materials. Except one case in point where parents had to step in and replace a roof that had been blown off by the wind, such cases of development are at stand still as even the political leaders have failed to support it. The head teachers also noted that they were able to see parents who come to ascertain the supply of material where there is such need. The parents were not willing to come for any other development meetings and suggestions to that effect often fell on deaf ears.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS ON HYPOTHESES

The first hypothesis stated that free education encourages uncontrolled age limit in enrolment. This was evidently true as most of the children's ages rotated around teenage and yet the highest enrolment at the schools was mainly between class one and two. These ages were far beyond the accepted age limit for lower primary, which is between 6-8 years of age.

The second hypothesis stated that free education determined the enrolment rates. This featured mainly in the enrolment rates. Enrolment records at the education offices showed that all schools had registered improvement in enrolment. It was also noted that by this improvement, many schools had also registered loss through transfers to private schools. The percentage would have been higher if the new pupils were merely adding on those of previous year.

The third hypothesis stated that free education contributes to poor examination results. It was noted that the records of mark sheets and teachers mark books for the year 2002 and 2003 had shown a drop in percentage attainment in marks. This was also depicted through the drop in the number of assessment tests, which also translates in poor examination results.

Hypothesis four states that free education lowers teacher's efficiency. It was noted that most teachers did not give as many assessment tests as they did the previous years. The teachers did not give as much remedial work nor take part in co-curricular activities vigorously, as they had done in the previous years.

It was also noted through this hypothesis that the teachers were not motivated due to salary increase, which had stretched over a longer period in which most would not benefit as they were retiring. They were therefore not eager to support the government in its endeavour of free education.

The last hypothesis states that free education reduces parents participation in school activities. It was realised through the findings that the parents had been offloaded a burden and were not doing much as far as project development in the schools was concerned. They agreed that it had not been a priority for them to go to school and take part in the activities.

It was further noted that although some parents were willing the political arm continuously reminded them of free education as a government promise which had been fulfilled and nobody had powers to do otherwise.

However from the findings it was concluded that free education was a noble course by the present government but had many teething problems which needed to be addressed to help in proper management and implementation.

4.7 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES BY KEY INFORMANTS

1. That free education came at the most appropriate time and it was quite timely as many believed such a move would have remained a topic for discussion as it had been for many years.
2. That free education had been introduced in a hurry and had encountered problems, which still needed solution.
3. That success of free education will require everybody's participation i.e. the policy makers, the leaders, teachers and the parents, all-inclusive.
4. That a lot needs to be put in place right from the government and the schools to help in the programme's sustainability after careful implementation.

Points of Dissent:

1. Whereas heads would have felt that teachers need to be motivated, the education office felt that there was no better motivation that may be offered. The teachers needed to support the programme without asking for any incentives as they were better remunerated than the field officers who moved from school to school with no extra incentive.

2. All other key informants except the parents felt that there was need for communities to fully support the programme as many had misunderstood the whole endeavour to mean that all their requirements would be provided for by the government. They also felt that there was need for a demarcation line between politics and matters of policy, which affect the lives of the youth.
3. The education office noted that late re-imburement of funds was watering down the process and causing unnecessary delay in the proper implementation of the programme.
4. The head teachers had the following observations to make:
 - a) Many children were over age and had some problems matching those who were regularly in school. This, they noted had caused drop out for those who could not cope.
 - b) The general relationship between parents and teachers was not cordial as many parents viewed teachers as a group that was against the free education programme.
 - c) All development projects for which the government did not give funds have stalled and there was no open channel to make a follow up.
 - d) Materials supplied by the government were not safe in if teachers kept them in school. This had forced the teachers to give the materials to the parents for their safe custody but many times the materials had either been misplaced or misused.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5 INTRODUCTION

The study addressed the issue of free primary education and came up with responses from the pupils, the teachers and other stakeholders like parents and the implementers of free primary school education.

5.1 CONCLUSION

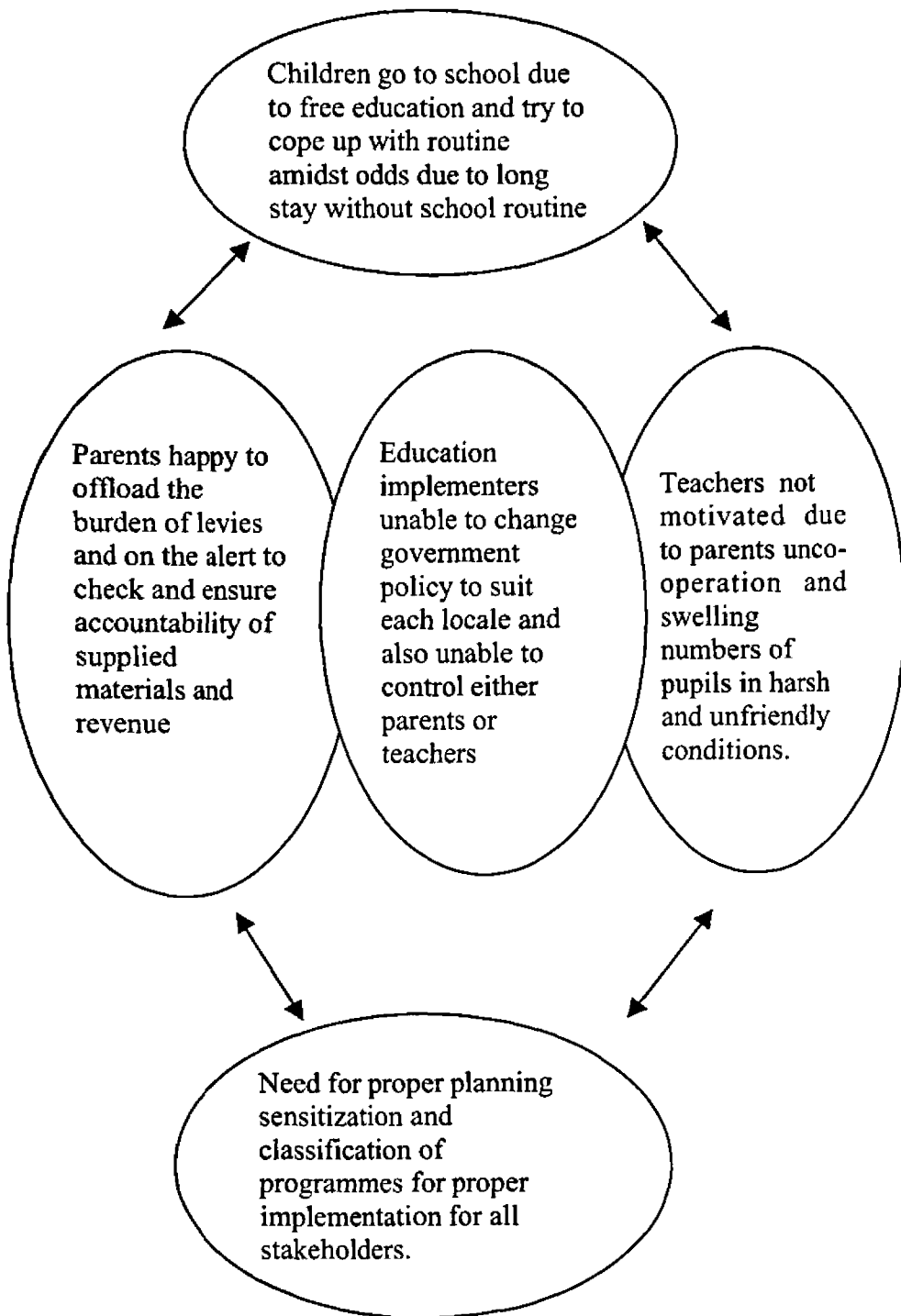
As free education launched with a bang, every child who was at home especially due to payment of levies went to school. It was however not easy for the children who found the routine both strenuous and unfamiliar. Many are therefore just coping with this situation.

Parents received free education with applause and have hence called off school projects as they off loaded the responsibility of establishing these to the government.

From past experiences the teachers received the program with utmost despair as they were already demotivated by the previous regime and have not been very supportive of the program as they term it as an unnecessary increase in workload. The implementers of the program at lower levels find it difficult to change the policy governing the funding and are therefore unable to offer appropriate advice for the teachers and the parents.

All these are problems that have emerged from the implementation of free education and hence need attention. Below is a model of responses designed by the researcher to show the responses of free education:

5.2 FREE EDUCATION: MODEL OF RESPONSES



5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There should be a well-planned and co-coordinated approach to free education to avoid unnecessary hiccups and strains in its implementation.
2. There is an obvious need for qualified personnel to handle the areas of accounts and equipment procurement since the head teachers lack knowledge in book keeping and equipment procurement procedures.
3. Arrangements for youth polytechnics and adult education programs should have been expanded to include suitable activities to cater for those who need mere literacy, numeracy and to offer more appropriate and suitable challenge offering activities to suit their interest and age.
4. Deliberate arrangements to attract and encourage the hand-capped children to benefit from free education are necessary as such children are evident in the neighborhood and nobody seems to take cognizance of them
5. There is a necessity to provide funding to encourage regular assessment and evaluation activities not necessary for individual schools aggrandizement but as a positive means of gauging their own performance.
6. Funding for regular tests and examinations be encouraged as a means of ensuring both teaching and learning are going on in school.
7. There is need to increase funding to cover construction of classrooms to reduce congestion.
8. Politics and the press should have a clear demarcation on policy matters as far as free education is concerned so that those implementing the programmes are free to do so.

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APPENDIX I

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

LEVIES

The compact English Dictionary defines levies as the money so raised by the imposition of and collection of taxes, tariffs, or fines.

In the case of schools, these levies are imposed by school committees, and the DEB to help in the running of the schools. This includes the payments for tuition, stationary, fundraisings, funerals etc.

PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

The encyclopaedia of sociology defines education as that part of bringing up that occurs in formal institutions and in more accelerated terms, schooling.

Education can be viewed as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge in society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists refer to as socialization or enculturation. A child whether conceived among the African bushmen, the renaissance florentines or the middle classes of the Manhattan is born without culture. Education is designed to guide him in learning a culture, moulding his behaviour in the way of adulthood and guiding him towards his eventual role in society (Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol. 5, 1974)

Primary is defined as basic, elementary or being the first stage. Primary Education is therefore the first phase of statutory Education, usually covering the years 5 to 6 up to 11 or 12. The 8.4.4 system of Education offers between 6 and 14 years of primary school.

SCHOOL

A place where learning can take place usually classified according to whether it is for primary or secondary age pupils. (Crystal D. 2000)

In Kenya it is the second stage of Education after Nursery School.

CHILDREN

Longman Dictionary of contemporary English defines children as young human beings of either sex from before birth to completion of physical development.

In Kenya, the children and young persons act (Cap 141 Laws of Kenya) defines a child as a person under the age of 14. A juvenile is one aged over 14 years but is under 16. A young person is one aged 16 or more but is under the age of 18

The children's bill (1988) defines children as persons under the age of 18 (Kenya Country Report 1998).

LOW- INCOME GROUPS

Participatory urban appraisals carried out in Mombasa and Kisumu indicate the contextual and dynamic character of poverty as characterised by low income, lack of access to income earning opportunities, lack of assets and earnings, lack of access to health and education and poor environmental conditions. Most low-income groups experience hardship and suffering as members of families and household either as poor children, as struggling husbands and wives or as widows or separated or divorced women with dependant children (National Poverty Education Plan 1999-2015) In this study the low-income groups will consist of wage earners and those peasants who depend on farm produce for their livelihood.

APPENDIX II

CASE I: A PARENT'S RESPONSE

"Free education is very good .We are very happy. I have 8 children, 2 girls are married and the others are in school. The bigger children are not in school. Two of them reported to school and ran away after one month. Now they are at home not really doing much. I thank the government because if free education did not start, I would not have afforded to pay any fees for my children. At least now I have children in school although some of them got the chance to learn without paying .I do not buy books or any other stationary expect in the nursery school where I pay 300/= . Sometimes the nursery school children are sent home but I am trying to cope since it's only in the nursery school that I have to pay this year. My husband is a drunkard and does not bother about the children. We only see him at bedtime. The government of Kenya is better than my husband as it has taken my children to school. The only thing he did is to get the children and that is all".

"Now that education is free, I hope that any money I will get I will use to hire land so that I can plant enough maize and beans for the children to have a meal when they come out of school. Otherwise the land I have cannot sustain us even for two months. I could also buy a sheep to start with, as I own nothing".

"The community can only contribute through other efforts like manpower for school projects since we have always been unable to pay and we may

as well be still unable to pay now and that is why our children were not in school earlier”.

“In case some parents are able, may be they could contribute but I personally have no cash to pay”.

“The government should have given this free education from nursery school since most of the schools insist on the children having nursery education before they proceed to primary school. May be they think we can afford but the truth is that we actually cannot afford to pay any levies. We can try and buy the uniform and it is very bad for children to miss free primary education because they can't afford to pay the nursery school fee”.

“I have two children who went to school at the beginning of the year and just dropped off although it was free, education. They are about 15 and 16 years and could not cope with younger ones in class 1 and 2. My 14 year old daughter has not joined class one yet as I had to go for her from the employers place in Kakamega. She was delayed but she is starting this term”.

“I do not visit school unless they ask me to go there when they are giving the materials to the children. There are no new projects in the school expect when took a pole to repair a roof that had been blown by the wind”.

APPENDIX III

CASE 2: A KEY INFORMANT FROM THE EDUCATION OFFICE

Free education is one of the most noble ideas of our times .We are all happy to support it and see it succeed. However, all the efforts we are using to make this program succeed are being frustrated variously.

Firstly, the program started very speedily to satisfy the political scene. This did not give time to planners to put proper channels for implementation in place. So far, we are still implementing the program with problems here and there.

Secondly, there seemed to be no specific budgetary obligation for free education. This would explain why funds are released with delay some times forcing schools to remain at a stand still for a while.

Thirdly, the numbers of children having swelled abruptly, we have encountered problems of staff both for the field and the teach classes.

On the other hand, parents too have given us a share of the problems. Following the political pronouncements, parents have believed that they now can relax and do nothing on development in the schools.

They have disowned school programmes such that some do not seem to be serious. I have an example from a school in which the pupils felt that they were behind in syllabus coverage .The parents approached me to ask the teachers to give the pupils holiday classes but did not want to pay .When I approached the teachers, they accepted and organized for the holiday classes .It was sad that the same parents who had made the request failed to send the children to school. Only 2 pupils reported out of the 36 candidates in the class. The teachers had no

tion but to close the school and proceed for the holidays. I also advised them to do so.

In another case, the roof of a school was blown off by heavy rainstorms. When the headmaster approached the area political representatives, they indeed came to the place and talked to the parents but their advice was to wait for the government's intervention as money for such activities was available. On seeing no alternative, the parents themselves had to mobilize funds as an emergency fund to roof the school.

This area has very bad roads and sometimes it's difficult for my officers to penetrate some schools. I only have 2 zonal inspectors for the 4 zones and yet they are supposed to be four of them. I face problems in disseminating information from the District Education office. This is due to the few officers, the perennial rains, muddy roads and lack of proper transport. I just hope that these problems will ease as we continue working on the implementation of this program".

APPENDIX IV

QUESTIONNAIRE I: FOR PUPILS

Questionnaire No. I

1. Name of school _____

Type Public

Private.

2. Childs Class

3. Gender M _____

F _____

AGE LIMIT

4. Date of birth

5. When did you start school?

State year _____

6. Have you ever missed school?

Yes

No

If Yes why? _____

FAMILY BACKGROUND

7. Parents' occupation

Mother

Father

8. How many are you in the family

Brothers _____

Sisters _____

3. What do you do when you close school?

- a) Read
- b) Help in the house
- c) Help in the shamba
- d) Work for pay
- e) Others (specify)

PERFORMANCE

10. Are you happy with your performance or not?

11. Why do you perform as you do?

12. What will you do after primary school?

- a) Go to secondary school
- b) Look for a job
- c) Get married
- d) Any other (Specify)

13. Why?

ATTENDANCE

14. Have you ever left school for a long time?

Yes

No

If Yes, why? _____

15. Why did you decide to come to school?

16. What do you like about school?

17. What don't you like about school?

20. Do you know any pupils who dropped out of school since January 2003

(probe)

APPENDIX V

QUESTIONNAIRE II FOR TEACHERS.

Class teacher for class _____

No. of lessons per week _____

No. of pupils in class Boys _____

Girls _____

Total _____

Gender of teacher _____

Subject taught _____

Assessment:

No. Of tests	YEAR2002			YEAR 2003		
	Week	Month	Term	Week	Month	Term

2002	Test 1			Test 2			Test 3		
Marks attained	Highest	Lowest	Average	Highest	Lowest	Average	Highest	Lowest	Average
2003	Test 1			Test 2			Test 3		
Marks attained	Highest	Lowest	Average	Highest	Lowest	Average	Highest	Lowest	Average

Remedial classes:

1. Do you teach on weekends or after five o'clock?

Yes No

If yes how many lessons?

If no, why?

2. Do you give other remedial classes?

Yes No

If yes, when?

If no, why?

3. Do you have new pupils in your class?

If yes where did they come from?

4. Are there any pupils who reported in January and have dropped out?

Yes No

If yes how many?

5. What do you think about free education as far as your teaching is concerned?

(a) Has helped me

(b) Has increased my work

(c) Unnecessary

(d) Any other (specify)

6. When do you arrive in school

i. 7 – 7.30am

ii. 7.30 – 8.00am

iii. Any other time (specify)

7. Do you leave school later than the usual time?

Yes No

If yes, why?

8. What do you do with low achievers?

(a) Teach them very early in the morning

(b) Teach them late in the evening

(c) Give them extra work

(d) Tell them to work hard

(e) Any other (specify)

9. What do you think about the withdrawal of school levies and how does it affect you personally?

10. What do you think the community should do to back up free Education?

Co-Curricular Activities

11. How many co-curricular activities does the school take part.

12. How many of the activities have you been involved this year?

APPENDIX VI:INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS:

HEADTEACHERS.

TOPIC: Free Education: An assessment of the response by teachers and Children from low-income groups. A study of Kakamega District.

ENROLMENT

1. Name of School _____

Type _____

2 No. Of pupils

Class	Year		
	2001	2002	2003
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
Total			

3 Name of respondent

Age

Marital status

M

S

Gender

School Management

4. Comment about withdrawal of levies in primary school

5. In comparison to payment of levies do you think schools have benefited from this course by the government?

6. How does withdrawal of levies affected the management of the school, teachers, parents and the pupils?

7. How is the school coping with the new numbers of enrolment?

8. What advice do you give to the government about the withdrawal of levies?

9. What would you expect the community to do to back up the Government's efforts on free Education?

ADMINISTRATORS:

.

Name

Age

Marital status M

S

Area of administration:

Gender:

1. As an administrator what can you comment about withdrawal of levies from school?
2. Has this effort by the government been beneficial to the community in any way?
Explain
3. What effects does the withdrawal of levies have on schools in your area?
4. What advice do you think the government should be given about the levies?
5. What would you advice the community to do in order to participate in free Education and back up the Governments' effort?

PARENTS:

Name

Marital status

Age

Gander

Level of Education

1. What do you do for a living?
2. Comment on free education in primary schools.
3. Now that Education is free what do you do with the resources that you would have used to pay for education?
4. Of what benefit has free Education been to you?
5. What do you do as an individual and as a community to back up free Education?
6. What advice can you give on free Education?

Levies

7. Are there any levies you pay this year when Education in free (probe)