

**FACTORS INFLUENCING IMPLEMENTATION OF FREE
PRIMARY EDUCATION IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF
TESO DISTRICT. //**

BY

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EAS

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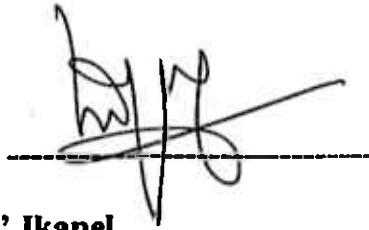
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and that it has not been presented to any other institution for the award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

To my late Aunt, Juliana Toto, through whose intervention I become somebody. Without her sacrifice I would not have come this far.

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List Of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AC	Anglican Church
CATA	Catholic Teachers Association
ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
ACPSEC	Amukura Catholic Primary Schools Examination Council
AEO	Assistant Education Officer
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANPPCLN	African Network for Prevention and Protection of Child Labour and Neglect
ARV	Anti-retroviral drugs
ASAL	Arid and Semi-arid Lands
CDTF	Community Development Trust Fund
CELTEL	Cellular Telecommunications
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DC	District Commissioner
DEB	District Education Board
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DO	District Officer
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EENET	Enabling Education Network
EFA	Education For All

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EMS	Education Media Services
EWC	Electricity, Water and Conservancy
FPE	Free Primary Education
GNP	Gross National Product
GOK	Government of Kenya
GPA	General Purpose Account
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICS	International Christian Services
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KAP	Knowledge Attitude and Practice
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KNUT	Kenya National Union of Teachers
KTN	Kenya Television Network
LT&T	Local Transport and Travel
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MTN	Mobile Telephone Network
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Parents Association

PAMLO	Pan African Mathematics and Languages Olympics
RC	Roman Catholic Church
RMI	Repair Maintenance and Improvement
SA	Salvation Army Church
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SDA	Swedish Development Agency
SES	School Equipment Scheme
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SIMBA	School Instructional Materials Bank Account
SIMSC	School Instructional Materials Selection Committee
SMC	School Management Committee
SPSS	Statistical Programme for Social Sciences
SU	Special Units
TAC	Teachers Advisory Centre
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USA	United States of America

USAID

United States Agency for International Development

UTL

Uganda Telecoms

WCOM

World Christian Outreach Ministries

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ABSTRACT

Although education has always been considered central to the development of both the person and the country, it had been provided in Kenya on cost-sharing basis between the government and the citizenry. While the government employed teachers and paid their salaries, the parents were expected to construct schools and provide the necessary learning and teaching materials. Poverty accentuated by general global economic recession, poor weather conditions, rapid population growth, HIV/AIDS pandemic and other factors deprived both the parents and the government of the ability to sustain quality education. In concert with other poor indicators of education, these factors conspired to make education only secondary to other basic human needs. In 2001, there were about 6.3 million children in school while 3.3 million others were unable to attend school. Transition rates have dropped miserably. For every 6 children nationally or 3 children in Teso, who are in primary school, only one will be able to complete secondary education.

For the first time in the history of this nation, primary education became free to all children in 2003 when the NARC government came to power. The new government scrapped the cost-sharing arrangements and took over the funding of each school's recurrent budget throughout the country. This research is a culmination of an attempt to examine factors that have influenced implementation of Free Primary Education in Kenya and achievements made so far, using Teso district as a case study.

The communication strategies adopted prior to implementation were mainly mass mediated messages during the political campaigns in the run-up to the general elections of 2002. The messages were used as campaign tools and delivered either through the media or at political rallies. It was not until it assumed power that the new government was able to develop coherent communication strategies. The media, *barazas* by the administration, education officials, local politicians and other stakeholders were employed at implementation stage.

This study was undertaken using library research, Internet searches and field surveys. Reference is made to the initiatives in Nigeria and Uganda, which implemented their universal primary education policies much earlier than Kenya. The field surveys were carried out in rural Teso district, 500 kilometers West of Nairobi. Data was collected between September and November 2004 using two sets of questionnaires. One set was administered to 192 parents across the district achieving 100% response. The second set was administered to district education officials achieving 75% response.

The justification for this study was that, although FPE was in its second year of implementation, it had not quite taken root. This study sought to examine the major economic, social and cultural factors that influenced this outcome. The FPE policy is applied uniformly throughout Kenya. The results of this study can, therefore, be generalized to apply to other parts of the country. The results will

also be useful to policy makers, educationists and planners, researchers, social workers and other stakeholders.

The paper concludes that various factors converged to influence implementation of FPE. Communication, as well as social, economic and cultural factors contributed to this convergence. Although a noble idea, FPE faces a number of challenges ranging from socio-cultural attitudes and practices to lack of teachers and classrooms. The adoption of a “pro-innovation” rather than an integrated communication approach before implementation of FPE is partly to blame. An integrated approach ensures that all stakeholders are incorporated in decision making. This approach would help in inculcating an education culture, which seems to be lacking in many people of Kenya.

The major recommendations include the need to adopt communication strategies that change people’s attitudes and behaviour through structured and coordinated campaigns. There is also need for a legal framework to goad FPE and check intervening factors that would negate achievement of EFA by 2015.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

It is a fact that children are born without a culture. Education, both formal and informal is designed to socialize them into a culture, moulding their behaviour in the ways of adulthood and directing them towards their eventual roles in society. Education can be thought of as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. It is imperative that everyone in society, therefore, gets educated to ensure that they fit into their roles. In this context, many nations have striven to offer education to their citizens.

Since independence in 1963, the Kenya government has given priority to education, not only in order to develop the economy, but also to mould good citizens, promote national unity and encourage proper use of leisure time (Sessional Paper No. 10, 1965). The government has also encouraged the establishment of privately maintained and managed schools, subject to the teaching of a common curriculum with the public schools.

Most recently, the NARC government, which came to power in December 2002, promised free primary education (FPE) among other things. Once installed, the

new government hastened to make good its promise, declaring FPE for all Kenyans with effect from 6th January 2003.

Right from the outset, vigorous campaigns were carried out using the media, Provincial Administration, Ministry of Education, political forums and other channels. This study attempts to examine the performance of FPE in Kenya since its inception, using the example of Teso district.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It would appear that Kenya's FPE policy was hurriedly implemented to fulfill the campaign pledge made to voters in the run up to the general elections of 2002. Apparently no minimal baseline studies were carried out to establish what factors on the ground were critical for the implementation of the policy. For instance, there was no clear direction as to the age limits of those meant to benefit from FPE. Within this confusion, for example, an 84-year-old man astounded everyone when he enrolled in standard one in Eldoret and attracted media headlines in early 2003. The implementation was also undertaken while the much-awaited Education Sector Master Plan had not been released.

FPE is understood to mean non-payment of fees or any other levies by the parents of children in classes starting from standard one through to standard eight in public schools. To show its commitment on this matter, the government directed

all school communities and District Education Boards (DEBs) to put an embargo on the emergence of new schools. The government further directed that refund modalities for financial commitments entered into in the year 2003 be worked out. For the Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL), however, the government reiterated its commitment to continue financing the School Feeding Programme (SFP) and supporting low cost boarding schools.

Schools have hitherto operated on parents' levies. The levies helped in improvement and repairs, payment of support staff and a horde of other expenses. In place of the levies the government has now assumed financial responsibility for all public primary schools in the country. For each enrolled child the government remits a sum of 1,020.00 shillings per annum to each school. Further grants are remitted to schools to cater for other general expenses such as payment of support staff and co-curricula activities.

In a departure from established protocol, the funds were this time round, to be disbursed directly to the primary schools. Remittances to each school depend on enrolment. Nevertheless, parents were still meant to bear the cost of school uniform, transport to and from school, medical care and meals while at school, in addition to other incidental expenses. The role of the DEB in the management of these funds is not clear.

The problem was, however, that the policy was not effectively communicated in the campaigns that were launched prior to the 2002 general elections. The communication was neither planned nor coordinated and lacked structured objectives and methodology. The haphazard manner in which FPE was introduced through election campaigns may have done more damage than good to the programme. Each communicator interpreted the policy in the way they thought the message would be best received. The politicians particularly used these campaigns for political mileage. No efforts appear to have been made towards apportioning roles and achieving attitude change. Some parents considered FPE as a NARC affair and adopted a hands-off approach. Others still harbour negative attitude towards education, fortified by the fact that they continue seeing even those who completed school wasted away in the villages without jobs.

This study seeks to examine factors that have influenced the implementation of FPE in Teso district. The need for this study is stimulated by the fact that FPE, though a noble idea, has not quite taken root due to certain attitudinal, socio-economic, political and logistical factors. The factors examined include communication strategies used; people's attitudes and practices and whether the resources on the ground were sufficient to anchor FPE implementation.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of the study was to identify and examine socio-economic, cultural and political factors that have influenced implementation of FPE in rural Kenya using the example of Teso district in Western Province.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Identify and assess the communication campaign strategies that have been applied in implementing the FPE policy;
- Examine how people's knowledge, attitudes and practices influenced or have been influenced by the implementation of this policy;
- Determine what changes have taken place in people's livelihoods in Teso district as a result of FPE; and
- Based on the findings, suggest how FPE can best be anchored in Kenya.

1.4. JUSTIFICATION

One of the hallmarks of Kenya's independence was the quest to rid the country of illiteracy, poverty and disease (Sessional Paper No. 10, 1965). Illiteracy can only be eradicated through sustained education efforts. A literate or an educated nation is then better placed to fight against poverty, disease and other oddities.

Kenya invests heavily in education. In the financial year 2001/2002, for example, the education sector alone was allocated 52.6 billion Kenya shillings out of the 60.8 billion shillings allocated to all social services. It is worth noting that 44.8 billion shillings out of the education sector allocation went into teachers' salaries thereby leaving scanty resources for operations. (Source: Ministry of Education).

Forty years after independence, and despite massive logistical and financial investment, Kenya is yet to achieve UPE for her citizens. Indeed provision of FPE has been brain teasing the education fraternity for years. Serious problems on the education front relate to declines in enrolment and completion rates, financing and relevance of the education offered nationally. Enrolment and completion problems are most crucial at primary level. Barely 47% complete the primary cycle of education. Annual ratios of trends in enrolment from 1963 to 1995 show enrolment in primary schools lagging behind at only 5.7% as shown in table 1.0.

Table: 1.0. Trends in Educational Enrolment, 1963-1995 (000's)

Education	1963	1995	Male/Female	1963/95 Annual
Primary	892	5,545	1.02	5.7
Secondary	30	632	1.18	9.5
University	0.571	44.91	2.79	13.6
Teacher Train.	4	16.878	1.05	4.5
Technical	1	8.148	0	6.6
Polytechnics	0	7.927	3.219	0

SOURCE: National Development Plan, 1997-2001.

There is need, therefore, to examine factors influencing the recently implemented FPE policy. The rationale for studying these factors hinges on the fact that FPE is a suitable engine for spurring the country's commitment to:

- Fight illiteracy, poverty and disease;
- Achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals of EFA by 2015, and
- Join the NICs by achieving industrialization by 2020.

At the inception of FPE, the Minister said that 3.3 million children of age 6-13 years were not attending school. It is, therefore, justified to carry out this study and examine the policies and implementation mechanisms that have been formulated to popularize FPE policy in the country. The policies and mechanisms should be able to attract all children to school, not only to complete the cycle of primary education, but also to subsequently be able to contribute to the country's economy and industrialization programme.

The FPE policy is applied uniformly throughout the country. It is worth carrying out this study in rural Teso, because when problems afflict the education sector, rural schools are the hardest hit. Experiences gained in this study could equally be useful in addressing similar problems in other parts of the country. The study will examine common problems such as gender disparity, high drop out and repetition rates, low completion rates, high wastage and low transition rates, among others.

The recommendations will be of use to policy makers, educationists, education planners social workers, and other interested stakeholders with regard to design, application, monitoring and evaluation of, not only FPE, but also other child-friendly activities, for the ultimate aim of achieving EFA goals. The study may also generate interest for further research in the provision of EFA in Kenya.

1.5. STUDY ASSUMPTIONS

Despite the adoption and implementation of this noble idea, FPE is bedevilled by many problems. These range from socio-economic and cultural factors, including people's attitudes and practices, to political factors touching on poor communication campaign strategies. This study assumes that, although communication plays a major role in the adoption of new ideas and programmes as well as attitude change, no appropriate communication strategies were used in the case of FPE. It is imperative, especially in this very vital national undertaking, for people proficient in communication to be involved in the design of appropriate messages that not only reinforce existing knowledge, but also aim at changing people's attitudes and practices. It is the assumption of this study that people's knowledge, attitude and practice have played a big role in influencing the implementation of the FPE programme.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on education, with specific reference to FPE. This includes academic, policy and legal literature relevant to primary education. It is instructive to note that FPE is only in its second year of implementation. Consequently, not much local literature on FPE is available. Reference has been made to comparative universal primary education initiatives. Conceptual tools used in communicating strategies such as FPE are also examined.

2.2. The Quest for Universal Primary Education

Primary education, also called elementary education is the first stage traditionally found in formal education. Despite the many differences among nations of the world, the objectives and curriculum of primary education tend to be similar. Each nation is committed to the preparation of her citizens through mass education, which includes a full cycle of primary or elementary education for all. Depending on where it is applied, this form of education revolves around the ages of 5 to 14 years. In terms of curriculum, the objectives suggest an emphasis on language competence, arithmetic skills and basic social studies and science.

In the Western world, industrialization, urbanization and mass labour led to the gradual acceptance of the view that education ought to be the responsibility of the state. Countries such as France and Germany established public educational systems early in the 19th century. Others, including Great Britain and the USA, under the spell of *laissez-faire*, took longer to intervene due to the notion that “free schools” were to be established only for pauper children. Furthermore, taxpayers had to be convinced that taxation was the only way to provide education to all. Education was, therefore, left to voluntary or private enterprise.

Christian churches took the lead in establishing elementary schools on voluntary basis. Voluntary finances would not, however, meet the growing need for these schools. In 1870, the United Kingdom parliament enacted the Elementary School Education Act. This became the foundation upon which the English education system was built. In 1890, elementary education became compulsory throughout England and Wales. In 1891, payment of fees was abolished in all, but a few elementary schools. Scotland and Northern Ireland were to follow suit later.

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In the USA, the Common School, the archetype of the present day American Public School system, took longer to gain acceptance in the various States. It was not until the mid 19th century that the common school was open freely to every child and supported by public funds.

The UN declared education as one of the human rights when, in 1950, it asserted in the UDHR that “everyone has a right to education”. This declaration triggered efforts from all countries of the world to universalise education. In 1989 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Kenya is a signatory, came into force.

With regard to basic education, the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) was held in Jomtien, Thailand from 5th to 9th March 1990. The conference, organised by the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, and UNICEF, came up with a document entitled “World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to meet Basic Education Needs”. The EFA initiatives adopted at Jomtien were echoed at the Dakar Education for All Forum in April 2000 and at the U.N Special Session on Children held in May 2001. However, problem after problem continued to negate any effort to achieve EFA.

Concerned about the deteriorating situation, 189 U.N member countries, meeting in September 2000 and sharing the same vision with that at Jomtien, committed the global community to achieving UPE by the year 2015. The provision of UPE was made one of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Even the KANU government ascribed to these goals, but lacked the commitment to implement the UPE policy. This is to be achieved by ensuring that:

- All boys and girls complete a full course of primary education;
- Gender disparity in schools is eliminated;

- Innovations that would ensure no child once enrolled dropped out of school, and
- Those not in school are identified and enabled to go to school.

2.3 Initiatives in Africa

In Africa, at the Addis Ababa Conference of 1961, African Ministers of Education set 1980 as the target year for achievement of universal education throughout the continent. Though many African nations, including Kenya, spent between 25 and 40 percent of their annual budgets on education, none was able to achieve the target due to economic depression accentuated by a rapid population growth and general poverty.

According to Oxfam's February 2000 "Report on Achieving Universal Primary Education", Sub-Saharan Africa continued to face particularly severe challenges with the number of children out of school increasing. A number of factors were identified as conspiring to make education crisis in Africa particularly acute. These include slow economic growth, rapid population growth, conflict, HIV/AIDS and gender discrimination. The report predicts that, if these trends continue, there will be 57 million primary school age-children out of school by the year 2015.

2.3.1. Nigeria

Universal access to education has been Nigeria's prime target since the mid 1970s. In 1976, the Nigerian UPE programme was launched with primary school enrolment of 6.2 million pupils. This was followed in 1977 by the publication of the National Policy on Education. By 1992, Nigeria had registered some 14.8 million children in her primary schools. (Denga 2000).

In the 1990s, activities aimed at achieving education for all continued to be pursued. A Situation and Policy Analysis of Basic Education exercise was carried out from 1991 to 1993. (Source: Federal Government, 1993). Problems encountered in the implementation of UPE included limited funding; irregular payment of teachers; poor provision and maintenance of buildings, equipment and instructional materials; poor supervision and monitoring of education centres; long walking distances for children between home and school; poor planning; lack of programmes on interface between parents and school and competition between public schools and private schools which offer better facilities.

Basic education in Nigeria is equated to six years of primary schooling and three years of Junior Secondary School. In 2001, the Nigerian Senate enacted the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act, to impose free and compulsory education to children aged 7-17 years. This attracted 16,796,078 pupils in the 48,242 public

primary schools. Another 1,965,519 pupils enrolled in private primary schools. (Source: Umar and Adoba, *This Day*, 12/06/01).

Sadly, the education sector continues to experience serious financial constraints due to low government financial support. For example, in 2001/2002, the education sector allocation was a mere 0.76% of the country's GNP! This compared miserably with Kenya and South Africa whose allocations were 6.5% and 7.9% of GNP respectively. (Dike, 2002).

2.3.2. Uganda

Uganda's UPE programme blasted off in 1996 with an enrolment of approximately 2 million children. Its main goal was to provide the minimum necessary facilities and resources to enable children of ages 6-12 years enter and remain in school to complete the Primary Cycle of Education. By 1999, 6.5 million children aged 6-15 years and accounting for 1/3 of the country's total population were attending primary school. (Source: Uganda Government, <http://www.education.go.ug/UPE.htm>).

Uganda's UPE programme started by providing free primary education for a maximum of 4 children per family. In order to comply with constitutional requirements on affirmative action, in favour of marginal groups, 2 of the 4 children had to be girls, in families with both sexes. Furthermore, in families with

children with disabilities, such children had to be given the highest priority in enrolment under this programme. In addition to payment of school fees, the government provided grants to cover cost of co-curricula activities as well as the management and maintenance of utilities like water and electricity.

After a few years of trial, Uganda was able to establish a firm policy for the achievement of complete universalization. The policy was extensively discussed at various fora including educational institutions, the Cabinet and Parliament. Uganda thus implemented her UPE policy, which now provides free education to all school-age children. A Poverty Action Fund, to administer savings from foreign-debt-relief, has been established. The savings go to support UPE. The main challenge, however, appears to be the provision of education to children with special needs. (Source: Enabling Education Network, 2000).

Studies in Kyamaseke County, carried out by Oxfam, indicate that parents are much relieved of the pressure of paying primary school fees and are now determined to see all their children through school. UPE has enabled parents to put money aside for secondary education. Teachers, too, have felt the difference. Class sizes have shrunk and teaching has improved. There is optimism that very soon illiteracy will be a thing of the past in Uganda. (Source: Oxfam: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk>)

2.3.3 Kenya

2.3.3.1. Background Information

The Education Act, Chapter 211 Laws of Kenya, came into force on 4th April 1968. It provides for regulation and progressive development of education. The Act empowers the Minister responsible for matters of education, to promote the education of the people of Kenya and the progressive development of institutions devoted to the promotion of education. Once thus empowered, the Minister is required to secure, within his general direction and control and for purposes of carrying out the national policy for education, the effective co-operation of all public bodies concerned with education. To assist in the formulation of development plans for education, the Minister is empowered by the Act to appoint an Advisory Council to advise on any matters concerning education in the country or part thereof, and may establish different councils for different areas or for different aspects of education.

The government manages all public schools through the Ministry of Education. Management of schools within the jurisdiction of a Municipal Council is, however, entrusted to that Council. Moreover, a church, church organization or other body can opt to maintain and manage a school as an unaided institution. Where a school community wishes that religious traditions be respected, the church or religious organization concerned shall be appointed as sponsor to the

school. Any person wishing to establish an unaided or private school shall make an application for registration in the prescribed manner to the Minister.

2.3.3.2. Towards Universal Primary Education

Soon after gaining independence, Kenya adopted policies representative of the application of African Socialism to planning in Kenya (African Socialism and its Application to Kenya—Sessional Paper No. 10, 1965). One of the policies contained in this document stated that education (whether general or vocational) and educational institutions (whether community or individually owned) will be vigorously enforced in order to ensure uniform standards and to relate educational development to the needs and resources of the country.

The reasoning then was that at Kenya's stage of development, education was more of an economic than a social service. Education was the instrument for relieving the country of shortage of domestic manpower and equalizing economic opportunities among citizens. However, this fell short of the Universal-Access Education Model (Clark Kerr, 1978). This is because the same policy stated that all citizens were to contribute to the development of education through self-help, payment of school fees and taxes and through service as teachers.

The excitement at independence and the quest for the anticipated economic opportunities, spurred primary school enrolment and construction of new school

facilities. In 1963 there were 6,058 primary schools in the country with an enrolment of 892,000. The number of schools rose to 17,080, in 2001, with an enrolment of 6.3 million. The government's concern was that every Kenyan had the inalienable right, no matter his or her socio-economic status, to basic education as a basic human right. Consequently the expansion of education facilities and review of curriculum became some of the government's most important challenges.

In 1985 an 8-4-4 system of education was introduced after phasing out the 7-4-2-3 system. The 8-4-4 system provides for eight years of primary education, four years at secondary level and four years at university level. This system was expected to produce self-reliant young people who would contribute to the reduction of unemployment. Over the years, however, the 8-4-4 system did not churn out the expected results, going by the growing number of unemployed graduates from all levels of education.

Weaknesses in the 8-4-4 system began to show through high rates of wastage and drop out in both primary and secondary levels. In 1995, the enrolment rate of primary school age children (6-13 years) stood at 76% while that of secondary was 27%. That is to say that for every six children enrolled in primary standard one, only one completes secondary form four. It appeared, therefore, that the 8-4-4 system could not propel the country into industrialization as touted when it was introduced. (GOK, 1997-2001)

In April 1998, the government set up a Commission of Inquiry, also dubbed the Curriculum Review Project, to review the 8-4-4 system. In his launching speech at the KIE, on 16th April 1998, the then Minister for Education and Manpower Development reiterated the government's concern for relevant and quality education at all levels. He termed the review exercise "a major activity expected to come up with the type of curricula that are relevant and qualitative". Views of the public were to be sought on such issues as wastage, relevance of curriculum, the impact of the number of subjects, the cost of education, learning facilities and workload, among others.

The Commission handed its report (The Koech Report, 1999), to the government in 2000. The Report recommended major overhaul of school curriculum and the removal of subjects with little relevance to the future careers of learners. Candidates at the primary level would be examined in Mathematics, English, Kiswahili, Science and General Paper. Subjects like Music, Art and Craft, Physical Education and Home Science would be taught at upper primary level, but would not be examined.

The Report further recommended the renaming of the primary level examination as Primary Assessment and Evaluation Test. While the students will be awarded Certificate of Primary Education, the main objective is to channel students to a regular, technical or vocational school. The recommended changes were to be implemented by the year 2005.

Despite these commendable efforts, the government faced several problems on the education front. These primarily related to financing, low enrolment and completion rates, and relevance of the education offered. Over the last two decades the country continued to experience economic decline. Upon realizing that internal policies and structural rigidity were constraining economic growth and development, the government introduced SAPs through Sessional Paper Number 1 of 1986, on *Economic Management for Renewed Growth*. In 1989, the government introduced a cost sharing policy through which parents were expected to contribute towards education and other social services. Parents were to construct schools and provide the necessary teaching and learning materials. The government on its part provided teachers and paid their salaries.

2.3.3.3. Introduction of FPE

The U.N Millennium Development Goals for the achievement of universal primary education by 2015, charged every country of the world to ensure that (1) all boys and girls completed a full course of primary education, (2) gender disparity in schools is eliminated, (3) innovations that would ensure no child once enrolled dropped out of school and (4) those not in school are identified and enabled to go to school.

Kenya joined the global community and signed up to the MDGs. Further and for purposes of enforcing the Rights of the Child, the Children's Act of 2001 was

successfully enacted. In January 2003 the government introduced FPE throughout the country. Government policy was outlined in a Ministerial Statement on Free Primary Education issued by the Minister for Education, Science and Technology. The Director of Education promptly issued implementation guidelines through a Circular letter dated 8th January 2003.

The Kenya FPE policy, has taken into account all the MDGs requirements. In his statement while launching the policy, the Minister recounted the poor indicators of education that had characterized the 1990s. These included (1) drastic decline in enrolments, (2) high dropout and repetition rates, (3) low completion rates and (4) high wastage and transition rates. Some of the causes of these poor indicators were identified as the following:

- Cost sharing policy of 1988 where, through SAPs, parents were expected to contribute towards education and other social services;
- Inadequate teaching and learning materials. The cost sharing policy required the government to pay for teachers while the parents and the communities provided books, teaching materials and other necessary equipment;
- Learning materials, classrooms and salaries for non-teaching staff. Households unable to pay these levies had their children dropping out of school;
- The HIV/AIDS pandemic that has affected many parents and left many children left orphaned. Household demands coupled with lack of adequate

programmes to cater for those affected at school has pushed such orphans out of school;

- **Poor performance of the economy in the last decade rendering 56% of Kenyans to live below poverty lines. Compelling priorities for survival at individual, family and community levels leave little or no time for educational demands; and**
- **Poor teaching and learning school environment with inadequate physical resources such as classrooms, desks, latrines and others have enhanced the drop out and non-completion rates.**

The result of these poor indicators was that an estimated number of 3.3 million children (6-13 years) were unable to attend school. The Minister then outlined the government's priorities, which were to (1) retain all those already in school, (2) ensure that all those eligible for standard one register and learn in a school and (3) enable the 3.3 million children who had dropped out of school return to school and are facilitated to learn.

However, in 2001, there were 6.3 million children attending school throughout the country, while 3.3 million were out of school. In 2004, only 7.5 million children were at school. This means that not all school-age children are actually at school. There are some 2 million children still hanging out somewhere!

On 10th January 2003, the Minister appointed an FPE Task Force. Its terms of reference included assisting the government to develop appropriate responses for implementing FPE, outlining concrete guidelines for smooth and effective implementation and identifying short and long-term issues in the implementation.

Consequent upon the publication of the report of the FPE Task Force, the government set out and outlined the role of each stakeholder in policy implementation. This included the role of schools, teachers, parents, pupils, the district administration, communities, parliamentarians, development partners, private sector and religious organizations.

The Minister had thus set the country on a course of achieving UPE. By the end of the financial year 2003/2004, the government, with assistance from development partners such as the World Bank, SDA, CIDA, UNICEF and the British DFID, had spent 9.85 billion shillings on FPE. (Daily Nation, 14/8/04).

2.4. Theoretical Framework

The provision of FPE has been brain teasing the education fraternity in Kenya for years due to continued decline in the economic growth. The precipitates of the unsatisfactory performance include “poor implementation of macro-economic policies.....slow pace of economic reforms and deteriorating infrastructure”.

(GOK, 2002-2008). Aware of the above constraints, the KANU government said in the NDP 2002-2008:

The goal is to achieve and sustain UPE by 2005 and to raise transitional rates from the current 40% to 70% by the year 2008. While faced with shrinking resources, the government is still committed to reconciling the aims of achieving universal access to primary education and the high education costs to households.

Like any innovation, FPE required to be communicated to and adopted by the social system. The diffusion theory estimates that communication helps change an individual's perception of his situation. Whereas mass media channels are more effective in creating awareness, interpersonal channels are more effective in forming and changing attitudes.

In the run-up to the general elections of 2002, NARC whipped-up mass support by promising FPE through political campaigns. Indeed, once elected to power, NARC promptly introduced FPE in January 2003. Whereas KANU tried to make provision of FPE a gradual process, NARC made it an overnight deal. NARC adopted a "pro-innovation" approach in which human communication is a one-way linear process of persuasion. Rogers (1995) asserts that innovations cannot succeed unless the consumer is made an active participant in decision making. The effects of the one-way linear process of persuasion, used during the political campaigns, are now impacting on FPE.

The response to FPE was very high, but there were not enough teachers and classrooms to cater for the learners. Where proper learning is so hampered, pupils

easily become disillusioned. They find it meaningless to trek to school daily only to go to play. Many thus opt out of school and add to the growing drop out rate.

The parents have adopted a hands-off approach because they never participated in the FPE decision making. The government is, therefore, expected to bear the entire FPE burden without calling for any input from parents. The FPE funds, which are the incentives for the ideas communicated during the campaigns, are not only far from adequate, but are also remitted very late. The first tranche was not released until six months after FPE took off. The DEB does not appear to play any significant role in the management of FPE funds. MoEST now deals directly with the primary schools, albeit through the DEO.

It is emphasized that in this kind of programmes, it is imperative to prepare the target population in advance. All stakeholders should be involved in policy formulation, as was the case in Nigeria and Uganda. The services of professional communicators should be engaged to design and produce effective persuasion and attitude change messages. Message dissemination should be through participatory interpersonal channels rather than political rallies. A lot, therefore, remains to be done to achieve attitude change and ensure sustenance of the Kenya FPE.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This study was carried out in Teso district in Western Kenya, about 500 km from Nairobi. This is a one-constituency district, carved out of the greater Busia district in November 1995. The district borders Mt. Elgon district to the North; Bungoma district to the East; Busia district to the South and the Republic of Uganda to the West.

Although the level of response in the district is generally high, FPE has not quite taken root as earlier expected. This study seeks to establish factors that have influenced that outcome. It is also worth noting that various stakeholders are putting a lot of effort in FPE activities and helping to push up school enrolments.

3.2. Selection and Description of the Study Area.

3.2.1. Size and Population Factors

Teso district comprises an area of 558.5 square kilometres, 441 square kilometres of, which are arable. It lies at an altitude of between 1300 and 1500 metres above sea level and enjoys an annual rainfall of 1270-1700 mm. The district is divided into four administrative divisions, namely, Chakol division in the South (139.9 sq.

km), Amukura and Amagoro divisions in the centre (181.8 and 91.2 sq. km respectively) and Angurai division in the North (145.6 sq. km). Malaba Town Council and part of Busia Municipality fall within this district, under Amagoro and Chakol divisions respectively. Amagoro, the district headquarters, is situated in Amagoro division. (Source: Teso District Development Plan 2002-2008).

The district's population size of 197,395 (National Census 1999), comprises 95,631 males and 101,764 females. The youthful population (15-25 years) is 43,776 (22.68%). The primary school going population (6-13 years) is 47,597 (24.11%), while that of secondary school age is 18,984 (9.61%). With population growth rate of 2.8% per annum, and allowing for infant mortality rate of 75/1000 and under age 5 mortality rate of 111/1000, the district population for 2004 can be forecasted at 220,120.

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3.2.2. Social and Cultural Factors

Although relatively new, and contrary to the impression created by its name, Teso district is very rich in ethnic diversity. Its position along the international boarder attracted other ethnic groups to settle here for purposes of either farming or cross-boarder trade.

The Teso, the predominant ethnic group in the district, has kinship traversing the international boarder into the Republic of Uganda. In the Republic of Uganda, the Teso is the second largest ethnic group, second only to the Baganda.

Other ethnic groups settled in this district include the Luhyia, Luo, Kikuyu, Maasai, Kisii, Kamba, Saboot and Somali. Ethnic integration is expected to bring about fusion of different socio-cultural experiences and give a new direction to development in an area. It is therefore of interest to this study to establish if this ethnic mix has influenced FPE.

Despite the influence of Christianity, polygamy is still a significant part of the traditional way of life. It is not uncommon to find households or family units with between 5 and 25 children each. In such large households, the cost of providing education to all siblings is often out of the reach of parents. FPE is, therefore, a deserved and welcome relief to many a family. Nevertheless, access to secondary education, whose cost is well over 20,000 Kenya shillings per student per annum, is still a cause of concern to many.

Like other parts of the country where freedom of religion is respected, Teso too has its share of religious thicket. The area is predominantly Christian, with mainstream denominations being the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church of Kenya and the Salvation Army Church. There are also a few Muslims

and even atheists. Some conventional Christian denominations and sects are also venturing into this district.

3.2.3. Economic Factors and Land Use

Land in Teso is privately owned and registered under the Registered Land Act, (Chapter 300, Laws of Kenya). Farm sizes vary from 5 to over 100 acres per household. Population growth now puts pressure on the available land, which is often subdivided for distribution to family members or sold to raise funds to satisfy emerging financial needs.

The inhabitants of this rural district are mostly subsistence peasant farmers, who also practise mixed farming by keeping cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and poultry. Subsistence crops such as cassava, millets, sorghum, bananas, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, peas, beans, pumpkins, yams, tomatoes and onions are grown. Surplus from subsistence harvest is sold to raise money to meet other financial necessities. Fruit trees grown both for consumption and sale include oranges, mangoes, pineapples, pawpaw, guava, passion fruit and avocado. Small-scale cash crop farming of cotton, tobacco, robusta coffee, sugar cane, sunflower and pepper is also practised. However, the spirit of the farmers in the area is often broken by poor extension and marketing services.

Commercial business is concentrated in the urban boarder towns of Malaba and Busia. Other relatively busy market centres are Adungosi, Alupe, Amukura, Amagoro/Kocholia and Angurai. Electricity is very poorly distributed although the high voltage line ferrying imported electricity from Uganda's Owen Falls dam in Jinja, traverses this district on its long journey to Nairobi. Only major urban and market centres are provided with electricity, which is often unreliable especially during heavy bouts of rainfall.

3.2.4. Transport and Communication

Communication is relatively easy within the district by vehicle, cycle or even on foot. There is a thriving "Boda Boda" or bicycle taxi business in the area. Two international highways traverse this district. "The Great North Road", from Nairobi through Nakuru and Eldoret, enters the Republic of Uganda through this district at Malaba boarder town. The other major trunk road from Kisumu also enters the Republic of Uganda through this district at Busia boarder town. Good road networks too connect other market centres. Most schools can be accessed with ease. The sandy nature of soils in most parts of the district makes all roads usable at all seasons.

Telecommunication services, though often unreliable, are offered by Telkom Kenya at major urban and market centres. Both Ken-Cell (now Celtel) and Safaricom have introduced mobile phone services, which now offer stiff

competition to Telkom Kenya. Primary schools in the district seldom have Telkom Kenya landlines and only a few secondary schools within the urban and major market centres have such services. For ease of cross-boarder trade, many people are also connected to Uganda's mobile communication networks such as Mango UTL, MTN and Celtel, which have strong signals in the district.

3.3. Sample Design and Sampling Procedure

The researcher realized that it would not be easy to obtain a representative sample using the probability sampling method. This is due to the fact that the entire population and area of study was too large to be covered in the limited time available. Furthermore it would involve massive expense. It was also found that many other researchers, especially on HIV/AIDS, had visited the area and promised donor funds. The promises have not been fulfilled and this has made people suspicious and unwilling to co-operate in further research issues. The researcher had to spend time convincing people that this was a mere academic research, which had nothing to do with HIV/AIDS or donor funds.

After discussing the matter with the local education officials, the researcher decided to apply non-probability-sampling technique, the snowball sampling procedure. Samples were drawn from each of the four divisions of the district. The local chiefs played a big role in introducing the researcher to parents to be interviewed. These in turn introduced others. However, care was taken to ensure

that people were interviewed from every corner of the divisions. At the end of the process, a total of 192 people were interviewed.

3.4. Data Sources, Collection Methods and Techniques.

The study was based on library research, Internet searches and surveys. The study is largely exploratory and descriptive. Library and Internet research provided a lot of data covered in the chapter on Literature Review. In addition to providing background information, literature review also assisted in identifying some research assumptions as clues to issues under investigation.

Two types of questionnaires were used for structured interviews. One questionnaire was administered to education officials and the other to the parents across the district. The questionnaires had both closed and open ended questions that were administered informally through face-to-face interactions. Questions were asked as worded and in the order in which they were written. This allowed for comparison of answers from respondents to facilitate computation of summary statistics. After going through the structured questionnaire, the researcher would engage the respondent in a conversation using unstructured questions to obtain more information. Unstructured questions had the advantage of creating a non formal atmosphere for obtaining information that could not easily come out through structured questions.

Two focus group discussions were held with 15 SIMSC and 12 ACPSEC members respectively. The membership of these committees comprises both teachers and parents. They would naturally be more interested in the welfare of the schools in their locality. Guided discussions were held on factors impeding total realization of FPE in the area. A lot of information on problems bedevilling FPE, such as inadequacy of teachers and classrooms as well as the parents hands-off attitude was received. This method of data collection is a socially oriented research technique that enables capture of real-life data in a social setting. It is flexible with high face validity and low cost. It also helps bring out aspects that would not have emerged or been anticipated from individual interviews.

Interviews were also held with key informants drawn from the District Education Office at Amagoro and from divisional or zonal offices. Interviewees included the Deputy District Education Officer, the Deputy District Inspector of Schools, the District Staffing Officer, the District FPE Co-ordinate, Zonal Inspectors and Teachers Advisory Centre (TAC) Tutors. Other interviewees were from sponsoring churches and head teachers of various primary schools. These interviewees gave information on the effectiveness and progress made so far as well as the communication strategies used in FPE in the district.

3.5. Data Analysis.

Data was analyzed objectively using the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) which is a recognized scientific and statistical method. Statistical method of organizing data for ease of understanding and interpretation has also been employed as well as statistical inferences.

3.6. The Study Constraints and Limitations.

The findings of this study are subject to certain limitations inherent in the issues under investigation. These limitations include the following:

- FPE is a relatively new phenomenon in Kenya's educational arena. It is in fact only in its second year of implementation. Up-to-date data was not readily available and this affects sampling;
- Findings are dependent on respondents' conceptual framework, which is not easily observable and quantifiable. The respondents are, therefore, likely to report about what they could consciously recall during the interviews. The possibility of there being inaccurate responses, bias, cover-up, exaggeration and under-reporting cannot be ruled out;
- Constraints on time and funds did not allow for in-depth study. Luckily, however, the researcher is familiar with the research district and used his car to reach all the informants and a personal computer to work with. In order to carry out questionnaire interviews at the sub-location level, the researcher

employed assistants, who were mainly Form Four leavers, from the localities concerned.

3.7. Research Schedule

Date	Activity
July 1- 31	Proposal writing
August 27	Submission of draft proposal
September 10	Submission of final proposal
September 1- October 10	Field survey
October 11- 25	Data analysis and interpretation
October 25- 31	Compiling report
November 1	Submission of draft report
November 30	Submission of final report

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1. Background Information

Primary school education in Teso owes its establishment to Christian missionaries of the pre-independence era. There were 32 primary schools and two secondary schools in the area at the dawn of independence. The two secondary schools are the Catholic Church's St. Paul's Amukura Secondary School and the Salvation Army Church's Kolanya Secondary School. Whereas Amukura was constructed with funds donated by the American people through USAID, the Salvation Army church with own funds constructed Kolanya. The two schools admitted the first form one students in 1962. The churches controlled all the 32 primary schools. The Catholic Church controlled 20 primary schools while the Anglican and the Salvation Army churches controlled 8 and 4 primary schools respectively.

At the time of this study the district had 111 public primary schools, 7 unaided/private primary schools and 18 public secondary schools. Plans to establish one private secondary school were still dodged by logistical problems. Table 4.1. below is the present distribution of both primary and secondary schools in each of the four administrative divisions of the district.

Table 4.1. Current Distribution of Schools per Division.

Division	Primary Schools		Secondary Schools		
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Totals
Chakol	24	2	3	0	29
Amukura	22	0	5	0	27
Amagoro	25	5	2	0	32
Angurai	40	0	8	0	48
Totals	111	7	18	0	136

Source: Teso District Education Office, Amagoro.

Although education is now under the control of the government, schools are either public government assisted or unaided/private. Church influence in education still holds sway in Teso district. The school communities have tended to encourage creation of schools in line with the religious traditions that influence their locality. Nevertheless, there is no denominational segregation in schools. Children are free to enroll in any school irrespective of religious beliefs. Denominations actively engaged in the sponsorship of schools are the Catholic Church (RC), the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) and the Salvation Army Church (SA). Table 4.2. below shows the distribution of schools in the district according to their religious affiliation. Out of a total of 118 primary schools in the district, 112 have religious affiliation while private investors establish 6.

Table 4.2. Distribution of Schools According to Religious Affiliation

Church	Chakol Division		Amukura Division		Amagoro Division		Angurai Division	
	Pri. School	Sec. School	Pri. School	Sec. School	Pri. School	Sec. School	Pri. School	Sec. School
RC	20	2	19	5	9	2	6	1
ACK	4	1	3	0	17	1	29	4
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3
Private	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0

Source: Teso District Education Office, Amagoro.

4.2. Implementation of FPE

Although FPE took effect from January 2003, government funding did not begin until the start of the new financial year on 1st July 2003. Each school was instructed to open two accounts in any one of the nine approved banks. One of the accounts, for the Schools Instructional Materials, is known as SIMBA, or Account 1. The other account is for general purpose (GPA), or Account 2. Each school had to establish two committees, comprising parents and teachers, to manage the funds. The School Instructional Materials Selection Committee (SIMSC) manages SIMBA. The School Management Committee (SMC) manages GPA.

The government disburses to each school in Teso district a sum of 1,020.00 shillings in respect of each enrolled pupil. Out of this disbursement, a sum of

650.00 shillings is banked into SIMBA for the purchase of textbooks, exercise books, pens, supplementary readers and reference materials, pencils, duster, chalk, registers and charts and wall-maps. The remaining sum of 370.00 shillings is banked into the GPA to cater for payment of support staff wages, repairs, maintenance and improvement (RMI), local travel and transport (LT&T), activities, quality assurance, electricity, water and conservancy (EWC), postage, box rental and telephone.

At the start of the 2003/2004 financial year, the government granted each primary school in the district funds to kick-start FPE activities as follows:

- 28,502.00 shillings to cover urgent needs such as payment of support staff, LT&T, EWC and contingencies;
- 25,000.00 shillings to improve storage facilities;
- 50,000.00 shillings to improve toilet facilities and water harvesting and storage;
- 10,000.00 shillings for creation of disability-friendly environment in school including sensitization and counseling of parents and construction of ramps and special toilets;
- 2,000.00 shillings for each enrolled child with disability, to address specific needs such as wheel chairs, white rods, hearing aids and others. This was to be in addition to the 1,020.00 shillings disbursed for each enrolled child.

At the time of this study, Teso district had received more than 97 million shillings in FPE funds. Another sum of 153,660.00, earmarked for each school with special units, to address specific disability needs, had not reached the schools concerned.

The FPE programme had taken off quite successfully in the district. No cases of mismanagement or misappropriation of funds were reported. However, like in the case of diffusion of any new innovation, errors of omission and commission were detected. Luckily all were curable errors and the situation had quickly been remedied. The District Education Office was closely supervising and monitoring application of FPE funds. The researcher was very impressed with the efficiency with which the education office, the SMCs and SIMSCs managed the programme funds in the district.

Like is the case with any new project, FPE too has its strengths and weaknesses. The head teachers and the members of the SMC and SIMSC have no professional training in accounting and procurement management. The education office however, locally arranges induction workshops and seminars to acquaint them with basic financial management and procurement procedures.

In the focus group discussions, it was argued that the head teacher devotes all his or her time ensuring financial and procurement efficiency, while paying little or no attention to class teaching. Teacher deficiency is an acute problem. The district teacher/pupil average ratio is 1:70, against the ideal situation of 1:40. Put

bluntly, head-teachers spend more time trying to ensure efficient management and accounting of FPE funds at the expense of the learning child. Suggestions were, therefore, made for urgent improvement of the teacher/pupil ratio and the deployment, to schools, of accounts clerks. In the alternative, it was suggested, the former School Equipment Scheme (SES) is revived to replace the present SIMBA arrangement. Funds managed under GPA were said to be grossly inadequate and should be reviewed upwards. It was further suggested that since each school had its unique problems and requirements, SMCs, SIMSCs and PAs should be given greater leeway in the utilization of GPA allocations to enable them prioritize their schools' needs. Calls were also made for a law to rein in parents who failed to send children to school and another to outlaw marriages under 18 years.

4.2.1. Enrolment in Public Primary Schools.

Both public and private schools adopt the common government established curriculum. With the introduction of FPE, public schools in addition to the common curriculum, now maintain special units (SU). These are to cater for children with special needs such as those with hearing disabilities, mental retardation and physical disabilities. Table 4.3 below represents enrolment trends in the district, according to divisions, in both the ordinary curriculum and the SU for the period 2002-2004.

Table 4.3. Enrolment Trends in Public Schools, 2002-2004.

Year	Chakol Div.		Amukura Div.		Amagoro Div.		Angurai Div.	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2002-O	6307	5720	4548	4141	5409	5149	6726	6727
-SU	21	9	13	7	43	15	3	2
2003-O	7913	6974	5394	5222	6535	6101	7569	7515
-SU	38	25	18	20	42	20	7	3
2004-O	8651	7638	6626	5678	7097	6690	8185	7873
SU	39	23	28	32	60	36	5	7

Legend: O= Ordinary Curriculum; SU= Special Units

Source: Teso District Education Office, Amagoro.

The total enrolment for the ordinary school curriculum was 44,727 in 2002, 53,223 in 2003 and 58,438 in 2004. That is to say that, when FPE was introduced in 2003, enrolment went up by 18.9%. In the second year of FPE, however, there was an increase of only 9.7%. Growth was also recorded in the SU. 113 children with special needs were enrolled in 2002. The number rose to 173 (53% growth) in 2003 and 230 (32.9% growth) in 2004. This trend, especially in the case of SU, is expected to grow, as parents of such children become increasing aware of the opportunities available in the local schools.

4.2.2. Enrolment in non-public schools

At the time of this study there were 7 registered private primary schools in the district. A few others were still awaiting registration. So far, only Chakol and Amagoro divisions had fully registered private primary schools. There are two in

Chakol division and 5 in Amagoro division. Contrary to fears expressed at the start of FPE, that these schools would collapse, statistics show that enrolment is in fact growing.

Table 4.4. is a summary of the district private primary school enrolment for 2002-2004. In 2003, at the start of FPE, enrolment rose by 11.2% over the previous year. In 2004, the second year of FPE, enrolment rose by 19.8%. The researcher talked to some parents who had withdrawn their children from public schools and enrolled them in private schools. They cited lack of conducive learning environment due to overcrowding in classes and lack of teachers in public schools.

Table.4.4. Summary Enrolment in Private Schools.

Year	Boys	Girls	Totals
2002	405	357	762
2003	483	365	848
2004	527	489	1016

4.3. Biodata

192 respondents, both male and female, were interviewed in the study area. Table 4.5 represents distribution of respondents by sex. 120 male respondents were interviewed, thus accounting for 62.5% of the sample, while 72 female respondents accounted for the remaining 37.5% of the sample.

Table 4.5. Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Sex.

SEX	No.	PERCENTAGE
Males	120	62.5
Females	72	37.5
Total	192	100

The respondents were also analyzed according to their ages as shown in Table 4.6. Majority of the respondents fell in the 33-39 year age-bracket, accounting for 25% of the sample. The 40-46 year age-bracket, which accounted for 16.7% and the 47-52 year age-bracket, which accounted for 16.1%, followed this. The younger generation of 26-32 years, accounted for 14.6%.

Table 4.6. Distribution of Respondents by Age Clusters.

AGE BRACKET	No.	PERCENTAGE
18 and below	2	1.0
19-25	10	5.2
26-32	28	14.6
33-39	48	25.0
40-46	32	16.7
47-52	31	16.1
53-59	19	9.9
60 and above	22	11.5
Total	192	100

The respondents were further analyzed by their marital status as shown in Table 4.7. This is precisely because completeness of a family unit is more likely than not to contribute to stability in a child's education. Respondents' family units

included single parentage, monogamous and polygamous households, widowed as well as those divorced and separated.

Table 4.7. Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status.

Marriage characteristics	No.	Percentage
Single Parentage	9	4.7
Monogamous marriages	103	53.6
Polygamous Marriages	47	24.5
Widowed	28	14.6
Divorced/Separated	5	2.6
Total	192	100

150 respondents were married and formed a significant proportion (78.1%) of the interviewed sample. 53.6% of the marriages were monogamous and 24.5% were polygamous. 14.6% of the sample was widowed, 2.6% was divorced/separated and 4.7% comprised single parents. It is vital to analyze marital status as this determines family sizes and hence the ability to educate all siblings in the family.

Education levels of respondents are also vital. An educated parent has a better comprehension of the values of education. Indeed educated parents tend to be the first or early adopters of education policies. They would have the greatest degree of opinion leadership and peer-respect through which to informally influence the attitudes and overt behaviour of others within their social system. The rest simply adopt because those knowledgeable are doing it. In this study the education levels of the respondents were analyzed as shown in Table 4.8. below.

Table 4.8. Analysis of Respondents by Literacy Levels.

Level of Education	No.	Percentage
Illiterate	18	9.4
Primary level	100	52.0
Secondary level	66	34.4
Technical Training	8	4.2
Total	192	100

Majority of respondents (52% of the sample), had attained primary level of education. Those with secondary school education accounted for 34.4% while those with technical training accounted for 4.2%. Respondents with no formal education accounted for 9.4% of the sample. Indeed it is in this category that cases of children dropping out of school are endemic. The main causes of dropout are disinterest by either the parent or the child or both, early marriages and pregnancies in the case of girls.

Teso is a multi-ethnic district and Kiswahili is generally spoken throughout the district. Those who have gone through school do communicate in the English language too. Communicators have, therefore, no difficulty disseminating FPE information either in English or in Kiswahili. Nevertheless, in the remoter parts of the district where English or Kiswahili is not commonly spoken, Assistant Education Officers (AEOs) and TAC tutors who speak the ethnic language of the area are often at hand to assist.

4.4. How Communication Factors Influenced FPE Implementation

The communication channels through which people in the study area received information on FPE were diverse. They included the mass media, political campaigns, chiefs' *barazas*, education officials and teachers, own children, churches and friends and neighbours. However, respondents were able to identify channels that influenced them most as shown in Table 4.9. below.

Table 4.9. Influence of Communication Channels

Communication Channel	Respondents	Percentage Influence
Radio	83	43.2
Political campaigns	38	19.8
Chiefs' <i>barazas</i>	30	15.6
Area councillors	13	6.8
Own children	7	3.6
Education officials	7	3.8
School teachers	6	3.1
Others (Church, friend, neighbour, newspapers, television etc.)	8	4.2
Total	192	100

4.4.1. Role Played by Mass Media

All mass media channels can be accessed in the research area. There is a general belief in the area that radio is a government mouthpiece and speaks the truth, hence the 43.2% radio influence in the area. This is hardly surprising as it was found that 91.7% of the respondents actually owned radio sets. The KBC radio is well received in the area. At the time of this study, however, Radio Citizen signals had also reached the area.

Television ownership is very low and confined to urban centres with electricity. A few respondents in the rural areas had black and white sets and used car batteries to power them. Only the KBC television signals could be received. Citizen Television and KTN signals started reaching this area in July 2004. The high cost of sets, poor signal and lack of electricity make television disadvantageous as a medium of mass communication. Although 5.2% of the respondents owned television sets, none was influenced by television messages.

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Daily newspapers are available at major urban and market centres. Although literacy levels are high, newspaper readership is low. Financial ability and lack of interest make newspapers not influential as a mass medium. Only 1.6% of the respondents claimed newspaper readership, but none admitted having been influenced by newspaper content.

Radio's traditional roles of information, education and entertainment cannot be over-emphasized. The respondents admitted that radio helped to shape and give meaning to the political promises made during the 2002 campaigns. In fact radio later helped shape awareness of the roles of each FPE stakeholder, which had not emerged during the political campaigns. The researcher found each school with a "World Space" Satellite radio set donated by the KIE for reception of EMS via satellite. Most radio sets were in use, but a few were reportedly out of order. There were apparently no local technicians capable of repairing these satellite sets. There is, therefore, no doubt that people of this rural district will benefit more if the government disseminates its programmes such as FPE through radio.

4.4.2. Role Played by Political Campaigns

19.8% of the respondents said they were influenced by the political campaigns that heralded the NARC victory of December 2002. NARC promised to introduce FPE immediately and to create 500,000 jobs annually to go with it. The high response to FPE was simply a reflection of the manner in which the people of this area, until then a die-hard KANU zone, overwhelmingly voted for NARC in expectation of the promises made. Most respondents said that they simply wanted to benefit from the pledges made during the campaigns. The FPE message was not in standard format, but engulfed in the euphoria for change. Each politician interpreted FPE in his or her own way. The NARC politicians lost no opportunity in using FPE as a bet to win votes and political mileage.

It was not until early in 2003, much after the general elections, that the government moved to delineate the role of each stakeholder, including parents, in FPE. Sensitization campaigns were put in motion through *barazas* called by the Provincial Administration and education officials. The truth of the matter, however, is that the uncoordinated campaign messages of 2002 did more harm than good to the FPE programme. Some parents told the researcher that they had understood it to mean that NARC would provide free education in its totality. They now realize that not much has changed. They still buy school uniforms and pay money for mock tests, remedial teaching and replacement of lost or used up items. They are further called upon to contribute money for construction of classrooms. They have also realized that they still have to pay fees in the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Units. When asked whether they considered FPE as a success story, 82.8% of respondents said it was and only 17.2% said it was not. When asked whether they considered primary education as now completely free 68.2% of the respondents said yes they did and 31.8% said they did not.

This should be an eye opener. In future any messages likely to have serious policy implications ought to be professionally structured and dispensed without being politicized to avoid misunderstanding.

4.4.3. Role Played by *Barazas*

Barazas are public meetings arranged by officials of the Provincial Administration such as the chief, D.O and D.C. These meetings are used to address local issues of development, security and to expound on any government policies. Local or grass-root leaders, such as Councillors, use these forums often to articulate issues of local interest.

In the research area, *barazas* had no role in FPE prior to its introduction. However, after January 2003, *barazas* came in handy as a form of ‘fire-fighting’ agent. They have become expedient for sensitization and for explanation of everyone’s role in the arena of FPE. *Barazas* have helped dispel the notion that FPE is entirely a NARC affair and that parents have no role in it. 15.6% of the respondents interviewed reported having been influenced by the FPE information obtained from the Chief’s *baraza*. Another 6.8% said their area Councillor influenced them. Undoubtedly, Councillors capitalized on the NARC pledges during the campaigns. This time round they are hard pressed to explain issues regarding FPE and the promised 500,000 jobs which should have absorbed the thousands of jobless school leavers in the area.

A Councillor who talked to this researcher praised the *barazas* as effective sensitization and counseling tools. At these *barazas*, Councillors can defend their pre-election pledges. People are now beginning to understand the meaning of FPE

and their role in it. They are also beginning to appreciate that employment is indeed not the sole purpose of education. It appears, therefore, that *barazas* are a vital channel of interpersonal communication and effective forums for educating people about their rights and obligations.

4.4.4. Role Played by Education Officials and Teachers

After introduction of FPE in January 2003, the process of implementation devolved to the Education Staff and the teachers at the local level. No prior preparations had been made for the start of this programme. Indeed NARC assumed power only after the elections in December 2002. It had, therefore, to be implemented on a 'crash programme' basis. After a few sandwich courses and seminars, these officials braced themselves for the challenging tasks ahead. The District Education Office called *barazas* at every school, to sensitize school communities and committees and to set the stage for FPE take-off.

It must be admitted that this was a very daunting experience. The education officials and the teachers got involved after the event, as it were. People had already been psyched up for free education. Nevertheless, it had to befall to these officials to set the stage and put FPE in its proper perspective. 3.6% of the respondents said they were influenced by the Education Officials and 3.1% said they were influenced by teachers. All the education officials interviewed said that the area's response to FPE was above average.

It is established in the diffusion theory that interpersonal channels, for example, agricultural extension agents, play a significant role in the diffusion of innovations. In the case of FPE, the Education Staff and the teachers, like extension agents, play a significant role in attitude change. In the study area, they help change people's hands-off approach to one of participation in FPE implementation.

4.4.5. Role Played by Children

Despite the campaign euphoria of 2002 and the amount of information churned out on radio, some parents in the study area remained unmoved. Education, free or not, was not of their immediate concern.

At the start of FPE children who were previously disadvantaged for lack of fees, naturally got excited and wished to go to school like other children. They had to convince their parents to support their quest for education. In this category, the researcher found parents who only responded to FPE on the insistence of their children. This category accounts for 3.6% of the respondents interviewed. This perhaps gives credence to calls for a legal framework to make education compulsory and to rein in difficult parents.

4.4.6. Role Played by Other Stakeholders

The intervention by churches, NGOs and other voluntary groups, which was absent prior to the introduction of FPE, is now driving FPE initiatives and helping change attitudes. NGOs such as ICS, CDTF, ANPPCLN, WCOM and others have initiated programmes to improve education standards in schools. They assist through quality assurance activities, donation of books, desks, water storage facilities and construction of classrooms. The parents are required to participate in the implementation of these activities.

In Amukura division, the Amukura Catholic parish is going flat out to change the “hands-off” attitude through sensitization and counselling seminars. The message to parishioners is that FPE is their own programme. They have to supplement government effort by enabling the child receive quality education. The church acts through various groups such as the Catholic Families Guild, the Catholic Teachers Association (CATA), Amukura Catholic Primary Schools Examination Council (ACPSEC) and others.

Through ACPSEC, the inadequately government-funded Quality Assurance vote-head, for example, is being boosted through parents’ participation. With additional contributions from parents, sufficient materials are purchased. Competitive tests for all primary classes and mock examinations for standard eight are organized. All schools within the jurisdiction of the parish, including the

few ACK sponsored schools, participate in this initiative. Encouraging results are beginning to emerge. For example, in the Teso District Standard 8 Mock Trials for 2004, Amukura division improved its position from fourth in the previous trials to position two. The parents now cherish the fruits of their participatory initiative. Reverend Father James Mabele, in charge of the Amukura Catholic Parish and the pioneer of this initiative, was happy that parents were beginning to respond positively. However, he reiterated that a lot remained to be done.

In another part of the district, a voluntary group known as PAMLO has initiated a project to encourage and assist learners to develop a flair particularly for mathematics, English language and physics. This initiative so far benefits a cluster of 6 primary and 5 secondary schools in Angurai division and one primary school in Amukura division.

A recent addition to these initiatives is the ICS. They too, have taken up the challenge and initiated education improvement support in six primary schools in Amukura division and 5 in Amagoro division. Their programmes will run for the period 2004 to 2006.

The organizers of ACPSEC, PAMLO and ICS initiatives have a close rapport with the district education office. They also link well with the education officials who provide professional guidance at every stage. The influence of churches and

other voluntary groups appears, therefore, to be emerging as a potential that will drive FPE initiatives and help build capacities in their localities.

4.5. Other Factors Influencing FPE in Teso District

As noted earlier, education began taking root in Teso district in the pre-independence era. FPE did not, therefore, come as a surprise. Communication has also been noted as a factor that influenced FPE both at introduction and implementation stages. However, communication was not the only influencing factor. The study found that FPE was influenced by a convergence of many factors. The intervention of these factors will determine the increase or decrease of the poor indicators that have bedevilled education in this country. This ultimately will determine the success or failure of FPE in the district.

4.5.1. Economic Factors

Teso district has 441 square kilometres of arable land, with an average density of 354 persons per square kilometre. Annual rainfall reaches 1,700mm during the short rains and 1,270mm during the long rains. The district's average percentage of absolute poverty is 56% and its contribution to national poverty is 0.8%. Table 4.10. below indicates how various sectors of the economy contribute to household incomes.

Table 4.10. Sectoral Contributions to Household Income

Sector	Percentage Income
Agriculture	65
Rural self employment	18
Urban self employment	10
Wage employment	5
Other	2
Total	100

Source: Teso District Development Plan 2002-2008

Agriculture, the single major source of livelihood in this rural district, contributes 65%. The bulk of this is in peasant subsistence farming. Out of all the arable land only 8,526 hectares are under cash crops. This can be termed as negligible. Farmers are disillusioned and discouraged by non-existent or poor extension and marketing services. The researcher attempted to establish people's average monthly incomes as shown in Table 4.11.. The majority in the sample fell in the 0-500 shillings monthly-income bracket.

Table 4.11. Respondents' Average Monthly Incomes

Income Bracket	Number of Respondents	Percentage
0-500	102	53.1
501-1,000	48	25
1001-5,000	32	16.7
5001-10,000	9	4.7
10,000 and above	1	0.5
Total	192	100

Let us revisit the Minister's FPE inaugural speech. He said in part,

"Poor performance of the economy in the last decade rendered 56% of Kenyans to live below poverty lines. Compelling priorities for survival at the individual, family and community levels leave little or no time for education demands."

Through the FPE policy, the government relieved parents of the cost-sharing burden in primary schools. However, it appears that funds are still not sufficient to bail schools out of years of neglect. It is also still too early to observe any significant change in people's livelihoods.

Poverty appears to be a major factor in Teso. The above indicators show that people live below the poverty line and this impacts negatively on education. It is imperative that efforts to rejuvenate the economy in general are put in motion in earnest. Extension and marketing services, in the agricultural sector, should be re-activated. A family's financial stability will support FPE and improve completion rates and eliminate wastage, low transition rates and school dropouts.

4.5.2. Social Factors

Teso is a multi-ethnic district. An ethnic mix often breeds both the good and the bad. The advantages include the spread of the national language Kiswahili. This inspires an aura of nationalism. The indigenous people, who believed that school was a preserve of the boy child, now have a new inspiration to send both boys and

girls to school. Through the new role models, the indigenous girl child, has taken her rightful place in class.

The researcher found encouraging enrolment figures in the district. Out of the total enrolment of 58,438 as at January 2004, there were 30,559 (52.3%) boys and 27,879 (47.7%) girls. In some schools, as sampled out in Table 4.12, girls' enrolment surpassed that of boys. This is an indicator that gender discrimination will soon be a none issue.

Table 4.12. Comparative Enrolment of Boys and Girls

SCHOOL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
Akolong'	245	228	473
Akoreet	391	376	767
Amoni	322	311	633
Ang'urai	274	269	543
Chamasir	205	187	392
Changara	210	200	410
Kokare	306	292	598
Machakus	525	493	1018

In the urban and market centres, the ethnic mix is more pronounced because of their business potential. Social problems alien to the area have cropped up. Children and young persons are quickly discarding their socio-cultural practices. New practices have emerged such as smoking and drinking of illicit substances,

cross-boarder hawking, watching commercial video shows and early sexual activities. This aberrant behaviour has claimed many school dropouts and early pregnancies. Pregnancies are now a big cause for concern.. In one school the researcher heard that 3 standard eight girls, KCPE candidates, were pregnant.

The Teso District Development Plan 2002-2008, predicted that only 90% of school age children would be at school in 2004 and 94% in 2008. FPE will no doubt alter these predictions. The district's primary school dropout rate is 7.4% for girls and 7.1% for boys. These high rates translate into very low transition rates. With over 58,000 children in primary school, it is a pity that only 19,000 are in secondary school. That is to say that for every 3 children in primary school, only one makes it to secondary school. The drop out rate in secondary schools is 2.6% for boys and 14.4% for girls.

The above trends need to be checked if the objectives of FPE are to be realized. At this rate Teso may soon find difficulty sending any child to university.

Other social factors impacting negatively on FPE include the following:

Health

Teso is a malaria-prone area. Research proclaims that children aged less than 5 years and pregnant mothers are the most vulnerable. Infant mortality in the district

is 75/1000 while that of children under age 5 is 111/1000. These are fairly high rates. Concerted efforts are required to fight malaria so those children live to benefit from FPE.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is claiming the lives, not only of parents, but also of teachers and school children. Without family support or adequate teachers, chances of children dropping out are very high. These deaths also put the teacher/pupil ratio under severe strain leading to lack of or poor engagement between teacher and child. A child who does not get value for taking the trouble of coming to school, suffers the temptation of staying away or even dropping out all together. Ways and means of introducing ARV drugs to prolong the lives of teachers who may be infected would greatly mitigate the situation.

In some schools visited by the researcher, up to one-third of the children are orphaned. The government has declared AIDS a national disaster. It may be prudent to extend the SFP to this district to enable the orphaned children stay in class. The dream of UPE by 2015 may not otherwise be realizable.

Attitudes

Attitudes in general have plenty of influence on FPE. Some parents do not see any value in education. The researcher talked to some of them, who were quick to retort "Why waste time and money when even those who have completed school

are back to the village with no change in their lifestyles?" Such absurd thinking has greatly negated FPE progress in some parts of the district.

Some people expected the government to assume all the responsibilities of caring for the child. They say the idea of free education was NARC's not their own. In any event it should be NARC's turn to pay for their votes. They refuse to be called upon to contribute money towards any school activities. It is a painstaking exercise for the local leaders to try and change these negative attitudes. Education staff, chiefs, Councillors and churches spend much time in sensitization and counseling *barazas* and seminars. Some people have to be persuaded and at times forced to even attend these *barazas* or seminars. It is, therefore, crucial that attitude change mechanisms be put in place if FPE is to succeed.

The introduction of FPE is further impacting negatively on ECD. Parents are still expected to fund ECD units, but do not see why they should. Some have opted to keep their children at home until they attain the right age for standard one.

The SU, meant for children with specific needs, are also experiencing attitude problems. For the specific needs to be addressed, these children should be afforded separate class facilities. The All-Inclusive Policy is not in the best interests of these children. Apart from inadequate special needs teachers, both fellow pupils and those teachers not trained in special needs also visit hostilities and discrimination upon these children.

The Minister's call to the 3.3 million school dropouts throughout the country to return to school, was good news to many a disadvantaged child. However, on reaching school, many were betrayed by their age and could only begrudgingly be accepted. They soon realized that their presence was considered a nuisance. They were, therefore, frustrated out of school. Some suggestions were made that the government should consider an innovation like establishing vocational units to cater for the needs of these unfortunate and apparently "outgrown" children. These negative attitudes make it impossible for the Minister to realize his return-to-school dream for the 3.3 million dropouts.

Resources and Infrastructure

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No effort appears to have been made to ensure availability of resources and infrastructure before introduction of FPE. Although the government is funding recurrent budgets at all public primary schools to kick-start the programme, the funds are far from adequate. The human resource situation in the district is pathetic to say the least. The District Education Office at Amagoro, supposed to oversee all education activities in the district, is ill staffed to meet the new challenges. The office is in dire need of improvement in staffing levels, especially in the Inspectorate and FPE co-ordination sections. It is suggested that a research and planning unit be devolved to the district level to help achieve the

government's objective "to develop strategies that are region specific for addressing the challenges in education".

The teacher/pupil ratio of 1:70 cannot be conducive to proper standards of learning. A lot of strain is put on the available teachers. Unless the ratio is improved, predictions are that schools will suffer poor delivery with consequent drop in standards.

The demand for enrolment was so overwhelming that some schools could hardly cope. The researcher visited schools in the area and saw the pathetic situation of some of them. At one school, the researcher found one stream of 144 standard one pupils crammed into a classroom with hardly any space for their teacher. There were no desks and the children sat on the floor.

In some schools, buildings are simply of mud walls and grass thatch, with no door or window shutters. Aciit and Kaeset schools in the South and the North of the district respectively are such examples. In most schools, however, repair work and construction of storage facilities, toilets and water harvesting and storage facilities was in high gear using recently disbursed FPE funds. The researcher visited Aterait primary school on 5th October 2004, where a tragic incident had occurred the previous day. An old pit latrine had collapsed trapping two pupils as the others escaped. Unfortunately one of the children, a girl, died in the incident while

another was rescued and rushed to hospital in critical condition. Delay in funds disbursement and construction of new toilets was blamed for this incident.

Constraints in the education delivery infrastructure still abound, making learning unattractive for many. Education does not entail just paying school fees. It calls for other direct and indirect expenses. Indeed each school has its unique problems and financial requirements. The expenses of a public school in Nairobi cannot be compared to those of a doorless public school, or even a boarding school, situated in rural settings such as Teso district. A few schools have, however, made commendable effort to improve the learning environment with the FPE funds received. Kokare primary school, with about 600 children, deserves mention for using the funds to renovate buildings and provide each child with a desk.

Aspects of Child labour

Although not on a large scale, aspects of child labour that negate FPE initiatives, were traceable in the study area,. In the remoter parts of the district, some parents preferred giving their children away to work as house-helpers in urban areas. In the tobacco growing zones, children are often made to skip school to help tobacco farmers during the planting and harvesting seasons. In the sugar cane growing zones, children are used during cane planting seasons. On market days, parents send their children to undertake various chores at the markets.

The researcher witnessed an incident in September 2004, in which the Chief rounded-up some 67 truants at Amukura market. The children had skipped school to sell items at the market. Some claimed they had been instructed by their parents to skip school and go to the market. Others could not give any tangible excuse for being out of school. The Chief's action was praised by many who saw the action of the parents as breach of the rights of the children. They called for a legal framework to establish compulsory education and punishment for parents who diverted children's attention from school.

4.5.3. Cultural Factors

The institution of marriage appears to have a very high rating in Teso district. The idea of marriage is spurred by two phenomena: the instinctive urge for procreation and continuation of the family line and the economic value of dowry from a daughter's marriage.. Parents tend to encourage their children's marriages in the quest for grandchildren and for dowry, in the case of daughters. In this area, early marriages account for the highest number of school dropouts.

In the Northern part of the district, the researcher visited Kabukui primary school. It is situated in a village in which people of the Sabaot ethnic community have a heavy presence. In this community, circumcision is not only a passage to adulthood, but also a gateway to marriage. After circumcision, children see no more value in education. Most opt out of school and get married. It would appear

that the situation could only be corrected through a legal framework that will outlaw marriages under age 18. This will have the object of ensuring that children complete at least a cycle of primary education before marriage.

Religion too breeds certain cultural behaviours. The research area is said to have been invaded by some conventional Christian sects with their culture of crusades and 'Kesha' (vigil). They are attracting many children and the youth. Days and nights are sometimes spent on these activities. It has been noted that these activities are affecting learning. The researcher was told in one discussion group that these crusades/'Kesha'(vigils) are turning into breeding dens for girl-child pregnancies and eventual school dropouts.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of Research Findings

This study found plenty of evidence of high response to FPE in the research area. Awareness was kick-started by the political campaigns of 2002, in which NARC pledged to introduce FPE if elected to power. Other channels of awareness included the media, and interpersonal communication through *barazas*, education officials and teachers, own children, churches, and voluntary groups. The introduction of FPE, as an incentive in itself, enabled many previously disadvantaged children enter school.

The study showed that FPE was initially met with mixed response as people were not quite sure what the implications would be. It took the intervention of several communication strategies to change people's perceptions and attitudes. The fact that education was going to be free did not immediately influence everybody. There are those who still see no value in education and it is towards this category that more attention should be focused. When asked whether FPE was a success story in the area, 82.8% of the respondents agreed that it was, but 17.2% said it was not. When further asked whether primary education was free, 68.2% said it was free, but 31.8% said it was not free.

Through various intervention mechanisms many people have come to appreciate that they too have a stake and, therefore, a role to play in the eventual success of FPE. Their roles included ensuring that the child actually attends school, and is adequately provided for in terms of counsel, discipline, feeding, transport, school uniforms, medical care and others.

The ratio of girls to boys has improved and in some schools the enrolment of girls surpasses that of boys. This should be the trend, given that there are more females than males in this district. There is also an upward trend in the enrolment of children with special needs. This is, however, threatened by the move to have all-inclusive classes rather than separate classes for those with special needs.

The ECD units are ideally the primary schools' "catchment areas." These units are, however, at the risk of perishing. Some parents consider them unnecessary. Others feel that these units should be incorporated into the FPE cycle and funded by the government.

FPE has also brought parents closer to the schools, especially as members of SMCs, SIMSCs or PAs. Parents of children in classes 1 to 4 collect and sign for instructional materials issued to their children. These materials are kept at home by the parents and issued to the children as and when the need arises. Any materials lost or used-up have to be replaced by the parent. The idea of parents

having to stock instructional materials at home, where there are no proper storage facilities is, however, questionable.

All respondents expressed gratitude to the government for relieving them of the burden of paying fees. They also appreciated the introduction of special units to cater for children with special needs who previously had lost hope of an education. It is, however, still early to expect much change in the peoples' livelihoods. One excited parent claimed to have purchased a bicycle with the fee-savings. Another had bought a goat. Other parents said they could now concentrate on fees for children in secondary school. There were reports, too, that some parents now spend all their time and money on drinking sprees.

The introduction of FPE is like the introduction of an innovation. Not everyone gets excited about an innovation and will adopt. Likewise not everyone gets excited about FPE and will take his or her child to a public school. In the study area there are parents who still do not care about education for their children. There are others, obviously well to do, who prefer enrolling their children in private, fee-paying primary schools. They explained this away by citing overcrowding and over-stretched facilities, which, according to them, are not conducive to good standards of learning at public schools.

The introduction of FPE also appears to have limited the functions of the DEB. The Ministry now deals with schools directly, as if the DEB no longer existed.

Using the snowballing sampling method, a sample of 192 persons picked from all sub-locations, was interviewed using a questionnaire schedule and the probing method. Data was also collected through KII and during FGD. The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS and qualitative method of analysis.

5.2. Conclusions

With regard to communication, it is evident that the parents were more influenced by radio, the political campaigns and *barazas*. both of chiefs and area Councillors. With political campaigns now a thing of the past, the radio and the *barazas* remain the main instruments for communicating and disseminating FPE information. The radio here is seen as government mouthpiece and almost everyone has a radio set.

The Two-step Flow of communication theory of Lazarsfeld et al (1948) concluded that radio was a powerful tool in diffusion of campaign messages. However, interpersonal communication played a vital role in facilitating campaign messages among members of a social group. In the study area, Chiefs and Councillors are viewed as the grass-root articulators of government policy. Using the Two-step Flow theory, they act as the primary group or the opinion leaders, who first receive information and then pass it on to members of their

community. The education officials, teachers and children, on the other hand, were not rated highly for the obvious reason that they are interested parties.

While the preferred channels should be utilized more for information dissemination and other activities aimed at enhancing the quality of education, new channels such as churches and voluntary groups should also be involved. There is need, however, to stress the importance of engaging the services of professional communicators, in the production of structured messages and their dissemination, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

Other economic, social and cultural factors also registered their presence in influencing implementation of FPE in Teso district. Although the government is now meeting some of the schools' recurrent budgets, the issue of development or capital budgets is still shrouded in mystery. The government has to either provide funds for capital expenditure or give directions otherwise. The study area is still gripped by some of the causes of poor indicators of education that the Minister outlined. The percentage of abject poverty in this district is 56%. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, poor performance of the economy and poor teaching and learning environment, still plague the area. There is an acute shortage of teachers and classrooms for meaningful learning. Early marriages, aspects of child labour and pregnancies are also impacting negatively on FPE. A lot needs to be done to ensure that the situation ameliorates and the gains made so far do not go to waste.

Although it is a noble idea, FPE is dogged by a number of problems. These include socio-cultural attitudes and practices as well as insufficient teachers and classrooms. All these problems can be blamed on the manner in which FPE was introduced. NARC, which had not even formed a government, used political campaigns, both to ascend to power and to introduce the FPE Policy. They adopted a “pro-innovation” approach and assumed that everybody was eager to adopt. An integrated approach in which all stakeholders are involved in decision making should have been employed before introduction of FPE. This approach would have enabled the stakeholders own the programme and thereby goad the development of an education culture.

5.3 Recommendations

Arising from the research, the following recommendations are made

- The success of FPE will depend on people’s behaviour and attitude towards education, removal of fees notwithstanding. There is need to achieve attitude and behaviour change. Ways and means should be sought to make people develop and nurture an education culture to enable them own FPE;
- A unit for continuous education research and planning should be devolved to the district level. It will assist the local education staff and parents, not only in understanding, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, but also in adoption of new innovations. Parents would be encouraged to seek information directly

from this unit. Part of the unit's portfolio would be to carry out continuous KAP studies in the district. The information gathered would enable the local education staff cope with peoples' attitude towards education. It will further equip them with the tools necessary to face new challenges and enhance programme sustainability;

- The medium or language of communication should be diversified and simplified. Leaflets on education should be produced in the Kiswahili language. In the case of a target area with one ethnic group, the vernacular language of that ethnic group should be used;
- A multi-channel approach ensures that more people are reached. Education planners need to adopt this approach in addition to mobility. As many stakeholders as possible should be involved in dissemination of education information and material and in eliciting positive response to new programmes. A team approach by all stakeholders eliminates duplication and unnecessary expense;
- Education planners should develop standard but simple messages prior to any programme campaign. The messages should outline the roles of the respective stakeholders in order to eliminate evasion of roles. Communication experts should be involved in the design of the campaign messages;
- Voluntary and church groups should be exploited as an emerging channel of communication. Education planners could use them to disseminate new educational programmes and to achieve attitude change;

- Members of SMCs, SIMSCs and PAs should be facilitated to visit their counterparts in other districts and to form partnerships. This is because the education curriculum is uniform throughout the country. Such partnerships will be interactive and will help develop and sustain a uniform education culture in the country;
- The parents' inability to pay fees was not exclusive to primary. It affects secondary schools as well as ECD units. FPE appears to be impacting negatively on ECD in Teso district. ECD units should ideally act as primary schools' catchment areas. A strong ECD foundation should be developed to sustain positive results in primary schools. The government should consider, not only taking over the employment of ECD teachers, but also incorporating at least two years of ECD into the primary education cycle. A new primary education cycle should incorporate children of ages 4-13 years;
- Since universal education is now a matter of global concern there is need to rein in errant parents and pupils. A legal framework to provide for compulsory primary education with sanctions for non-conformity and for child labour should be formulated. The Education Act, the Children's Act and other relevant pieces of legislation should be amended to outlaw marriage below the age of 18 years. This will ensure that every child completes at least a cycle of primary education;
- In order to save on professional time spent by teachers on accounting and procurement procedures, it is suggested that accounts clerks be employed for each school or cluster of schools. Presently these procedures are maintained

efficiently, but at the expense of the learning child. Alternatively, the SIMBA allocations should be replaced by the old SES;

- Schools do not have uniform problems and needs. Each school may have its unique problems and needs. Members of SMC and SIMSC should be allowed greater leeway to transfer funds between vote-heads to enable them prioritize their school needs;
- Delayed disbursement of funds to schools and the contradiction in operation seasons are impacting negatively on FPE. The government operates on financial year basis while schools operate on calendar year basis. At the time of this research FPE implementation was in its 21st calendar month, yet disbursements received accounted for only one 12-month financial year. Funding was thus 9 months behind schedule. By December 2004 schools shall have lost a whole calendar year of funding. Seasons of operation need, therefore, to be synchronized;
- Poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic are the major causes of school dropout in the area. Affected children find staying away from school, in order to eke out a living, more sensible than attending school and going hungry. Since AIDS is now a national disaster, it is suggested that the SFP should be extended to all schools in the district. This will ensure achievement of universal education by 2015;
- The district teacher/pupil ratio stood at 1:70 at the time of this study. The ideal situation is 1:40. The situation is pretty pathetic when schools are considered individually. Teachers are dying at an alarming rate. Although actual causes

of death are never revealed, deaths from HIV/AIDS related causes couldn't be ruled out. Making ARV drugs available to teachers would go a long way in containing this threatening situation. Along with HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, the district will then be able to maximize the beneficial impact of education and minimize the harmful impact of HIV/AIDS on education;

- FPE attracted not only children, but also young persons over 18 years back to school. The odd age mix introduced new dynamics into the classroom to the disadvantage of proper learning. For example the very young were conspicuously uneasy with their older brothers and sisters being around and vice-versa. Most of the older ones had no choice, but to opt out of the confrontation and hence out of school. It is suggested that, although the problem is likely to be short-lived, vocational units be set up to cater for the needs of older children who equally need to benefit from an education;
- In the case of children with special needs, the Uganda experience shows that the policy of mainstreaming or "all-inclusive" classes can be disastrous. There ought to be a separate learning environment with enough specially trained teachers;
- McLuhan's (1964) prediction of the world becoming a 'global village' is now a reality. Kenya must be part of the 'information age' community. Children from rural Teso come to learn of computers only when they visit Nairobi or other major towns. In order to realize the 'global village' dream, rural electrification programmes should be implemented to supply electricity to all

schools in the district. This will enable introduction of computers and the study of ICT;

- The importance of communication in education development cannot be overstated. Communication is, however, only meaningful when there is feedback. A teacher in a corner of rural Teso, wishing to confer with or seek advice from his DEO, is obligated to take a day off to make the 30 or so kilometre 'boda boda' journey to Amagoro. To minimize these delays it is suggested that, from the postage, box rental and telephone vote-heads, schools be allowed to acquire mobile phones for ease of communication. Luckily, the two mobile phone providers cover the entire district adequately with strong signals.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Glossary

This glossary does not aim to give scientific definitions but simply provides a handy reference that explains certain key terms as they are used in this study.

Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL)

This refers to parts of Kenya that are categorized as hardship areas. They experience very little or no rainfall, resulting in perpetual drought and famine. Most of these areas are inhabited by nomadic ethnic groups that migrate from place to place in search of pasture for their animals.

Attitude

This is a person's affective or emotional reaction towards other people or things.

Campaign

Planned attempt to influence public opinion, behaviour, attitudes and knowledge towards some cause. This can be through the use of the media, political rallies, public *barazas* interpersonal communication and other channels.

Communication

The exchange and sharing of information, attitudes, ideas, or emotions in a mutual manner.

District Education Board (DEB)

A representative body of persons appointed by the Minister under the Education Act to oversee matters of education in a district. Each board exercises jurisdiction over all maintained and assisted primary schools in the district for which it is established.

Ethnic Group

This is a collectivity of peoples claiming real or putative ancestry, with shared symbolic socio-cultural elements of its identity such as kinship, language, physical appearance, territory, beliefs and practices.

Persuasion

Persuasion is the process, by which a person's attitude or behaviour is, with duress, influenced by communication from other people.

Primary Education

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This is also invariably known as elementary education and basic education offered in primary schools. It is the first stage traditionally found in formal education, beginning at the age of 6 to 13 years and covers classes from standards one to eight.

Public School

A school maintained or assisted out of public funds.

School

An institution or an assembly of not less than ten pupils, established as provided under the Education Act, for purposes of offering regular formal instruction.

School Community

A collectivity of peoples living around and being served by a school. This includes parents, guardians, pupils and sponsors.

School Feeding Programme

A programme undertaken by the Ministry of Education in the perpetually famine stricken Arid and Semi-Arid Lands to enable children stay at school, especially because some ethnic groups in these areas live migratory lives.

Unaided/private School

This is a school other than a public school.

APPENDIX II

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Background Information

1. Name of Respondent -----(Optional)
 - (1) Sub-location -----
 - (2) Location-----
 - (3) Division -----
2. District of Birth: Teso, Other (Specify)-----
3. Gender: Male Female
4. Age bracket in years: 18 and below, 19-25, 26-32, 33-39,
 40-46, 47-52, 53-59, 60 and above.
5. Education Level: Illiterate, Primary, Secondary, Technical,
 University, Other (Specify) -----
6. Languages Spoken: -----
7. Marital Status: Single, Monogamous, Polygamous, Widowed.
 Divorced/separated.
8. Number of Children: None, 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10 and over.
9. Occupation/Profession: Farmer, Public Service, Private Company,
 Business, Retiree. (State last employment)-----

B. Socio-economic Variables

10. (a) Do you practise mixed farming? Yes, No.

(b) If Yes, what do you keep? Cattle, Goats, Sheep, Pigs,
 Poultry.

11. Approximate income per month (Shillings) 0-500, 501-1,000,
 1,001-5,000, 5,001-10000, Over 10,000

12. Involvement in Community Work: Location Committee,
 Women Group, Church Group, Ward Committee,
 School Committee, District Committee, Other.

(Please Specify) -----

C. Sources of Information and Communication Channels Used.

13. Which of these do you own? Radio, Television, None

(a) Do you read Newspapers? Yes, No.

(b) If Yes, which? The Nation, The Standard, The People,

Kenya Times, Taifa Leo, Others -----

15. Do you know about Free Primary Education (FPE)? Yes, No.

16. If Yes, how did you first know about it? Radio, TV, Newspapers,

Political campaigns, Chief's *baraza*, Education Official, School

Teacher, Own Children, Friends/ Neighbours, Area Councillor,

Church, Other Channel, (Specify) -----

17. Which channel in 16 above influenced you most about FPE? Please

specify -----

18. Did you also discuss the matter with others? Yes, No.

19. Did you also influence other people? Yes, No.

D. Comments About FPE Implementation.

(a) Can you say that primary education is now completely free in your area?

Yes, No, Don't Know.

(b) If No. please explain -----

21. (a) Did your children attend primary school prior to FPE ? Yes, No,

(b) If Yes, how many? 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10 and over.

22. (a) Did you send children to school after FPE introduction ? Yes, No,

(b) If Yes, specify number -----

23. (a) Have any of your children dropped out of school? Yes, No.

(b) If Yes, Why? -----

24. (a) Can you say that FPE is a success story in your area? Yes, No,

Don't Know. (b) If No, Please explain -----

25. (a) Do all school-age children attend school in your area? Yes, No,

Don't Know. (b) If No, what are some of the obstacles? -----

26. Have you attended any *barazas* to discuss FPE? Yes No.

27. Briefly explain how your lifestyle has changed since introduction of FPE?

E. Contact Between Parents and Education Staff

28. Which primary school is nearest your home? -----

29. Are you a member of any school committee? Yes, No.

30. Do you get invited to attend school meetings ? Yes, No

31. Do Education Staff visit your school? Regularly, Rarely, Don't
Know.

32. (a) Have any educational *barazas* been held in your area since the beginning of
the year? Yes, No, Don't Know.

(b) If Yes, by whom? Administration, Politicians, Education Officials,
 NGOs, Other. (Specify)-----

33. Did you attend such *barazas*? Yes, No.

34. What is your opinion about education officials in the area?

Good Advisers, Usually Available Never Available, Disinterested

No opinion.

35. What is your relationship with the local school teachers?

Excellent, Good, Poor, None.

APPENDIX III

PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name-----

2. Gender: M, F

3. District of birth: Teso, Other (Specify)-----

4. Age ----- years.

5. Length of service in the district ----- years.

6. Position held/Title-----

7. Please briefly explain nature of duties-----

8. How many schools are under your supervision?-----

9. Total number of pupils in these schools-----

10. How often do you visit your schools? Weekly, Monthly, Half Yearly,

Yearly, Other (Specify)-----

11. How frequently do you receive reports on each school? Weekly, Monthly,

Quarterly, Half Yearly, Annually, On demand, Other (Specify)-----

12. How many teachers are under your jurisdiction?-----

13. (a) How do you maintain contact with teachers? School visits, By invitation,

Other Ways (Specify)-----

(b) How often? Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly, Quarterly,

Other (Specify)-----

14. How often do you report on your teachers? Monthly, Quarterly,
 Annually, Other (Specify). -----

15. How many times have you since the beginning of the year:

(a) Organized educational seminar/workshop: Once, Twice, More
than twice, Not at All.

(b) Organized meetings with school communities: Once, Twice,
 More than twice Not at All.

(c) Distributed written educational materials to school communities

Yes, No. If Yes, Language used, -----

(d) Attended a meeting organized by someone else and given advice on education :

Once, Twice, More than twice, Not at All.

16. If you attended any meetings under 15 above, who organized them?

Administration, Other department, Politician, Church group,

Local Authority, NGO, School Community, Other (Specify) -----

17. Do parents seek information without your prompting or priming? Yes, No.

18. FPE was introduced in 2003. What channels of communication were used

to spread the message to the people? Circulars, Barazas, Media,

Churches, Community groups, Politicians, Teachers,

Other (Specify).-----

19. Was the FPE message structured in a standard format? Yes, No.

20. How do you rate the people's response to FPE during the first year of implementation, Very High, High, Average, Below average.
21. How do you rate the people's response to FPE in the second year of implementation? Very High, High, Average, Below Average
22. It is known that FPE is not 100% successful in Teso because not all school age children are actually attending school. What are some of the reasons for this?
 Attitude, Culture, Poverty, Child Labour Early Marriage,
 HIV/AIDS trauma, Lack of Teachers, Lack of classrooms,
 Unsuitable Policies, Other (Specify) -----

23. What action do you take to ensure that this situation ameliorates?-----

24. What in your view can lead to a permanent solution to the problems of non-attendance and dropout? -----

25. FPE has been applied uniformly throughout the country. In your view, are there problems peculiar to this area that the programme cannot adequately address? Yes, No. If Yes, please identify some -----

26. FPE funds are now disbursed directly to schools. What is your role in expenditure management? -----

27. (a) Have you attended any course/seminar on FPE? Yes, No.

(b) If Yes, 1 week seminar, 2 week seminar, Short course.

28. What were some of the benefits of the seminar/course, if attended -----

29. Are you motivated to do the kind of work you are doing? Yes, No.

30. What motivates/demotivates you? -----

31. What has been the greatest challenge to your work in this area?

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