THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT ON ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THARAKA DISTRICT

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DECLARATION

This research project is my own original work and has not been presented for an award of any degree in any other University or Institution. No part of this research project may be reproduced without prior permission of the author and/or University of Nairobi.

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To my husband Bernard Kiongo Mwathi, children Norah kagwira, Rose gatwiri, Nicasios Mwathi, Faith Muthoni and Kelvin Migwi and My mother Elizabeth Mathumba.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated impact of community support grant on access to ECDE in Tharaka District, in Eastern province, Kenya. The objectives that guided the study were to determine the level of access and quality of Early Childhood Development and Education following implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District, determine challenges facing the implementation of community support grant and to determine effective strategies to remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in that district. The significance of the study was to generate data that can be used to address the challenges facing implementation of the community support grant. Findings and recommendation of this study can be used to improve access to Early Childhood Development and Education and help DEO to confirm whether the grant was well utilized. The limitation of the study was inadequate literature and data on impact of community support grant. The study assumptions were that grant given was used to provide the facilities as intended and improve access. Among the reviewed literature included access to basic education in Kenya and its inherent concerns and challenges facing implementation of community support grant. The target population comprised of 60 head teachers, 120 ECDE teachers, 5 DICECE officers and 1 DEO in Tharaka District. This study adopted a descriptive research survey and data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. 30 head teachers and 30 ECDE teachers were sampled through simple random sampling and 5 DICECE officers and 1 DEO were purposively sampled. Instrument piloting was conducted to five schools that were not included in the study. The findings for this study were that the major impact of community support grants to ECDE included quality of learning and teaching materials, improved enrolment (access), reduced cost of education, improved teacher salary top ups, improved quality of learning environment. A number of challenges included underpayment of teachers, delay in releasing the funds, inadequate funding, underpayment of teachers, endemic poverty among a grater number of parents. The study also identified a number of strategies that can be employed to mitigate the challenges e.g. increase CSG funding, inclusion of ECDE in the programe of FPE, employment of ECDE teachers by the government, prompt realizing of CSGs to beneficially schools, initiating income generating projects to supplement CSG. Questionnaires were administered to the respondents and the following conclusions were made. Underpayment of ECDE teachers, delay in releasing the fund and inadequate funding. In regard of the above, the following recommendations were made. Increase the community support funding, inclusion of ECDE in FPE programme, employment of ECDE teachers by the government and initiating income generating project to supplement community support grant.

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ACRONYMS

AKDN:	AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
ASALs:	ARID AND SEMI ARID LANDS
CHWs:	COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS
CSG:	COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT
DICECE:	DISTRICT CENTRE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
ECDE:	EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION
EFA:	EDUCATION FOR ALL
ERWEP:	ECONOMIC RECOVERY FOR WEALTH AND EMPOWERMENT PAPER
FPE:	FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION
GER:	GROSS ENROLLMENT RATES
GMP:	GROWTH MONITORING AND PROMOTION
IIEP:	ISLAMIC INTEGRATED EDUCATION PROGRAM
KDHS:	KENYA DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY
HIV/AIDS:	HUMAN IMMUNE VIRUS/ACQUIRED IMMUNO DIFICIENCY SYDROME
KEPI:	KENYA EXPANDED IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM
KESSP:	KENYA EDUCATION SECTOR SUPPORT PROGRAM
MOEST:	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
MOH:	MINISTRY OF HEALTH
NACECE:	NATIONAL CENTRE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
NGO:	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
NARC:	NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION
OECD:	ORGANIZATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
PRSP:	POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER
TBAs:	TRADITIONAL BIRTH ATTENDANTS
UNESCO:	UNITED NATIONS EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
UNICEF:	UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN FUND

UPE: UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

CHAPTER ONE
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the key expected results in the operationalization of the Sessional paper No.1 of (2005 – 2010) on policy framework for education training and research are: to attain universal primary Education (UPE) and Education for All (EFA) by 2015 and to raise primary school to secondary transition rate from 47% to 70% by 2008. The Sessional paper has also explicitly pointed the need to develop a comprehensive early childhood development and education (ECDE) policy, enhance access and quality of services and build capacity. These were to be done under the Kenya Education Sector Support Program (KESSP 2005- 2010). These strategies are expected to promote early childhood education.

The overarching objective of pre-school program is to build a strong foundation for cognitive, socio-emotional and health development that enabled the child to maximize his/her learning potential upon entering primary school (Kenya Education Background Report, 2005). However, 65% of children in Kenya, especially those from poor households do not access quality pre-school program. The capacity of these children to learn is diminished due to the lack of appropriate care and psychosocial stimulation at the right age. Even when the primary education is free these children will start school disadvantaged.

Recent years have seen a global endeavor to prioritize early childhood care and education as a foundation for later learning and development as evidenced by the global guidelines for early childhood education in the 21st century (Association for Childhood Education International, 1999). Early childhood development education (ECDE) is crucial for human capital formation and for enhancing the educability of

children. There is an increasing body of scientific literature pointing to the importance of the first few years of life from the point of view of human physical, mental and social development. Appropriate physical and mental development of children in the pre-school years leads to timely school enrollment and improved progress and performance in school. A number of experimental studies on early child vulnerability to adverse environmental circumstances during the pre-school years, and more important from applied perspective, have shown that deficits in intellectual development that accompany poverty and malnutrition can be prevented or compensated through early childhood development interventions, that provide improved diets, learning experiences and health surveillance (Achoka, 2007).

Investment in early childhood development programs worldwide have grown since 1970s for a number of reasons (UNESCO Early Childhood Policy Review Report, 2005). First, the increasing participation of women in the labour force and changes in family structures and child-rearing practices has created new demands for child care. Second, steady improvements in the survival of children have led governments to invest in laying the foundation for human development by improving the health, nutrition, and learning potential of those who survive beyond the first year of life. Third, governments have recognized that early childhood interventions are particularly useful as a preventive investment for groups at high risk of educational failure. All of the above reasons apply in the case of Kenya. The demand for child care has increased as a result of increasing numbers of nuclear families with working/single-parents, most of whom are poor. Results from the Kenya poverty assessment (1995) indicate that a third of rural households are female-headed. These households, and those in arid and

semi arid lands (ASALS), slums and those in plantation areas are likely to have access to quality childcare.

While the Kenyan child's chances of survival have improved dramatically since the 1960s, child quality indicators such as levels of educability, morbidity and nutritional status showed that much remains to be done (UNESCO, 2005). Improvements in these indicators are considerably worse for children from poor households, who are less likely to attend school and more likely to be malnourished than the average Kenyan child. The demand for early child development services in Kenya has resulted in the establishment of a large network of child development centers, mostly in rural areas, by parents of children who didn't have access to privately owned 'nursery schools'. The community has been the most important partner in the development of the centers, taking responsibility for the provision of physical facilities, payment of salaries, organization of feeding programs, and provision of learning and playing materials. Some communities received financial and supervisory support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local governments. In the 1970s, the government of Kenya stepped in to provide training support and supervision for centers. In 1984, The National center for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) was established at the Kenya Institute of Education. NACECE was made responsible for the training of trainers, curriculum development, research and coordination (UNESCO Early Childhood Policy Review Report, 2005). In full cognizance of the National and International goals of education, ministry of education (MOE) developed a comprehensive early childhood development and education policy paying special attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged children by 2005. The policy sought out objects of ensuring that all children in difficult circumstances that had access to and

completed free and compulsory primary education by 2021. The Kenyan government envisaged enhanced access, equity and quality of education especially in ECDE (GOK Sessional paper No. 1, 2005).

In Kenya, poor access to education was largely blamed on prevailing poverty, poor national economic performance, HIV/AIDS and environmental degradation, especially in arid and semi arid areas (Kenya Education Background Report, 2005). Other issues defining the larger part of education in Kenya include negative attitudes towards schooling, amidst dwindling opportunities, thus de-motivating parents against sending children to school; numerous other challenges as indicated by reduced gross enrollment ratios, high dropouts, low completion and transition rates as well as regional and gender disparities; in addition to the question regarding both quality and accessibility. In addressing the foregoing problems, Kenya developed several policies including poverty reduction papers, National education Master Plan (1997-2010). Recently the country had embarked on developing provisional education for all (EFA) plans, for incorporation in the National EFA plan. Beyond the policies, there had been efforts related to service provision, including bursaries, text books, school feeding programs, provision of learning aids, teacher training, among others. However, provisions for early childhood development and education in the free primary education (FPE) had been low (UNESCO, 2005).

One of key objectives of the Sessional paper No 1 of 2005 entitled 'A policy framework for education, training and research' is to enhance access, equity and quality of education at all levels by 2010. By 2003, access to ECDE services was 35%. The national target is to raise this access to 60% by 2010. The strategy ministry of

education continues to apply to achieve these targets is the provision of government grant in the form of Community Support Grant (CSG). Community support grant programme is an initiative by the ministry of education to assist early childhood centres and communities in the poorest areas of Kenya to improve access to quality early childhood education for children aged 4 to 5 years. The ministry of education proposed to provide ECDE community support grants to 5,000 ECDE centers in 35 Districts with low access and high poverty levels. Ministry of education was involved in identification of target areas. District Education boards (DEBs) and District Education Officers (DEOs) were asked to identify areas with low access to early childhood development and education services and poor infrastructure.

District education officers in all Districts identified the ECDE centres based on the criteria provided by the ministry of education and submitted the list to District education boards who gave the final approval of ECDE centres to receive a community support grant. The overall aim of the selection process was to select the ECDE centres located in pockets of poverty and disadvantaged areas across the country. Tharaka District being among the Districts with high poverty and low access was considered by the early childhood development management unit at the ministry of education to benefit from community support grant on this basis. Each beneficiary of the fund was to receive a total of KSHS 300,000 (around 4,500 USD) in three installments over five years. The ECDE community supports grant is be used to improve existing infrastructure of ECDE centers, such as classrooms, toilets, school furniture and learning materials. They can also be used to increase the teacher salaries.

Despite the above measures, the implementation of community support grants faces challenges that include inadequate community participation. A study conducted by Kenya Early Childhood Development Project (1997) reveals that despite some significant gains in implementation of community support grant initiative, there was still low access and quality of services provided by ECDE centers in some target districts including Tharaka. The study elucidates that access to ECDE services were low, particularly for the lowest income groups; there ware low public awareness regarding community support grant, levels of funding are too low to allow efficiency and effectiveness of program implementation. The study also established that despite providing community support grants to support disadvantaged communities by the government in collaboration with other development partners to improve access and quality regional disparities continue to persist. Equally the study also cited that despite remarkable achievements in boosting pre-school enrolments, 65% of children of pre-school going age are not enrolled in pre-schools. This study therefore intended to evaluate the impacts of community support grant on access and quality of ECDE and determined challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sections of pre-school and school age children in Tharaka District are not benefiting from the community support grant whose overall goal is to enhance education access for all children aged 4-5 years due to the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant. For instance, only about 40% of pre-school children are accessing ECDE. About 60% are still not accessing ECDE services despite the community support grant initiative. This could be attributed to the challenges facing

the implementation of the programme and the lack of comprehensive studies seeking effective strategies to address the challenges. Although the government initiated free primary Education (FPE) for all, this policy has not ensured total enrollment for all children as it does not include provisions for ECDE. As such, parents pay much money that most poor parents cannot afford. Concisely, either children from these poor homes miss the whole of ECDE or if they were enrolled, they drop out of school (Ministry of Education-2003).

The other concern is the lack of data on access to ECDE especially with the advent of embracing Education for All (EFA) and the implementation of Free Primary Education by the government. Research evidence showed that much focus has been on investigating the challenges facing the implementation of FPE and little has been done to study the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant. This study sought to fill this gap by determining challenges facing the implementation of community support grant as well as evaluating its impact on access and quality.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of community support grant on access to early childhood development and education in Tharaka District.

1.4 Research Objectives
The following objectives guided the study:

i) Examine the level of access and quality of early childhood development and education following the implementation of Community Support Grant in Tharaka District.

ii) Determine challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District.

iii) Determine effective strategies to remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District.

1.5 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

i. What is the level of access and quality of early childhood development and education in Tharaka District following the implementation of community support grant?

ii. What are the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District?

iii. What effective strategies can remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

It was hoped that this study would generate data that could be used to address the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant. Findings and recommendations of this study might bring about improvements in access to ECDE services. The study is expected to generate data and information to promote children's early learning. Findings might help DEOs to confirm whether the grant was well utilized and also mobilize parents to enroll their children in schools.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations to this study was a lack of adequate literature and data on impact of community support grant on access to ECDE services enjoyed by vulnerable and disadvantaged children in Tharaka; data that could be used as empirical source of information to guide the context of this study. This is particularly because few studies

were found in reference to this study in Kenya. Available data focused on challenges of implementing free primary education (FPE) with scanty information on community support grant. Other limitations to this study included lack of comprehensive records/documentation of utilization of community support grant.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study was conducted in Tharaka District. Head teachers, ECDE teachers, DICECE Officers and a District education officer were the target for the study. The study focused on the impact of Community Support Grant on access to ECDE. The specific aspects that the study focused on were access and quality by evaluating whether community support grant funds had enhanced access and helped to improve facilities in ECDE centres. The study also investigated the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant and strategies that could be used to readdress the challenges.

1.9 Basic Assumptions

This study made the assumptions that:

a)   Grants given were used to provide facilities as intended.

b)   Community support grant has improved access.

1.10 Definition of Terms

ACCESS: In this study the word access is used to refer to the enrollment of pre-school-age- going children to ECDE programs.

CHALLENGES: In this study the term challenge is used to refer to factors hindering access to education of pre-school children.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION: Is a generic term used to refer to education catering for children aged 3-5 years.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study comprised five chapters. Chapter one, introduction, consists of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and Research questions of the study, significance of the study, limitations to the study, delimitations, basic assumptions and definition of key terms. Chapter two comprised of literature review theoretical and conceptual framework. Chapter three dealt with the research methodology that comprises the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, validity and reliability, procedure for data collection and data analysis. Chapter four presented data analysis and discussion of the study findings. Chapter five dealt with the summary, conclusion and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature related to this study. The review has focused on: Access to basic education in Kenya and inherent concerns, investing in Early Childhood Development, Education System achievements and challenges, Demographic trends and current status of ECDE. Part two deals with the theoretical and conceptual frame work of the study.

2.2 Access to Basic Education in Kenya: Inherent Concerns

According to Achoka (2007) basic education being the minimum education that every Kenyan must have for progressive existence in society is a crucial factor. That is why Kenya subscribes to the international protocol that established Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand 1990 and the world education forum in Dakar, Senegal, 2000. Since then, the Kenya Government in her Education Sector Strategic Plan and Sessional paper No. 1 of 2005 has articulated how to attain goals for education. For instance early childhood education which tries to ensure development of the whole personality of the child's physical, mental, and socio-emotional attributes faces challenges such as lack of access to early childhood education mostly caused by poverty, regional and gender disparities, policy framework, and HIV/AIDS among others.

At primary school level where children stay longest in the schooling years and they develop more motor skill, further cognitive skills along with higher socialization than

the early childhood education level, has children failing to access education due to poverty, gender imbalances, regional imbalances among other concerns. Secondary education which creates a human resource base higher than the primary education along with training youth for further education and the world of work registers restriction to many children due to concerns of poverty, gender imbalances, and insecurity regional disparity among others. Achoka, asserts that reaching universal primary education (UPE) is the highest priority of the government of Kenya with the aim of accelerating the achievement of EFA goals. Other concerns related to EFA are gender equality, access and quality of non-formal education special needs education and adult education. Achoka notes that ECDE in Kenya receives minimal government investment compared with other sub-sectors. The literature concerns reviewed includes regional and gender disparity concerns, policy framework concerns, HIV/AIDS concerns, access to primary education in Kenya concerns and poverty concerns.

2.2.1 Regional Concerns

Kenya is largely varied geographically. Some parts like those of Northern Kenya are Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs).Other parts like those of Central and Western Provinces are wetlands. Most families that live in the ASALs encounter difficulties that counteract government efforts to achieve education for all Kenyans. Their life styles are not conducive to learning as they often move from one location to the other in search of wetlands and water for themselves and their livestock (Achoka, 2007); as they move on, they take their children along with them. It is difficult to have children from these regions attend ECDE education as required. Another related concern is children who are born to parents that are forced to become exiles subsequent to land/tribal clashes in Kenya like is the case in Mt. Elgon region of Rift Valley Province

(RVP) in year, 2007. Besides the RVP, another province that has been adversely affected by perennial land/tribal clashes is Coast. It should be noted that RVP is the largest province in Kenya. It runs from north to south Kenya. Many families not only inhabit the province but also depend on it for their livelihoods. The Coast province is Kenya's "international market place" which like the RVP hosts many people. Disturbances in these provinces therefore destabilize many Kenyans. The most affected lot are children whose parents are either send away from their homes and/or are killed. They remain unsupported for any useful education. In addition, cattle-rustling menace in some parts of North-Western Kenya leads to many deaths. Children are not spared the agony. Those who survive suffer poverty and neglect. Consequently, affected parents of land/tribal clashes and/or cattle rustling together with their children hibernate in market places, local chiefs' camps, religious centers, or roam on the streets begging for security and maintenance. These parents are not able to finance their children's ECDE education. The psychological trauma the children suffer is likely to hurt them the rest of their lives. Many of these children have been forced into becoming street beggars; that is a great concern, which the government is striving to resolve since it came to power, 2003. By then, 20% of Kenya's population belonged to age group 0-5 years (Republic of Kenya, 2003). Yet, enrolment into the ECDE was as low as 20% of the relevant age group (Republic of Kenya, 2006). Coupled with the above challenges is the issue of culture in some communities. Government efforts to provide equal educational opportunities for boys and girls are frustrated by some parents' choice to pay more attention to boys who are regarded a more formidable asset to the family than the girls. Consequently, more boys than girls enroll for ECDE creating gender disparity in spite of the fact that statistically Kenya's female to male population ratios are 51 to 49%. Accordingly, as earlier noted, enrolment for ECDE in

Kenya is far below expected average of 70% (UNESCO, 2006) all efforts to improve the situation notwithstanding (Republic of Kenya, 2004; 2003). The North Eastern Province exhibits the highest gender gap of 13.6 percentage points with the proportion of boys being 56.8% as against 43.2% for girls. Coast province was second in percentage mismatch between girl and boy enrolment with a disparity of 3.2 percentage points in favour of boys.

In some regions, primary schools are sparsely located. Young children have difficulties accessing such schools. Thanks to the local transportation system, the famed "boda-boda" mania. However, this system is as expensive for many parents as tracking is to the children. In either way, this concern contributes positively to primary school dropout rates particularly in some rural regions. Moreover, people who live in the ASALs have peculiar needs related to nomadic life style.

Establishment of low cost boarding schools has failed to alleviate the concern of low enrolment as either expansion and/or sustainability emerge as added concerns. Participation of the girl-child continues to be a challenge in some communities in Kenya. In particular, the cultural practice of early marriage for young girls haunts many families as their young girls are withdrawn from school and married to comparatively old men. This practice becomes double tragic when the girls must be quickly married to counteract perennial poverty in their homes. Of course, the government is impressively hawk-eyed against this practice. However, how does a government totally eradicate a people's culture? This could take centuries. For now, this practice together with others such as preferring to educate boys other than girls,

remain some of the major concerns Kenya encounters in making primary schooling accessible to both gender.

According to the study by Achoka (2007) on access to basics education in Kenya 2007, the findings apparently show that, most disparities occurred in Nairobi and North Eastern provinces. Enrolment in Coast, Nairobi, and North Eastern provinces were below the mark of 100%. Gross enrolment in the later province was pathetic, 23%. In spite of the fact that 51% of the Kenyan population is female, girl-child access to primary school was less than that of the boy-child in most provinces except for central and Western. Unfortunately, from 1990 to 2000, Kenya's primary school completion rates were below average. Throughout the period, girls' completion rates trailed those of the boys. This issue is most pronounced in the arid and semi-arid districts and pockets of poverty-stricken portions in the urban centers. Kenya therefore has a burden to improve the low access rates for especially the girl-child. This is an uphill task (Achoka, 2007).

2.2.2 Poverty Concerns

As noted earlier, many of Kenyans are poor (Republic of Kenya, 2003). These people have little or no hope of bringing up a child to the age of where they can benefit from free primary education. The Government's efforts to deal with this challenge are best exemplified in her policy papers on, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of 2001- 2004 and Economic Recovery for Wealth and Empowerment Paper (ERWEP) of 2003 - 2007 to mention but only two. Although the NARC government initiated Free Primary Education (FPE) for all, this policy has not ensured total enrolment for all primary school age group children. In Northern Eastern Province, for example, where

the highest index of poverty is recorded nationally, only one out of three children attends primary school (Otieno, 2007).

The major challenge for many Kenyans therefore has been many parents' and guardians' inability to augment government's financial provision with personal inputs as stipulated in the policy of cost-sharing (Republic of Kenya, 1988). By this policy, the government provides for teachers and to a limited extent, equipment. Parents, guardians and sponsors among others provide for facilities, uniform, feeding, medical care and other non-statutory fees. Upon many parents' failure to provide financial requirements, their children drop out of school despite the fact that this sector of education is "free".

2.2.3 HIV/AIDS Concerns

HIV/AIDS pandemic is another concern in provision of primary school education in Kenya. The pandemic affects the education system, which is the pillar of development and economic growth both at the societal and individual levels. Unfortunately, the pandemic has been reported in every district in Kenya. Sad to note, the pandemic affects the demand for schooling, enrolment rates, participation and completion necessitated by high rate of absenteeism from classes by pupils and by teachers (Achoka, 2006) leading to high dropout rate. By 2003, Kenya had over 2 million people living with HIV/AIDS. Over 600,000 among them were children. About 40-70% of patients in major public hospitals suffer from HIV/AIDS related illnesses. It is estimated that by the year 2010, nearly 3 million Kenyans will be suffering from HIV/AIDS (Republic of Kenya, 2003). Moreover, in 2006, the highest crime in Kenya

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was rape of the girl-child. It was erroneously believed that sex with a virgin cured the deadly HIV/AIDS! Many girl-children perished.

Accordingly, this trend defeats the whole purpose of education and erodes gains in basic education, which contribute towards attainment of EFA (ibid). Moreover, disabled children have been systematically sidelined in the awareness campaign as well as resource allocation making them more vulnerable to the disease as well as to school dropout (ibid). The overall picture of HIV/AIDS on access to primary education in Kenya is its negative impact on the potential clientele through, for example: the rapid growth in the number of orphans; increase in the number of street children; and the massive strain, which the orphan hood problem places on the extended family and the public welfare services.

2. 2.4 Policy Framework Concerns

Another concern in the provision of ECDE is the lack of adequate policy framework as a result; centers of learning have tended to adhere to different curriculum whose outcomes are not uniform or measurable. This concern creates mismatch for children's entry behavior to primary schools and compromises quality. The most adversely affected are children of the poor rural parents; yet they are the majority in Kenya. Moreover, the management of ECDE has been too long left to the abilities of individuals and affiliated societies. It scares an educator to realize that ECDE in some parts of Kenya is processed in tiny rooms called "academies" whose managers are not trained teachers and/or care takers.

The learning environment in most of such centers is not conducive. For instance, such centers are patched either behind shops, or in some 'bandas' or shanty-like buildings, or religious centers with too much other activities going on so as not to allow proper learning to take place. Alternatively, some centers are situated far away from homes of the learners who must then walk long distances only to arrive when they are too tired to access meaningful education. In any case, it is difficult under such learning conditions to detect children with special needs. This is because most of their teachers are not trained and/or they are more interested in enrolment than in paying special attention to children with special needs. It is at this level that one's future is enhanced or destroyed and this is a major Concern (Republic of Kenya, 2006).

According to Sessional paper No. 1 of 2005 titled 'A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research' (Republic of Kenya, 2005), the overall goal of education is to achieve EFA by 2015 in tandem with national and international commitments. The ministry has therefore; set the following specific objectives in full cognizance of the national and international goals: to ensure that all children have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education by 2010, to improve the quality of all aspects of education and to ensure that the learning needs of all, young people and adults are met through equitable access programmes by 2015.

The government is already implementing measures that seek to achieve these goals and improve the performance of this sub-sector. These include: Curriculum development for ECDE; Providing community support grants to support marginalized/vulnerable communities; and enhancing the capacity of supervision and inspection to ensure quality of ECDE programmes. A background report on the Kenyan situation by

UNESCO (2005) show that despite the above measures, access, equity, equity and quality in this sub-sector remain constrained by various factors that include: limited teaching and learning materials, inadequate ECDE centers; inadequate community participation; and lack of clear policy on transition from pre-primary to primary school among others.

2.3 Basic Education System, Achievements and Challenges

Under the Education and Training Act, education is the right of every child. Primary school education has been free, but not compulsory, since 2003. In 1985, Kenya embraced the 8-4-4 system of formal education, that is, 8 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of university. Basic education covers the primary and secondary school years. The age of entry into primary school is 6+. A non-formal system caters for disadvantaged children in arid and semi-arid regions and the urban slums. Prior to 2003, non-formal education was not funded by the ministry of education (MOE). Non-governmental organizations, religious bodies and local communities were the main References of support. Non-formal schools offer literacy and vocational skills to young children and youths. Since 2003 however, the Ministry of education (MOE) has provided financial support to these institutions as part of the Free Primary Education (FPE) program. Unfortunately, most non-formal schools have poor facilities, lack adequate textbooks and materials, and have high pupil-teacher ratios and untrained teachers. The Integrated Islamic Education Program (IIEP) is a non-formal school system that is usually supported by Muslim communities in collaboration with District centre for early childhood education (DICECE) trainers in the Mombasa, Malindi, Kwale, Kilifi, Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Ijara and Moyale

districts. Most financial support for the IIEP prior to 2003 was from UNICEF and local communities. These programs are also now financed by FPE.

Primary education: Attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2005 is a national goal in Kenya. Prior to 2003, primary education was a mirage for most Kenyan children, who could not afford registration fees, books and charges for the maintenance of facilities. Enrolment rates declined from 95% in 1989 to 76% in 1999. In 2001, the net enrolment rate in primary education was 69.9%. (Analytical Report on Education in Kenya, Ministry of Planning and National Development and EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005). After the government introduced FPE, enrolment rose by 17.7% from 6.131 million in 2002 to 7.208 million in 2003. In the same period, the number of teachers increased slightly from 178,037 to 178,622, resulting in higher pupil-teacher ratios in some schools. Some 91% of existing primary schools are public; the rest are private. A major problem concerning access to primary education, according to the 1999 census, was that children tended to enroll at a late age to start schooling. About one-third of 7-year-olds and one-fourth of 8-year-olds are not in school, and about 90% of children aged 10-14 years are enrolled in primary schools; after age 14 the enrolment rate falls sharply as a result of limited access to secondary schools.36 However, this situation may have changed after the introduction of FPE in 2003.

Thirty percent of children entering Standard 1 drop out before they reach the last grade of primary education. According to the Analytical Report of Education (2003), the dropout rate in the primary school cycle is 3.2%, ranging from 2% for Standard 1 to 5.2% for Standard 7. However, a tracer study conducted by Njenga and Kabiru (2001)

in Embu District showed that the average dropout rate is 4.9% and it tends to be higher in the earlier grades. Eastern and North Eastern Provinces had the highest dropout rates at 6.1% and 6%, respectively. Reasons for dropping out include parental ignorance of the importance of formal education (19%), poverty (13%), poor academic performance (6.5%) and pregnancy and/or early marriage (13.5. %).

The repetition rate is 13-16% in Standards 1 to 6, rising to as high as 19% in Standard 7 before dropping to below 5% in Standard 8. The high rate for Standard 7 is because many children are made to repeat this year in order to improve their performance in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in order to increase their chances of being admitted into secondary school.39 the tracer study by Njenga and Kabiru (2001) cited above found that repetition rates were higher in the earlier grades, notably in Standard 1. Repetition rates are lower for girls than for boys. The primary completion rate for 2000/01-2002/03 was 56%.41 Transition rates from primary school to secondary schools are even lower, with fewer girls entering secondary schools than boys. The current challenges facing primary education include: a high pupil-teacher ratio (40:1 in 2003, rising from 34:1 in 200243); low quality of education due to a lack of teacher training; and poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, resulting in the rising number of orphans, absenteeism and non-enrolment.

2.4 ECDE Access
Data is lacking on access to the ECDE services. The most widely collected data on access regards pre-school education targeting children aged 3-5. Attempts have been made to collect as much relevant data as possible from the Ministry of Health (MOH), e.g., the Ministry's KDHS of 2003, for the present report. But since little information is available on services falling under the auspices of ministries other than the MOE and MOH, it may be necessary to liaise with these ministries as well as NGOs to collect

relevant data. According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2004), Kenya's GER in pre-school education (ages 3-5) was 44.4% in 2001 (44.8% for boys and 44.0% for girls). Kenya experienced a slight decline in pre-school GER from 1998 to 2002. The highest GER of the period 1998-2002 was recorded in 1998, at 48.4% for girls and 47.6% for boys. In 2002, GER was 44.4% for boys and 38.3% for girls. Nairobi Province shows the highest GER throughout the period. Regional disparities are acute: the North Eastern Province recorded GER of just 11.2% for boys and 8.2% for girls in 2002. With regard to gender, there is no significant disparity in GER for pre-schools, unlike other levels of education.

2.4.1 NACECE/DICECE Initiatives to Increase Access

DICECE trainers and pre-school teachers hold parental education programs, material development and cooking demonstrations for parents and community members. These activities have helped raise awareness among parents and local communities of the importance of ECDE and especially of the needs and rights of young children. These initiatives have equipped parents and local communities with crucial skills and knowledge about how children grow and develop and the need for quality services in pre-schools. They are able to use the knowledge and skills to benefit themselves, their children and families. Moreover, growth monitoring and promotion (GMP) activities – mainly health and nutritional surveillance -- by pre-school teachers and parents of under fives in and out of pre-schools has increased access to ECDE services(NACECE,1995)

2.4.2 Initiative by the Ministry of Health to Increase Access

The MOH implements the Kenya Expanded Immunization Program (KEPI), a partnership-based program involving parents, local communities, NGOs and bilateral donors (e.g., UNICEF, World Bank). This partnership helped raise immunization coverage from 50% in 1963 to about 71.2% in 1993. However, coverage dropped to between 65% and 60% in 1998. The fairly high immunization coverage maintained so far is attributed to campaigns mounted by the MOH and participating agencies. Awareness of the importance of immunization is raised through mobile clinics (which take the services to the communities), through the media (especially radio, television and posters), and through announcements made at chiefs' "barazas" (community meetings), churches and other public places. The parents are informed where to take their under fives for immunization. Training of community health workers (CHWs) and TBAs is yet another initiative by the MOH, which has helped to increase access to immunization and quality care for young children. Other policies such as the breastfeeding policy have contributed to improving children's holistic development.

2.5 Challenges Facing the Implementation of Community Support Grant

MOE (2003) Report of the sector Review and development, identifies the following:

Low government investment in ECDE: One cause of low enrolment rates and disparities in access is lack of government investment in the ECDE sub-sector, which it regards primarily as a family and community responsibility. Less than 0.1% of the government budget for recurrent costs goes to the ECDE Program, compared with 61% for primary education. Parents and local communities finance about 70% of pre-

schools, while the rest are supported by other sponsors such as local authorities, religious and welfare organizations, NGOs and private entrepreneurs.

Free Primary Education Policy: This policy has had a negative impact on access to ECDE services. Most parents are refusing to pay pre-school fees, arguing that the government should provide free pre-school as well as primary school education. Thus, an increasing number of children are not benefiting from pre-school experiences, moving from home directly into primary schools. Such children miss the head start for primary school learning that they would get at pre-school which is known to cushion them against hostile experiences common to lower primary school classes, especially in Standard 1.

Poverty: Unlike primary education, pre-school services are fee-paying. This puts a particular burden on poor parents, who are also expected to contribute to the building of facilities, payment of teachers' salaries and management of pre-schools. Little or no financial support comes from other References. Poor children have no choice but to attend overcrowded pre-school services or stay at home if no affordable service is available in the vicinity. In some cases, hunger prevents children from attending pre-schools even when their fees have been paid. Usually it is parents with low education levels and those living below the poverty line who do not enroll their children in pre-schools. A combination of ignorance and poverty prevents children from partaking of the rich experiences offered by pre-schools, which provide a head start and a solid foundation for the development of life-long learning. These children stand to benefit most from pre-school experiences, without which they risk remaining disadvantaged and caught up in a lifelong cycle of poverty.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the administrative approach theory advanced by Henry Fayol. In this theory Fayol identified five administrative task areas. These task areas are; financial management, human resource, curriculum, physical, school community. The qualities of these components are critical to accessing education at all levels. Henry Fayol model shows that good school manager's deals with tasks that entail financial, human, curriculum physical and community management. The theory is relevant to this study because it is conceptualized that the head teacher needs to mobilize the above tasks in order to provide access. This theory has been borrowed because school management includes financial management that improves access.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework that captures the variables to guide the study is shown Figure

Figure 2.71 Conceptual Framework showing the Relationship between community Support Grant and its Impact on Access to ECDE.

Community Support Grant	School characteristics School management Poverty Community involvement	**Access to ECDE** No of pupils Quality Infrastructure Salary Learning materials
Independent variable	**Intervening variables**	**Dependent**
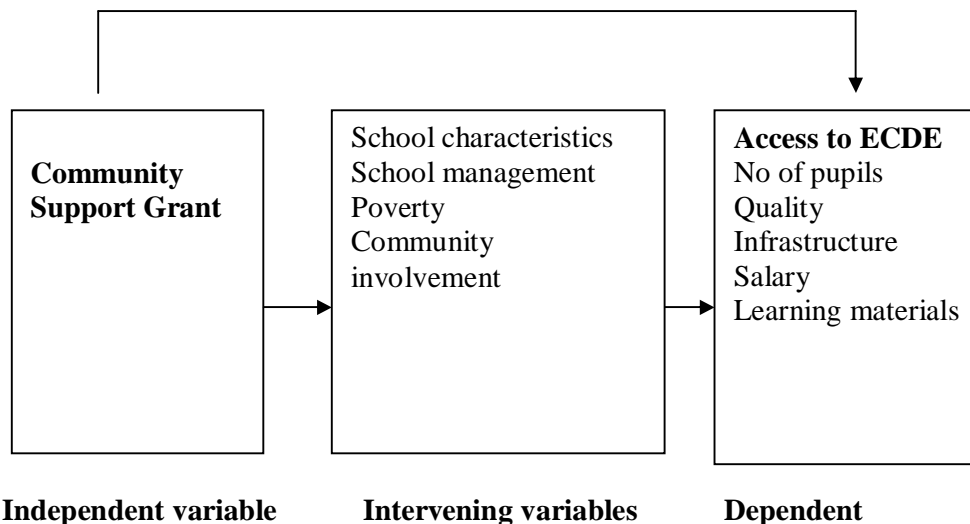
Community support grant entailed provision of infrastructures such as classrooms, toilets, teaching and learning materials, and paying teacher's salaries. These was be

manipulated to bring about change in the dependent variable that is access to ECDE in Tharaka but other extraneous variables may influence the outcome of the independent variables. Access include enrollment in school and quality of the programme. It is conceptualized that the impact of community support grant was improved access, improved infrastructure, teaching and learning materials and teacher salaries.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used in the study. The chapter covers the research design, The study location, the target population, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability data collection procedures and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research design that this study adopted was the descriptive survey. The descriptive survey was chosen for the study because it allows the researcher to study phenomena that do not allow for manipulation of variables (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Since the study involved human subjects, and the information needed cannot be manipulated, the researcher just collected information on the state of affairs in the schools, without manipulating any variables making the design appropriate for the study. According to Lockesh (1984) descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the status of phenomena and whenever possible to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

3.3 Population

The target population for this study comprised of 60 head teachers of the schools that received the grant, 120 ECDE teachers, 5 DICECE officers and 1 DEO in Tharaka District. A total of 186 subjects were involved in the study.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Orodho (2001) defines a sample as part of large population, which is brought to be representative of the larger population. Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representatives of characteristics found in the entire group. The accessible population is Tharaka District and 60 ECDE centers that are beneficiaries of the grant. Schools were first clustered and 30 randomly sampled. The rationale for clustering the schools was to obtain well defined clusters according the geographic areas that the schools existed. The head teachers in the 30 ECDE centers were automatically sampled. 30 ECDE teachers were also obtained by simple random sampling to participate in the study. The researcher requested the head teacher to randomly provide one ECDE teacher to participate in the study. The study used purposive random sampling and thus 5 DICECE officers and 1 DEO who was also purposively sampled. A sample size of 66 of the population was sampled.

Table 3.1 Sample Matrix

Category of population	Total population	Sampling procedure	Sample
Head teachers	60	Simple random	30
ECDE teachers	120	Simple random	30
DICECE Officers	5	Purposive	5
DEO	1	Purposive	1
Total	**186**		**66**

3.5 Research Instruments

This study used questionnaires for head teachers, ECDE teachers, DICECE officers, and DEO. The questionnaires were used because they allowed the researcher to reach a large sample within a short time. The questionnaires consisted of open and closed ended items and contained section A to C, with section A dealing with bio-data of the respondents. Section B sought to gather data on factors of CSG on access. Section C contained items that would sought to find out the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant and identify possible remedies to these challenges.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

According to Borg and Gall (1986) validity was the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure. To validate the research instrument the questionnaire was tested in five pilot schools that were not involved in the study. Content validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represented a specific domain or content of a particular consent.

To assess content validity my supervisors who are experts and professionals in the field were used. The pilot study assisted in identifying the problems that respondents encountered in the process of answering the questions put to them. From the piloted questionnaires ambiguous items were modified. Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Prior to the data collection, instrument piloting was conducted in five schools that were not included in the study. This involved administering the instrument only once to a sample of ECDE teachers, head teachers, DICECE officers and district education officer. The split- halves method of measuring reliability was used to estimate the degree to which the same results can be obtained within a repeated measure of the same concept. It involved splitting the pilot questionnaires into halves and finding the extent of correspondence or reliability between the halves; i.e. splitting the items in the instrument into two and giving each group half of the items to respond to. Scores from the two groups were then correlated in order to establish the extent to which the contents of the questionnaires were consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument is administered. The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to analyze for the two scores. Gay (1992) states that a correlation coefficient of at least 0.7 and above for the two halves is considered high enough to judge the reliability of the instrument. The reason behind pre-testing was to access the clarity of the questionnaire items so that those items that were found inadequate or vague are discarded or modified.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

A permit to carry out the research was obtained from the ministry of education. The permit was presented to the District Education Officer and the District commissioner to be allowed to visit the schools. The researcher visited the respondents to administer the questionnaires and collected them immediately after they were satisfactorily attended to.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

Kerlinger (1986) defines data analysis as categorizing, manipulating and summarizing of data in order to obtain answers to research questions. This study employed descriptive statistics to analyze the data. Gay (1981) asserts that descriptive survey data is commonly represented through use of frequency polygons, graphs, pi-charts and frequency table. Analyses were done using statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) version 11.5 and results presented in form of frequencies and percentages. The results were discussed and interpreted so as to answer the research questions.

Table 3.2 Methods of Data Analysis

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent variable	Method of analysis
i) What is the level of access and quality of early childhood development and education in Tharaka District following the implementation of community support grant?	Community Support Grant	ECDE Access	Means, frequencies, percentages
ii) What are the challenges facing the implementation of	Challenges	Implementation	Frequencies Percentages

community support grant in Tharaka District?			
iii) What effective strategies can remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District?	Remedies	Implementation	Frequencies Percentages

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the analysis of data and presentation of the results for the study. The data presented covers the respondent's demographic data, evaluation of the level of access and quality of early childhood development and education following the introduction of community support grant, challenges facing the implementation of the community support grant and strategies to remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant.

4.2 Respondent's Demographic Data

The demographic profile provides information about the population structure and helps create a mental picture of the subgroups that exists in the overall population. Researchers obtain demographic information from the study subject to understand simple characteristics and to determine if samples are a representative of the population of interest (Kirton, 2000). Although demographic variables cannot be manipulated, researchers can explain the difference between them and dependent variables. In this study, the researcher sought to determine respondent's characteristics by establishing their gender, professional qualification and work experience.

4.2.1 Respondents demographic data

The study sought to establish how the sample population was distributed by gender. By comparing the males and females distribution of the sample population, it would be possible to establish whether gender difference exist in the composition of the sample population. The results of ECDE teachers are given in the Table 4.3.

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Table 4.3 ECDE teachers' demographic data

ECDE Teachers	Frequency	%
Males	4	16
Females	21	84
Total	**25**	**100**

According to the findings in the table above, majority of the ECDE teachers were females 21 (84%) while the rest 4 (16%) were males. This shows that there was gender disparity among the study subjects in favour of females in the ECDE field.

4.2.2 Head Teachers' Demographic Data

This sought to show the distribution of head teachers by their gender. It gives an overview of the number of male and female head teachers who took part in the study. The results are presented in table 4.4 below

Table 4.4 Head teacher demographic data.

Head teacher	Frequency	%
Males	22	88
Females	3	12
Total	**25**	**100**

According to the findings in the table above, majority of the head teachers were males 22 (88%) while the rest 3 (12%) were females. This shows that there was gender disparity among head teachers when male prevailed.

4.2.3 Education officers' demographic data

This sought to show the distribution of Education officers' by their gender. The results are presented in table 4.5

Table 4.5 Education officers' demographic data

Education officers	Frequency	%
Males	2	33
Females	4	67
Total	**6**	**100**

According to the findings in the table 4.5 above majority 4 (67%) of the officers were females while the rest 2 (33%) were males. This shows that there was gender disparity in Education officers where the females prevailed.

4.2.4 Professional qualification of ECDE teachers

The study sought to establish the professional qualification of the respondents. Table 4.6 presents results of the findings.

Table 4.6 Professional qualification of the ECDE teachers

Qualification	Frequency	%
KCPE	2	8
KCSE	4	16
ECDE Certificate	16	64
Diploma ECDE	3	12
Total	**25**	**100**

The study established that majority 16 (64%) of the ECDE teachers had ECDE certificate qualification. The study further established that those with KCSE qualification accounted for 4 (16%), while those with Diploma qualification formed 3 (12%) of the sample population. The respondents with KCPE in ECDE accounted for 2 (8%).

The findings reveal that study subjects had different levels of qualification with data showing that highest qualification was Diploma and the lowest being KCPE. The findings generates a professional qualification that this study postulates to may have an influence on the implementation of community support grant particularly when the lower cradle in the qualification are the implementers of the programme.

4.2.5 Qualification of head teachers

The study also sought to show the qualification of the head teachers who took part in the study. The results are presented in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 Qualification of head teachers

Head teachers qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
PI CERTIFICATE	10	40
ATS IV	3	12
DIPLOMA ECDE	5	20
DEGREE	7	28
MASTERS	0	0
ANY OTHER	0	0
TOTAL	**25**	**100**

The study established majority 10 (40%) of the respondents had PI Certificate qualification. The study further established that those with degree qualification accounted for 7 (28%), while those with Diploma ECDE qualification formed 5 (20%) of the sample population. The respondents with ATS IV accounted for only 3 (12%). The findings reveal that the study subjects had different levels of qualification with data showing that the highest qualification was degree and the lowest was PI. The

findings generate a professional qualification that this study postulates to may have an influence on the implementation of community support grant.

4.2.6 Professional qualification of Education officers

The study also sought to show professional qualification of Educational Officers who took part in the study. Table 4.8 shows the professional qualifications of the Education officers.

Table 4.8 Professional qualification of Education officers

Professional qualification of Education Officer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
DIPLOMA ECDE	1	17
DEGREE	5	83
MASTERS	0	0
ANY OTHER	0	0
TOTAL	**6**	**100**

The study established that majority 5 (83%) of the respondents were graduates while the rest 1 (17%) had Diploma. The findings revealed that the officers had right qualifications for the monitoring and evaluation of the community support grant programme.

4.2.7 Work experience of ECDE teachers

The study sought to establish the length of services of the respondents. Kirton (2000) states that the length of time spent in organization leads to development of shared understanding and experiences. Results are shown below.

Table 4.9 Work experience of ECDE teachers

Year interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	6	24
5 – 10 years	8	32
10 – 20 years	8	32
Over 20 years	3	12
TOTAL	**25**	**100**

According to the findings in table above majority 8 (32%) respondents had served between 5 – 10 years and 10 – 20 years respectively. Others had served less than 5 years as indicated by 6 (24%) respondent while 3 (12%) indicated they had work experience of over 20 years. These findings implies majority subjects were knowledgeable about the issues of community support grant as they had work experience over the years which extended behond the time before and after the implementation of the programme.

4.2.8 Head teachers experience.

Table 4.10 sought to show the experience/number of years that the head teachers have been in their proffession. The findings are presented as below.

Table 4.10 Head teachers experience

Year interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	4	16
5 – 10 years	9	36
10 – 20 years	7	28
Over 20 years	5	20
TOTAL	**25**	**100**

According to the findings in the table above majority 9 (36%), 7 (28%) respondents had served between 5 – 10 years and 10 – 20 years respectively. Others had served over 20 years as indicated by 5 (20%) respondents while 4 (6%) indicate they had work experience of less than 5 years. These findings implies majority subject were knowledgeable about the issues of community support grant they had work experience of years which extended beyond the time before and after the implementation of the programme.

4.2.9 Work experience for Education officers

This study also sought to find out the number of years that the Education officers had worked in that capacity. The findings are presented in table 4.11

Table 4.11 Work experience for Education officers

Year interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	1	17
5 – 10 years	2	33
10 – 20 years	3	50
Over 20 years	0	0
TOTAL	**6**	**100**

According to findings in the table above majority, 3 (50%) of the officers had served for over 10 years while 2 (33%) had served between 5 – 10 years and 1 (17%) had served less than 5 years. These findings implies majority of the Education officers were knowledgeable about the issue of community support grant as they had work experience of years which extended beyond the time before and after the implementation of the programme.

4.3   Impact of Community Support Grants on Access and Quality ECDE

The first objective of the study was to determine the level of access and quality of ECDE following the implementation of community support grant. Data from the Head teachers indicated that indeed they received community support grant.   The Head teachers were asked to indicate whether they had received any community support grants funds from the government towards supporting ECDE.   They responded as shown in Table 4.12

4.3.1 Head Teachers and ECDE Teachers Response on Receipt of CSG

Table 4.12 shows the responses of Head Teachers and ECDE Teachers on whether they acknowledged the receipt of CSG.

Table 4.12 Head Teachers and ECDE Teachers Response on Receipt of CSG

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Total	**50**	**100**

As shown in Table 4.12 data from the subjects indicate that 50 (100%) acknowledged receipt of community support grant.

4.3.2 First Time CSG was allocated to Schools

A similar question to ECDE teachers sought to determine whether they were aware of the school receiving any community support grant and elicited a similar response as that of head teachers. The head teachers were asked to indicate when they first received the grant and whether they still continue to receive the grant. Data in Table 4.13 and 4.14 reveals the findings.

Table 4.13 First Time CSG was allocated to Schools

Year allocated	Frequency	%
2007	25	100
2008	0	0
2009	0	0
Total	**25**	**100**

According to the information in Table 4.13 majority 25 (100%) head teachers indicated that they first received community support grant in the year 2007. This shows that the community support grant was first implemented by the government in the financial year 2007/2008. Available data however shows that the grant has since not continued to be received by the schools as indicated in Table 4.14.

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4.3.4 Head Teachers Response on Whether CSG Continues to be Received

Table 4.14 shows the Head Teachers Response on whether community support grant continues to be received by the schools. The findings were as below

Table 4.14 Head Teachers Response on Whether CSG Continues to be Received

Responses	Frequency	%
Yes	2	8
No	23	92
Total	**25**	**100**

From the data on Table 4.14 majority head teachers indicated that they did not continue to receive the grant. The head teachers and the D.E.O were asked to indicate the total amount of money that each beneficiary school had received. The D.E.O's information was to confirm the authenticity of the head teachers' responses. As it turned out the least amount received was Ksh 25,000 whereas the highest amount was Ksh 220,914. Table 4.15 shows the group data of the amount of money received through the Community Support Grant for 25 ECDE Schools whose data was available. According to the study conducted by Early Childhood development project (1997) reveals that there is low access and quality of services provided by ECDE centres.

4.3.5 Amount Received through Community Support Grant

The study further sought to find out the amount of money received through the Community Support Grant (CSG) by the schools. The results are presented in table 4.15

Table 4.15 Amount Received through Community Support Grant

Amount Received (Ksh)	Frequency	%
Below 10,000	0	0
10,001 – 50,000	11	37
50,001 – 100,000	5	17
100,001 – 150,000	9	30
150,001 – 200,000	3	10
200,001 – 250,000	2	7
Total	**30**	**100**

The study establishes that most schools 11 (37%) had received between Ksh 10,001 and 50,000. 9 (30%) schools received cash between 100,001 and 150,000 while the schools that received between Ksh 50,001 and 100,000 accounted for 5 (17%). Another sample of schools that received between Ksh 150,001 and 200,000 accounted for 3 (10%). And only 2 (7%) received Ksh 200,001 and 250,000. According to the Ministry of Education Monitoring and Evaluation report 2009, it states that poor districts were targeted.

4.3.6 Time CSG was Communicated to the Community by Head Teachers

The head teachers were asked to indicate when they communicated to the community about the community support grant. The data on the Table 4.16 reveals the findings.

Table 4.16 Time CSG was Communicated to the Community by Head Teachers

Communication Time	Frequency	%
Soon after receiving the grant	21	84
Not communicated	4	16
Total	**25**	**100**

From the information shown on Table 4.16, it can be deduced that majority 21 (84%) head teachers communicated to the community about the community support grant soon after receiving the grant. The rest 4 (16%) indicated that they didn't communicate at all. The study further sought to establish from the head teachers, DEO and DICECE officers the method used to communicate about the community support grant to the community to which they responded as shown in Table 4.17.

4.3.7 Mode of Communication about CSG to Stakeholders

The study also went to extent of finding out the mode/ means in which communication about Community Support Grant (CSG) is done in an effort to reach to the stakeholders. The findings are shown in table 4.17

Table 4.17 Mode of Communication about CSG to Stakeholders

Response	Frequency	%
Meetings	56	100
Notice boards	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	**56**	**100**

The study established that the mode of communication used to inform stakeholders about grants was through meetings as indicated by majority 56 (100%) respondents.

4.3.8 Head Teachers' Response on whether they had been Trained on how to Use CSG

The head teachers were asked to indicate whether they were trained on how to use the community support grant to which they responded as shown on Table 4.18.

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Table 4.18 Head Teachers' Response on Whether they had been Trained on how to Use CSG

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	25	100
No	0	0
Total	**25**	**100**

The data on Table 4.18 shows that the head teachers had been trained on how to use the grant as indicated by majority 25 (100%) responses.

4.3.9 Persons that make decisions on Utilization of CSG

The study sought to establish from the head teachers who decided on how the money from grant was to be utilized. The findings are shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Persons that make decisions on Utilization of CSG

Responses	Frequency	%
The Head Teacher	2	8
The School Management Committee	22	88
The MOE	1	4
Total	**22**	**100**

The study established that the decision on how to use the grant was made by the school management committee as indicated by the majority 22 (88%) responses. Data also reveals that head teachers made decisions on how the received community support grant would be spent as shown by 2 (8%) responses. Findings that the ministry of education made decision on how to use the grant was reported by 1 (4%) respondents.

4.3.10 Improvements Initiated Using CSG by Schools

The study sought to establish from head teachers the improvement with regards to

ECDE program after receiving community support grants. The responses on Table 4.19 were elicited.

Table 4.20 Improvements Initiated Using CSG by Schools

Improvements	Frequency	%
Top up to ECDE teachers	24	40
Construction of classrooms	7	12
Buying of teaching/learning materials	14	23
Renovation of classrooms	5	8
Acquiring sitting facilities	8	13
Acquiring play materials	1	2
Construction of children toilets	1	2
Total	**60**	**100**

Data in Table 4.20 shows that a number of improvements regarding ECDE quality were initiated after receipt of community support grant. These included top up to ECDE teachers 24 (40%), buying teaching/learning materials 14 (23%), buying children chairs to sit on 8 (13%), construction of classrooms 7 (12%), renovation of classrooms 5 (8%), buying of play materials 1 (2%), and construction of toilets 1 (2%).

4.3.11 Children Access to ECDE for the Period 2005-2009

The study sought to assess pupil's access to ECDE from year 2005 to 2009 with the aim of establishing whether there was significant difference in access before and after implementation of community support grant. Data provided by head teachers is given on Table 4.21.

Table 4.21 Children Access to ECDE for the Period 2005-2009

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Enrolment	921	994	1251	1151	1144

The findings reveal that children access to ECDE slightly improved in the year 2007 during phase one implementation of Community Support Grant and declined slightly in the year 2008 and 2009. The decline reflected in year 2008 and 2009 can be explained by the fact that head teachers reported that they no longer receive the grant. The implication of this finding is that access to ECDE was enhanced by introduction of the community support grant and because the facility is no longer available, a decline in enrolment was noted. The government should therefore consider continuing offering the grant as the findings show that it enhanced access when it was offered.

4.3.12 DEO and DICECE Officers' Opinion on Access to ECDE Following the Implementation of CSG

The opinion of the DEO and DICECE officers on the status of children access to ECDE after the implementation of community support grant was also sought and the results on Table 4.22 were generated

Table 4.22 DEO and DICECE Officers' Opinion on Access to ECDE Following the Implementation of CSG

Opinion	Frequency	%
Improved access greatly	0	0
Improved access slightly	5	83
No improved on access	1	17
Total	**6**	**100**

The data provided by the DEO and DICECE officers shows that access to ECDE

improved slightly following the implementation of community support grant. This finding is reflected by data on enrollment shown on Table 4.15 that shows similar results. What can therefore be adduced from these results is that access to ECDE slightly improved after community support grant to schools was implemented.

4.3.13 Impacts of CSG on Access and Quality of ECDE

The study established the impacts of the Community Support Grant on access and quality.

Table 4.23 Impacts of CSG on Access and Quality of ECDE

The responses were measured on a 5 point Likert scale and the weighted means used to establish significant impacts from the responses. The results are given in Table 4.23.

Impacts	SA F %	AF %	NS F %	DF %	SD F %	Mean
Improved quality of learning and teaching	17 30	32 57	1 2	6 11	0 0	4.07
Improved enrolment	21 38	23 41	1 2	7 13	4 7	3.89
Reduced cost of education to parents	13 23	23 41	2 4	13 23	5 9	3.46

	SA (5)	A (4)	NS (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Weighted Mean
Improved	2	3	1	2	1	4.21
teacher	0	2	2	4	2	
salary top	3	5				
up	6	7				
Improved	2	2	1	7	2	3.98
quality of	0	6	2	1	4	
learning	3	4		3		
environme	6	6				
nt						
Enhanced	1	3	3	5	1	4.07
communit	5	2	5	9	2	
y support	2	5				
to ECDE	7	7				

Legend
SA – (5) Strongly Agree
A – (4) Agree

NS – (3) Not Sure

D – (2) Disagree

SD – (1) Strongly Disagree

According to the data on Table 4.23, there are a number of statistically significant impacts of community support grant on access and quality. After analyzing the weighted means on each finding, the study established that most of the responses had a mean of 3.0 and above that is considered significant. Findings show that the impacts of the community support grant include: improving of quality learning and teaching, improving access, reducing cost of education to parents, improved teacher salary top-up, improving quality of learning environment and enhancing community participation to ECDE. It can therefore be concluded that one of the most significant impact of community support grant was to improve ECDE teachers' salary top up as indicated by the weighted mean of 4.21.

4.4 Challenges Facing the Implementation of Community Support Grant

The second objective of the study was to determine the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka district.

4.4.1 Challenges Facing the Implementation of CSG

Respondents were asked to tick in their responses regarding predetermined challenges on a licker scale. Data in table 4.24 reveals the findings.

Table 4.24 Challenges Facing the Implementation of CSG

Challenges faced	SA F %		A F %		S F %		D F %		SD F %		MEAN
Lack of community support	22	39	24	43	1	2	7	13	2	4	4.0
Inadequate funds	32	57	24	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.6
Delay in realizing the funds	33	59	23	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.6
Underpayment of teachers	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.6
No place to source for teaching & teaching	8	14	21	38	4	7	14	25	3	5	4.7

	SA		A		NS		D		SD		Mean
materials											
Lack of government to include ECDE as part of FPE	35	63	19	34	1	2	1	2	0	0	4.5
Endemic poverty among a greater number of parents	25	45	23	41	1	2	7	13	0	0	4.2

Legend

Strongly Agree, SA – (1)

Agree, A – (2)

Not Sure, NS – (3)

Disagree, D – (4)

Strongly Disagree, SD-5

Data on Table 4.24 reveals an array of challenges facing the implementation of community support. The challenges identified to be most significant were those that had a mean of 3.0 and above measured on a 5 point Likert scale. Findings from the study show that underpayment of teachers was the most significant with a computed mean of 4.7. Among the other significant identified by the study includes delays in releasing the funds (mean 4.6), Lack of government to include ECDE as part of the free primary education (mean 4.5), Endemic poverty among parents (mean 4.2) and lack of community support(mean 4.0). According to MOE (2003) report of the sector review and development indentifies low investment in ECDE for example less 0.1% of the government budget for recurrent cost goes to the ECDE programme compared with

61% for Primary Education.

4.5 Strategies to Remedy the Challenges Facing the Implementation of Community Support Grant

The third objective of the study was to identify the strategies to address the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant.

4.5.1 Strategies to Address challenges Facing the Implementation of CSG

The respondents were asked to suggest measures that could be taken to mitigate the identified challenges to which they responded as shown in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25 Strategies to Address challenges Facing the Implementation of CSG

Responses	Frequency	%
Government to include ECDE in FPE	12	21
Government to release CSG promptly	8	14
Employment ECDE teachers	9	16
Provision of teaching and learning materials by MOE	5	9
Increase the amount of SCG allocation ECDE carters	15	27
Initiation of income generating projects to supplement CSG	7	13
Totals	**56**	**100**

Information on Table 4.25 present's findings that reveal the strategies that can be put in place to address the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant. Majority 15 (27%) respondents cited that the government should increase the amount of CSG allocation to schools as the current allocation is in inadequate to

effectively solve issues of quality and improve access.

One of challenges that were indentified to impede the implementation of CSG was lack of government to include ECDE in the free primary education programme. Findings reveals that 12 (21%) of the respondents indicated that only solution to avoid the inefficiency CSG is to include ECDE in the free primary education programme. Prompt release of community support grant fund to school would mitigate the problem occasioned by delays in releasing the funds as revealed by 8 (14%) respondents.

Further study found out that employment of ECDE teachers, as indicated by 9 (16%) respondents would be the only way to enhance access and quality as many as parents take their children to private ECDE centers where there are adequate teachers and facilities. It was established that though the government provided the grant to public schools to enhance access in ECDE, lack of teachers occasioned by non-employment and low payments were responsible for parent opting to look for alternative school mainly in the private sector thereby reducing the effectiveness of CSG in promoting access and quality in public ECDE schools.

As indicated by the results, 7 (13%) of the respondents indicated that schools should envisage initiating income generating projects to supplement the community support grant funds. The study further established that 5 (9%) of the respondents indicated that apart from the provision of community support grant, the government through the ministry of education should provide teaching and learning materials to ECDE. The government is providing community support to support marginalized /vulnerable communities (Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005).

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, summary of the main study findings is presented. The chapter also covers conclusions and recommendations of the study as well as suggestions for further research.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of community support grant on access to early childhood development and education in Tharaka District and the following are the specific objectives of the study:

i) Examine the level of access and quality of early childhood development and education following the implementation of Community Support Grant in Tharaka District.

ii) Determine challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District.

iii) Determine effective strategies to remedy the challenges facing the implementation of community support grant in Tharaka District.

The following are the summary of the research findings upon which the conclusions and recommendations of the study were made.

5.2 Summary of findings

This study had the following objectives; first, to determine the level of access on quality of early childhood development and education following the implementation of CSG in Tharaka District Eastern province, Kenya.

Findings from the study reveals that the major impact of community support grant to ECDE included quality of learning and teaching materials improved enrollment (access) reduced cost of education, improved teachers salary top ups, improved quality of learning environment and enhanced community support of ECDE.

The second objective was to determine challenges facing the implementation of CSG in Tharaka District. The following challenges were identified; Underpayment of teachers, delay in releasing CSG funds, inadequate funding, Lack of government to include ECDE in the programme of free primary education (FPE), Endemic poverty among a greater number of parents, and lack of community support.

The last objective of this study was to determine effective strategies to remedy the challenges facing the implementation of CSG in Tharaka District. The researcher identified the following strategies to mitigate the challenges; increased CSG funding, inclusion of ECDE in the programme of FPE, employment of ECDE teachers by the government, prompt releasing of CSG to beneficiary school, initiating income generating projects to supplement CSG, and provision of teaching and learning materials to ECDE centers by ministry of education.

5.3 Conclusion

Low access in Tharaka District is as a result of poverty in some families. The findings showed that after this grant was given, a slight improvement in access was realized, showing that some parents refuse to enroll their children in this centres because they cannot afford. This grants improved quality of learning/ teaching materials e.g. text books, syllabuses. In general this grant has reduced cost of education for ECDE parents that is why they are willing to take their children to school. Children also like good environment which has been improved by putting up structures for them and buying of teaching aids. Children learn better through interaction which is enhanced by good and conducive environments.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

Based on the study findings, the researcher makes the following recommendation. Government should increase the amount of money allocated to schools towards improvement of ECDE programmes in the marginalized areas and those in pockets of poverty. The government   should consider broadening of free primary education (FPE) to include ECDE, to enhance access. The government should consider employing ECDE teacher for sustained access and retention in ECDE. There should be prompt release of CSG beneficiaries when they are made available to facilitate a smooth implementation. Schools should consider as a matter of priority to initiate income generating project to supplement CSG. The government through the ministry of education should provide teaching/learning materials to ECDE centers.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

Further research is suggested in the area of effectiveness of supplementary sources of funds in the improvement of ECDE. In such kind of a study sources of supplementary funds for school improvement can be indentified that can be used as avenues to further enhance access and quality.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction to the Respondents

Dear Respondent,

REF: RESEARCH FIELD WORK

I am a postgraduate student pursuing a Master of Education in early childhood education in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology of University of Nairobi. I am currently undertaking a research study to determine the Impact of community support grant on access to early childhood education and development in Tharaka District. It would be greatly appreciated if you would give the required information for the purpose of this research. The results of this study will hopefully enable the government, ministry of education officials, school administrators, teachers, and communities to determine the Impact of community support grant on access to early childhood education and development.

All your responses to the questionnaire will be treated with the utmost confidence and will be used strictly for the purpose of the study. You are therefore kindly advised not to indicate your name for confidentiality. Please answer all the questions.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Migwi Seline Mukwamugao

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Head Teachers

This research is intended to find out the impact of community support grant on access to ECDE. It is meant for academic purpose only. The identity of participants and information provided will be treated confidentially. Please answer all questions as fair and honest as possible.

PART A: Biodata

Please tick as appropriate in the box
1.   Gender:

Male ( )   Female ( )

2.   Professional Qualification

P1 ( ) Diploma in ECE ( )   BED ( ) Masters ( ) Any other…………………

3.   Working experience as a head teacher:

Less than 5 years ( ) 5-10 years   ( )   10-20 years   ( )   Over 20 years ( )

PART B: Impact of Community Support Grant on Access to ECDE
1.   Did you receive community support grant from the government towards supporting ECDE?…………………………………………………………………………………
2.   When was the first time you received the grant?

…………………………………………………………………………………..

3. Do you continue to receive this grant?

………………………………………………………………………………..

4. What was the total allocation during the first and second disbursement for your school?

…………………………………………………………………………………

5. When do you communicate to the community about CSG? Tick as appropriate

Soon after the receipt of the grant ( ) Not communicated   ( )

6. Were you trained on how to use the Community Support Grant? Yes ( ) No ( )

7. Who decides on how to use the money?

…………………………………………………………………………………

8. What means do you use to communicate to the community about the availability of community support grant?

…………………………………………………………………………………

9. What improvements have you initiated in regard to ECDE after receiving community support grant?

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

10. What has been the enrolment status by gender in the ECDE program in your school from 2005 to 2009?

Year/Gender	2005		2006		2007		2008		2009	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Enrolment										

11. The following are some of the suggested impacts of CSG on access to ECDE. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. Use the key provided.

SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

Statement	SA 5	A 4	NS 3	D 2	SD 1
i)Improved quality of learning and teaching					
ii)Improved enrolment and access					
iii)Reduced cost of education to parents					
iv)Improved teacher salary top-ups					
v)Quality of learning environment improved					
vi)Enhanced community empowerment					

PART C: Challenges facing the implementation of Community Support Grant

1. The following challenges are thought to be facing the implementation of community support grant. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. . Use the key provided.

SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

statement	SA 1	A 2	NS 3	D 4	SD 5
i)Lack of community support					
ii)Inadequate funding					
iii) Delays in releasing the funds					
iv)Under payment of teachers					
v)No place to source for teaching-learning materials					

vi)Lack of government to include ECDE as part of FPE					
vii)Endemic poverty among a greater number of parents					

2.   Suggest measures that could be taken mitigate the above challenges.

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Appendix III: Questionnaire for ECDE Teachers

This research is intended to find out the impact of community support grant on access to ECDE. It is meant for academic purpose only. The identity of participants and information provided will be treated confidentially. Please answer all questions as fair and honest as possible.

PART A: Biodata

Please tick as appropriate in the box

1. Gender: Male ( )   Female ( )

2. Professional Qualification

P1 ( ) Diploma in ECE ( )   BED ( ) Masters ( ) Any other…………………

3. Working experience as a head teacher:

Less than 5 years ( )5-10 years   ( )10-20 years   ( )Over 20 years   ( )

PART B: Impact of Community Support Grant on access to ECDE

1. Do you have knowledge of community support grant? If yes explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………

2. As your school received any support from the government in terms of assistance in form of community support grant?

……………………………………………………………………………………

3. The following are some of the suggested impacts of CSG on access to ECDE. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. Use the key provided.

SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD
	1	2	3	4	5
i)improved quality of learning and teaching					
ii)improved enrolment and access					
iii)reduced cost of education to parents					
iv)Improved teacher salary top-ups					
v)Quality of learning environment improved					
vi)Enhanced community empowerment					

PART C: Challenges Facing the implementation of Community Support Grant

1. The following challenges are thought to be facing the implementation of community support grant. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. . Use the key provided.

SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD
	1	2	3	4	5
i)Lack of community support					
ii)Inadequate funding					
iii)delays in releasing the funds					
iv)Under payment of teachers					

v)No place to source for teaching-learning materials					
vi)lack of government to include ECDE as part of FPE					
vii)Endemic poverty among a greater number of parents					

2. Suggest measures that could be taken to mitigate the above challenges.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

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Appendix IV: Questionnaire for DICECE Officer/DEO

This research is intended to find out the impact of community support grant on access to ECDE. It is meant for academic purpose only. The identity of participants and information provided will be treated confidentially. Participation is voluntarily but participants are encouraged to answer all questions as fair and honest as possible.

PART A: Biodata
Please tick as appropriate in the box your;

1. Gender: Male ( )   Female ( )

2. Professional Qualification

   P1 ( )   Diploma in ECE ( )   BED ( ) Masters ( ) Any other…………………

3. Working experience as a head teacher:

   Less than 5 years ( )5-10 years   ( )10-20 years   ( )Over 20 years   ( )

PART B: Impact of Community Support Grant on access to ECDE
1. What has been the government community support grant allocation for ECDE centers

   in Tharaka District?

	Allocated amount Kshs	
	2007/08	2008/09
Tharaka District		

2. How much grant was received by the beneficiary schools and how were the fund

   utilized?

NO	School	Amount received
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		

19		
20		

3. Did you create awareness about community support grant to the community?

   Yes ( ) No ( )

   If "Yes" What was the mode of communication

   …………………………………………………………………………..

4. What is your comment on access to ECDE after community support grant?

   Improved access greatly   (   )

   Improved access only slightly (   )

   Not improved access   (   )

5. The following are some of the suggested impacts of CSG on access to ECDE. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. Use the key provided.

   SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
i)improved quality of learning and teaching					
ii)improved enrolment and access					
iii)reduced cost of education to parents					

iv)Improved teacher salary top-ups					
v)Quality of learning environment improved					
vi)Enhanced community empowerment					

PART C: Challenges Facing The implementation of Community Support Grant

1. The following challenges are thought to be facing the implementation of community support grant. For each of the statements underneath, please tick in the appropriate column/box that best represents your own opinion. . Use the key provided.

SA- Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **NS**- Not Sure; **D**- Disagree; **SD**- Strongly disagree

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD
	1	2	3	4	5
i)Lack of community support					
ii)Inadequate funding,					
iii)Delays in releasing the funds					
iv)Under payment of teachers					
v)No place to source for teaching-learning materials					
vi)lack of government to include ECDE as part of FPE					
vii)Endemic poverty among a greater number of parents					

2. Suggest measures that could be taken to mitigate the above challenges.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

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Thank you for your participation and cooperation

Appendix V: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION