

**THE EFFECTS OF FREE SCHOOLING ON QUALITY EDUCATION IN
PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GACHOKA DIVISION MBEERE
SOUTH SUB COUNTY**

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my husband Zephah and my three sons Collins, Tevin and Junior for their love, support, encouragement and understanding throughout the research period.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All glory goes to God for granting me the grace to accomplish this task. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors, Dr. Lewis Ngesu and Christine Kahigi for their guidance and support in various stages of the preparation of this project.

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Thank you.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of free schooling on quality of education in public primary schools in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub-county. The objective of the study was to determine the influence of learning and teaching facilities on quality education, to establish the relationships between the head teacher preparedness on financial management and quality education and to establish the influence of teacher – pupil ratio on quality education.

The researcher used descriptive survey research design in which 143 respondents comprising 20 head teachers, 120 teachers' and 3 quality assurance and standard officers were used.

Data was collected using questionnaires. The study also used interview schedules to collect data.

Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages presented in tables facilitated by statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 21. The study established that the availability of teaching and learning resources influenced implementation of FPE to some extent as lack of some materials such as text books made it difficult for the teaching and learning process to continue smoothly.

Based on the findings of this study the government needs to employ more teachers. The study established that the teacher pupil ratio influenced quality of education negatively since there is shortage of teachers to counter for the massive enrolment levels that had increased with the introduction of free primary education. The quality of education declined since the teachers were not enough to give serious attention to pupils and to mark pupil's assignments.

The study also established that financial management influenced free schooling as the findings indicated that procurement of goods was done according to the Procurement Act and the FPE funds was managed to a large extent without corruption.

The study recommended that the government should post more teachers in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South District and the head teachers should be trained on financial management for effective implementation of free schooling.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE:INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the study	6
1.5 Research Questions	6
1.6 Significance of the study.....	7
1.7 Limitations of the study	7
1.8 Delimitations of the study	8

1.9 Basic Assumptions.....	8
1.10 Definition of significance terms	9
1.11 Organization of the study	10
CHAPTER TWO:LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Overview of Free Primary Education	11
2.3 Free Primary Education in Africa	14
2.4 Free Primary School Education in Kenya	20
2.5 Rationale of Free Primary Education	23
2.6 Challenges of Free Primary Education	25
2.6.1 Teaching and Learning Resources on Quality Education.	25
2.6.2 Financial Management of FPE and Quality Education	26
2.6.3 Teacher – Pupil Ratio on Quality Education.....	28
2.7 Summary of the Literature Review	29
2.8 Theoretical Framework.....	29
CHAPTER THREE:RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	32
3.1 Introduction	32
3.2 Research Design	32
3.3 Target Population	32
3.4 Sample and Sampling.....	33

3.5 Data Collection Instrument.....	33
3.6 Validity of the Instrument.....	34
3.7 Reliability of the Instrument.....	34
3.8 Data Collection Procedure	35
3.9 Data Analysis Techniques	35
3.9.1 Ethical Issues	36
CHAPTER FOUR:DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....	37
4.1 Introduction	37
4.2 Demographic Data	37
4.3 The study sought to find out the education levels of head teachers and teachers in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South District.	38
4.4 The researcher sought information on work experience of respondents	39
4.5 The effects of availability of learning and teaching resources on the implementation of FPE in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub County.	40
4.6 Effects of teacher pupil ratio on the implementation of FPE.....	41
4.7 Attention to pupils during lessons.....	42
4.8 Effects of teachers pupils ratio on the implementaton of FPE.....	43
4.9 Marking of pupils written assignment.....	44
4.10 Preparedness and Management of FPE on Quality Education.....	45

CHAPTER FIVE:SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	48
5.1 Introduction	48
5.2 Summary of the study.....	48
5.3 Summary of the major findings	49
5.4 Conclusions	49
5.5 Recommendations	50
5.6 Suggestions for Further Research	51
REFERENCES	52
APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION	57
APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS	58
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS.....	63
APPENDIX 4:INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE ANDSTANDARDS OFFICERS.....	68

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.2	Gender Distribution of Respondents	37
Table 4.3	Cross tabulation on level of education of respondents.....	38
Table 4.4	Distribution of work experience of respondents.....	39
Table 4.5	Adequacy of teaching and learning resources.....	40
Table 4.6	Distribution of the pupils' population per class.....	41
Table 4.7	Attention to pupils during lessons	42
Table 4.8	Adequacy of teachers.....	43
Table 4.9	Marking of pupils assignments	44
Table 4.10	Procurement for learning and teaching resources according to the requirements of the Procurement Act.	45
Table 4.11	The extent to which FPE funds is managed without corruption.	46

LIST OF FIGURES

2.9 Conceptual Frame Work.	31
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO	District Education Officer
EFA	Education for all
FPE	Free Primary Education
KANU	Kenya African National Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NARC	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition
PEDP	Primary Education Development Plan
QASO	Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Globally, education forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. A quantum of education can be considered as both an investment and consumption. Whether education is an investment or consumption good, it entails costs aimed at achieving specific outcomes. These costs are borne by both the government and the household as social and private costs respectively. Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, and contribute to national and social development and reduce social inequality (World Bank, 1998). UNESCO (2005) argues that the level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development. In realization of the important role which education plays as an agent of national development and globalization, there has been agitation and concern for quality education all over the world. This is reflected in the inauguration of education for all (EFA) in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1995 and Dakar in 2000 (Government of Kenya, 2005).

Literacy and provision of education has been key throughout the world. Studies have shown that uneducated child or adult is a large liability to the society Free Primary Education (FPE) was viewed as a step towards achieving universal basic education and as a part of scaling up poverty reduction. The removal of school fees contributed to poverty reduction by ensuring universal access to basic education. This in turn could help break the cycle of poverty. Birdsall (1980) and Cochran (1979) argued that the household faces a tradeoff between present consumption and children's future income. This is because schooling is not free, the family faces a budget

constraint on achieving UPE (UNESCO; 2005). Direct costs can include general fees, examination fees, and costs of textbooks, uniform, materials, feeding, transportation salary top-ups, sports and culture. There are also indirect costs which include cost of labour at home or work. By eliminating direct costs of schooling, families could send their children to primary school. However, at the global level the United Nations came up with a target that all member states should achieve. They include: ensuring that by the year 2015 all children particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to the ethnic minorities should have access to a complete free compulsory and good quality primary education; ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are in line with Millennium Development Goals, eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and achieve universal primary education by 2015 (UNESCO, 2001). Kenya as one of the signatory was compelled to implement this UNESCO (2001) mandate to provide high standard and high quality primary education for every child.

The Kenya government has always strived to implement UPE without success. Immediately after independence the Ominde commission was established to address the imbalances which existed then. It recommended primary education for all children (Republic of Kenya, 1964). The Bessy report of 1972 recommended that major attention should be given to primary education and proposed many changes in the primary education and proposed many changes in the primary school curriculum (Republic of Kenya, 1972).

In the 1969 election manifesto, the party again re-echoed its commitment to provide more school opportunities, especially to the poor communities. The argument was that the payment of school fees tended to prevent a large proportion of the children from attending school (centre for research and Development (CRD), 2004). According to Eiseman and Schurze (1991), Kenya abolished tuition charges at primary schools in the 1970s. The other non-tuition costs associated

with education remained the responsibility of parents. With the adoption of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in the mid 1980s, user fees were introduced and applied to infrastructure development (Adams and Hartlet, 1996).

In January 2003, free primary education (FPE) was introduced by the Kenyan government. An additional 1.5 million children were able to attend schools for the first time (UNESCO, 2005). The enrolment rose from 5.9 million to 7.9 million. As a result many challenges arose. There were gender imbalances with 3.703 million boys enrolled at all levels compared to 3.505 million girls, giving a sex ratio of 106: 100. The massive influx in enrollment during implementation of free primary education policy by the government resulted in significant rise of the gross enrollment from 92 to 104% of the school going age population. Consequently, the pupil teacher ratio brought a blow in FPE. This overcrowding in classes besides an acute shortage of teachers led to declining quality of education in majority of the public schools. It is however evident that a big proportion of pupils who join school in class one do not proceed to the next level or complete primary school, indicating high repetition or dropout rate. (MOEST 2003).

The Commission of Inquiry into the education systems in Kenya (Koech report) says that the ideal pupil teacher should be 25: 1 and says a ratio of 40:1 affects the quality of teaching (Republic of Kenya, 1999). The free primary education was not adequately planned and resourced. The government of Kenya implemented the FPE programmes without carrying out a cost analysis to determine how much each child needs. The decision to award Kshs. 1020 per child per year was arbitrary. Many schools charged a higher figure for maintenance of pupils in school. Lack of planning and adequate resourcing by the government has led to consequences of increased drop out and falling of educational quality, where the performance is below average.

Several studies have been done in Kenya on the free primary education in Kenya. Free primary education allows access to education without discrimination. There are many challenges that hinder school-going age from accessing, and completing primary school education. These challenges include: the enrollment outstripped the available resources both material and human; for instance, classrooms were overcrowded as they were insufficient and lacking in some cases. Teachers are also not adequate and suffered low morale due to too much work. The non-fee charges of desks, uniforms, books and building funds, resulted in pupils being sent back home. Children of differing ages attended the same classes at the end of the year.

Children dropped out of school at an alarming rate. It is for this reason that the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education, the then Karega Mutahi advised all the teachers training colleges to start equipping trainers with skills of emerging issues in education including increased enrolment.

In the year 2003, the president declared that the National rainbow coalition (NARC) government was committed to the implementation of its election pledge of providing free primary education and it addressed the major challenges which includes sourcing of funds to sustain such an immense bill that was perceived to be impossible, disbursement of the money to schools in good time, ensuring the funds reaching the school are used for the intended purposes, dealing with the high enrolment of pupils in some schools providing more teachers and motivating them, maintaining quality of education and ensuring that retention rates remain high. However these challenges still remain. From the experience of other countries and similar to the current situation in Kenya, this study sought to determine the impact of FPE on quality education in primary schools in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub-county, Embu County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The implementations of FPE programme in Kenya were marked by many problems. The main problem that characterized the FPE programme implementation was over enrollment which led to decline of quality education in public primary schools. Some schools such as Olympic primary school in Nairobi had massive enrollment. In January 2003, the then director of education Mrs. Naomi Wangai issued a circular giving guideline on how the programme was to be implemented. She suggested shifting class system in the lower classes where some children were to attend classes in the morning and others in the afternoon. This was to take care of over enrolments. There was no increase in the teaching staff to counter the over enrolment. From the statistics available from the MOEST the number of teachers has remained almost constant despite the sudden increase in enrollment (Appendix VI and VII).

The children who were able to attend school received poor quality education and they failed to even acquire the most basic skills of reading and writing. The increase in enrollment compromised the performance of pupils in National Examinations. This was due to increased pupil- teacher ratio where teachers were not able to handle overcrowding classes. This led to poor quality education which was followed by poor K.C.P.E performance in 2003.

The implementation of FPE was also dogged by administrative problems. The influx of children into schools affected the physical facilities. Some of the head teachers charged levies for desks before a child was enrolled since there was no money provided by the government for buying physical facilities like desks, tables and chairs. There were reports from the District office availed to the researcher which indicated that most of the head teachers were unable to account for the money remitted by the government for implementation of free primary education.

The Ministry of Education did not train the head teachers who had no managerial skills but are experienced teachers who had excelled in their teaching subjects. The ministry of education

assumes that a teacher would automatically be transformed to an effective administrator. Koech commission recommends that appointment of head teachers and other managers be based on instructional management training, proven competence, possession of appropriate qualifications and relevant experience. It also recommended in service training programmes for managers, teachers and curriculum implementers (Republic of Kenya 1999). This study therefore investigated the head teacher preparedness on financial management on quality education.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of free schooling on the quality of education on primary education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere south sub county. The opinions from head teachers and teachers will provide the Ministry of Education with data and strategies on the ways of improving the implementation of FPE programme.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To determine the influence of learning and teaching facilities on the implementation of FPE programme in Gachoka Division, Mbeere south sub County.
2. To establish the preparedness of head teachers in financial management in Gachoka Division Mbeere South Sub County.
3. To establish the influence of teacher- pupil ratio on the implementation of FPE in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South sub County.

1.5 Research Questions

1. To what extent does learning and teaching facilities influence quality of education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub County?

2. What is the relationship between head teachers' preparedness on financial management and quality education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub County?
3. What is the influence of teacher pupil ratio on quality education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub County?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study will provide important valuable information to the policy makers, head teachers of primary schools, stakeholders and the community on the challenges encountered in the implementation of the FPE programme and the measures to address these challenges which have been suggested. The information provided can be used by policy makers to achieve EFA by 2015. The findings can be used by the head teacher and teacher to guide them on the need to train further in order to deal with challenges of FPE.

The insights in the study will assist quality assurance officers to give proper guidance to the school managers and teachers on how to handle emerging issues while implanting FPE programme. The study findings can be used as a base of monitoring and evaluation. It could act as a self assessment tool.

The study will assist the donors and other well wishers in accessing the level of needs in the implementation of the FPE programme. It has provided information on human resource planning and allocation of the funds by the donors and the government. The study will add knowledge of education management which could prompt future researchers to do similar studies and related topics building upon the information given.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The main limitation of this study arose from the ex-post facto-design used. According to Kerlinger (1973), the limitations of the ex-post factor design are that the researcher does not have direct

control of the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or they are inherently not manipulatable. For example, there was variation in the capacity of the head teachers due to experience and training. Some head teachers were more experienced and handled challenges than others. Other head teachers had managerial skills, therefore generalization of findings to all schools had to be considered. To overcome this, the researcher employed random sampling technique to collect data from a large population of respondents. According to Sharma (2008) some individuals tend to overrate themselves on desirable traits and underrate themselves on undesirable traits. Some head teachers tended to overrate their competence in school management, which may lead to wrong conclusion that FPE implementation is not faced with challenges. To overcome this researcher collected data from teachers, and quality assurance and standards officers.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in Mbeere south sub county which is limited geographically to get valid results for the whole country. Mbeere south has its own unique conditions which affect academic performance negatively. The study only involved teachers, head teachers and quality assurance and standard officers. Other stakeholders were not involved although FPE affects them too.

1.9 Basic Assumptions

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- (i) That the responses from the respondents were truthful, honest and objective to the questionnaires.
- (ii) That all schools had been provided with proper policy guidelines on the implementation of FPE.

(iii) That public primary schools administrator faced challenges related to the implementation of free primary education programme.

1.10 Definition of significance terms

Access: - refers to availability of opportunities for primary school and other education institutions to admit school age children and willingness of these children to take up the opportunity and get enrolled.

Enrolment: refers to the number of pupils who register as members at different grades at the beginning of the year.

Challenge: refers to problems or difficulties encountered in the process of implementing free primary education which could negatively impact on quality of education.

Free primary education: refers to the waiver of all forms of contributions to education by the parents in the primary school level. The government takes the financing of education in public schools.

Head teacher: refers to primary school manager with overall administrative responsibility of a school as stipulated in CAP 212 of the laws of Kenya.

Implementation: refers to the carrying out or execution of a given plan, in this case the free primary education policy in a successful manner.

Primary Education: refers to the first eight classes of school education cycle.

Teacher- pupils' ratio: refers to the ratio of the number of pupils in a school to the number of teachers in the same school.

Donor: refers to institution, individual, or group giving support in form of any kind.

Public school: government funded schools

Universal primary education: refers to compulsory schooling for pupils in classes 1-8 in a primary cycle.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides details on the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, basic assumptions of the study and definitions of significant terms.

Chapter two reviews the literature related to the overview on the FPE, rationale of FPE, availability of teaching and learning resources, management of FPE, adequacy of teachers, theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Chapter three describes the research methodology. It entails the research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques.

Chapter four focuses on data analysis and presentation of findings of the study on the impact of free schooling on quality of education. Chapter five presents the summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is organized into six sub topics. These include the overview of FPE, rationale of FPE, funding of FPE, availability of teaching and learning resources, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Understanding the challenges facing the implementation of FPE policy was an important aspect of this study. To review the challenges, it was important to look at the history of the education system, the funding by the government and its effect, teacher workload and management of the FPE at the school level. It was also important to review experiences of countries already operating the new policy of FPE programme.

2.2 Overview of Free Primary Education

Initially developed countries laid emphasis on Primary Education in their early stage of development. Denmark for example achieved free primary education by 1814, Sweden 1842 while Japan made successful attempts in 1875 (Alexander, 1992). Most developed Countries have achieved almost a hundred percent literacy levels. The United Nation chapter states that everyone has a right to education and that education is a human right. The World Bank and the international community wanted the government to cut expenditure and to adhere to structural adjustments programme. Coombs (1968) noted that in early sixties most developing countries consisted of mass illiteracy and that priority was to be given to universal primary Education (UPE) The African states, Asia and Latin America have adopted a uniform goal of working towards the attainment of universal Primary Education.

Globally, the quest for Education for All (EFA) began with the universal declaration of human rights adopted in 1948 that declared education as a human right. It aimed at ensuring that

elementary education was made free and compulsory to all children in all nations. This was affirmed again in the Bill of human rights in the 1970'S (EFA Global monitoring Report, 2005). The subsequent declarations on EFA were notably adopted at the world conference on education For All in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. It was noted that to serve the basic needs for all requires more than a commitment to basic education as an expanded vision that surpasses resources levels, institutional infrastructure, curricula and conventional delivery systems, while building on the best practices (World Declaration on EFA, 1990) This was further amplified by the Dakar framework in 2000 and in the millennium Development Goals (MDG) of the same year which reaffirmed the commitment to achieve universal provision and access to Primary schooling and Secondary education should be eliminated by 2015 and gender equality in education should be achieved by 2015 with a focus on ensuring girls full and equal access to basic education of good quality.

Universal Primary Education has been a goal for most countries worldwide. World Bank (2004) notes that when fees were abolished in Malawi (1994) enrolments went up by 51%, in Uganda enrolment went up by 70% in 1996, Cameroon 1999 increased from 88% to 105% while in Tanzania (2001) increased from 57 % to 85% and in Kenya the rates went up by 104% in 2003.

In Nigeria, Universal Primary Education was attained in 1970. There was inadequate preparation done in terms of teaching staff required for the implementation. According to Obunga (1999) , courses were therefore devised for persons who had failed in secondary school or even those who did not complete secondary education to cater for the shortage due to increased enrolment. Mass enrolment in Primary schools brought about many challenges in most countries.

In Uganda (1999), the drive to achieve UPE was seriously threatened by lack of finance, poor pay and lack of housing for teachers. There were classes with as many as 100 pupils. Teacher – Pupil ratio was 1:300 because of failure to recruit teachers.

Massive enrolment in Primary schools was characterized by high dropout rates due to unfriendly learning environments, poverty levels, child labour and impact of HIV/Aids (Ayieke, 2005) Other factors affecting enrolment include limited number of schools, absence of female teachers and failure to provide separate toilet for students(World Bank, 2004). The current FPE programme suffers from high rates of wastage through drop outs and repetitions (GOK, 2005)

The aim of FPE programme was to provide more school opportunities, especially to the poor communities. The argument was that payment of school fees tended to prevent a large number of children from attending school. According to Eiseman and Schurze (1991), Kenya abolished tuition charges at Primary schools in the 1970s. The other non tuition costs associated with education remained the responsibility of parents with the adoption of structural Adjustment programmes (SAPs) in the mid 1980s, user fees were introduced and applied to infrastructure development(Adams and Hartlet). 1996).

In Kenya, the newly elected National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government of President Mwai Kibaki began providing FPE in keeping with its election platform promise to eliminate user fees in primary schools as of January 2003. According to Raja and Burret (2004) Providing Universal basis education has proven to be considerably more challenging than was initially anticipated despite general programs. Mukundi (2004) indicated that in spite of the government's implementation of the new policy of FPE, children of school going age continue to be denied access and participation.

2.3 Free Primary Education in Africa

The school fee abolition initiative seeks to accelerate progress towards quality education for all children by supporting policies that remove cost barriers, preventing parents from enrolling and maintaining their children at school. This was launched by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank in 2005 as an instrument to ensure that existing education for all (EFA) commitments were met. Its main objectives are to provide guidance and support to countries planning to abolish school fees with respect to the developments and implementation of such policies. In many countries in Africa efforts to reduce or abolish school fees were initiated but were abandoned or reversed under pressure of an economic crisis.

In Ghana, for instance, primary school fees were first abolished in 1961, while in Kenya and Tanzania, fee abolition policies were introduced in 1974. These policies had a significant impact on enrolment and resulted in rapid gains toward the goal of universal primary education. Overtime, the policies were largely abandoned and many of the early gains reversed.

Many countries have reintroduced fee abolition policies during the past decade as part of the renewed international effort to achieve UPE by 2015. Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are at a risk of not reaching universal primary school completion by 2015.

The 2008 EFA Global Monitoring Report, for instance, lists Sao Tome and Principe, the Seychelles and Tanzania as the only countries to achieve the goal in 2005. In addition other countries like Benin, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi and Zambia are likely to achieve the goal by 2015. Between 1960 and 1980, the regions gross enrolment rate grew from 45 per cent to 50 percent and enrollment by some 260 percent, a level of growth not experienced by any other region at any time. The gross enrollment rate declined from 80 percent in 1980 to 72 percent in 1992 and did not regain its 1980 level until 2000. The 70 percent increase in enrolment during the 1980 -2000 period barely matched the growth in the primary school age population during

the same 20 year period, leaving the gross enrolment rate unchanged. A comparison between the two periods shows that progress in sub-Saharan Africa towards the target of universal primary education by 1980, agreed on in Addis Ababa in 1961 by African political leaders, was far greater than the progress made toward the subsequent target of UPE by 2000, agreed on in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990. While UPE was not attained by 1980, the number of students enrolled that year exceeded the enrolment target by 24 per cent.

Significant enrollment growth in the region, resulting from rapid increase in access resumed in the late 1990s at a level not since the 1970s. The gross enrollment rate reached 97 percent in the school year ending in 2005 up from 80 per cent in 1999. The main question about education development in Sub-Saharan Africa (including at the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum) has been how to address education stagnation. To be successful, fee abolition must be accompanied by a number of other reforms. These reforms must ensure that free abolition is financially sustainably over time, that it benefits reach the most vulnerable groups and that it preserves and improves education quality.

As soon as UPE had been launched, the situation of the countries in Africa changed for the worse, with a serious economic crisis reflecting downturn in the world economy, exacerbated in Tanzania case by the strain of the Uganda war. An early response to the economic difficulties was the decision to ask parents to contribute 20 shillings per school child which was not easy to collect. It was later increased to 100 shillings in 1985, later in 1995, primary school tuition fees were formally reintroduced throughout the 1980's and 1990's the economic crisis hit the education system hard. Primary schools have experienced a difficult time in trying to maintain coverage and standard.

In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa in 2006, an average, more than 90 per cent of children enter school, two-thirds of whom reach the end of the primary cycle. Of these, at least half fail to master the expected basic skills. Those who do not enter school dropout and those who do not acquire basic skills are increasingly children who are the most vulnerable from an economic and social point of view. They are predominantly from poor rural families, the majorities are girls, many are disabled and an increasing number are orphans because of the impact of civil strife and HIV/ AIDS. Abolition of fees was to ensure that no child would be denied access to school because of an inability to pay. The fees that were abolished had covered most of the non salary financing available at the school level.

Countries like Kenya, Ethiopia, and Malawi followed a “big bang” approach whereby fee abolition was announced with little prior planning. In Malawi there was a four-month planning period and in Ethiopia, it took about a year before the policy announcement was transmitted proactively to schools for implementation. Ghana and Mozambique did some prior testing of provision of support to schools before scaling up fee abolition to all primary schools.

The fee abolition in most African countries was generally an electoral promise and had strong support at highest political level in all countries. The government provided grants to replace materials purchased by fees such as the text books and schools supplies. Grant size per pupil varied considerably among the African countries. It was highest in Kenya compared to Malawi and Ethiopia. Pre-existing policies stipulated supply of free text books costs. Grants were below the recommended level because of a shortage of resources.

Mozambique followed a phased implementation on both the size and the scope of the grant increased over time. In Uganda Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced in January 1997. Education here was seen as an important foundation of the poverty eradication action plan.

Tuition fees were abolished for 6 – 12 years old and this was intended to apply to a maximum of four children per family. In addition, disabled and orphaned children were to be given special consideration. In practice, it was applied virtually to all children in this age group. Primary enrolment in 1996 was 2.7 million, by 2002; this had surged to 7.2 million pupils. Gross enrolment in 1995 was 74.3 per cent and by 2001, it had reached 135.8 per cent indicative of the considerable number of over and under age pupils enrolled. Not enrolled in the same year was 109.5 per cent. UPE had been achieved. The commitment to UPE can be seen in the budget hikes given to education. The government of Uganda did not attempt to introduce free primary education in the first instance. Most of its resources went to school construction, instructional materials and teachers' recruitment and recruitment expenditure.

In Zambia, the government introduced universal primary education in 2002 from grades 1 – 7. All users' fees were abolished and uniforms were no longer compulsory. Schools would raise funds but no child could be denied access to school on account of costs. During the 1990's, the number of teachers had declined, due to both HIV/AIDS and policy of not recruiting untrained teachers. Pupil teacher ratios had worsened from 37:1 in 1996 to 45:1 in 1998 and 47:1 in 1990's from 70.4 per cent in 1996 to 65.1 percent in 2001. Basic education share of the education budget increased to 56% in year 2000. Efforts are being made to overcome the critical shortage of education materials particularly a shortage of text books. Reliance on parents to find these costs has moved to government, parents are still required to contribute to the schools physical infrastructure and their maintenance. As access expands, the balancing act of Government will become trickier as it will need to meet parental demands for quality while intake improves.

Zimbabwe attempted to catch up on its lost educational progress with other countries which had attained political independence earlier on. Its enrolment doubled in only two years in the early

1980's. Zimbabwe expanded its educational systems. One third of its new schools became non-viable within the first five years of independence.

In Lesotho its constitution states that primary education should be free and compulsory however fees were high and enrolments were low. The minister of education was about to introduce universal primary education in 1993 when political instability made the step impossible. Church control of the education system and an unstable political environment prevented the government from exercising clear leadership on the issue. After political instability was restored through new elections, the new prime minister, who was the former minister of education, championed the cause, announcing in April 1999 that primary education would be free. The ministry had only eight months to develop policy and plan implementation. The government reimburses schools directly for book rental fees, stationery, building maintenance and meals with the money paid directly to the schools. Teacher's salaries, material and other input covered by the government are paid only to schools that agree not to demand fees from parents. Churches wishing to raise fees from parents can opt out of the free primary education system however; few schools can afford to do so.

In Namibia constitution, the right to equitable access to education was constitutionally guaranteed. It states that all persons shall have right to education, primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities and children should not be allowed to leave school until they have completed their primary education or have attained the age of sixteen. This constitutional provision and other legislations in Namibia paved the way for free universal primary education. The government's first commitment is to provide universal basic education. Despite the well crafted legislations and constitution provision the primary schools continued to charge school fees as from 1990 to 2012. Many learners were denied access to

primary education on basis of inability to pay school fees. The Namibia government decided to fast track the implementation of the Article 20 of its constitution, to implement universal primary education as from January 2013. This compels learners to attend primary education without paying school fees from grade 0 – 7 in all public schools. These developments practically signify the genesis of free primary education in the country.

In Nigeria the desire for high standard and good quality primary education for every child led to the introduction of the universal basic education (UBE) (UNESCO 2001). In 1999 president Obasanjo launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) as a strategy to bring quality education to every child. Poor management of information leads to conflicting statistics about the number of primary schools. One source put it at 54, 434 public primary schools, another source from school census put the number at 87,941, and an enrollment figure of 24, 422918 out of which males are 13,302,262 (55%) while female figure is 11,120,649 (45%), indicating gender imbalance of (83.6%). The inability of the country to meet the target set, according to Omotayo, Inebereme and Maduewesi (2008) include: financial problems, incompetent teachers, overcrowded classrooms, narrow curriculum content, high rate of drop outs and lack of quality control. These problems then led to decline in standard at all levels of education.

In Tanzania, free primary education was announced in 2001, largely as part of the poverty reduction strategic plan, having been incorporated into the education sector developments programmed, which has provided the framework for partnership with the international development community since its appraisal in 1999. In 2001, the primary education development plan (PEDP) was launched, and tuition fee and other mandatory cash contribution to schools were abolished. This was to ensure that children, especially from poor families, had access to primary school education. The plan PEDP is a five year effort (2002 – 2006) to improve both

educational quality and access in standards 1 -7 through the mechanisms outlined above in the joint staff assessment. The impact of FPE was adverse, there were severe shortages of classrooms, desks, instructional materials and teachers housing as well as insufficient numbers of teachers to cater for the school aged population. The government set aside 25% of its recurrent budget for education of which 62% is for primary education.

The World Bank, the EU, the Netherlands, SIDA, JICA are all contributing to the primary education subsector. It is recognized that primary education is insufficient in and of itself and that for it to fulfill its macro, poverty-alleviation purpose, it is important that it be relevant and include practical skills. It requires recruiting and upgrading teachers, monitoring and supervising their professional development, appropriate use of capitalization and development grants, school and financial management training as well as empowerment of school committees, to alleviate the adverse effects of FPE on the management of the primary schools.

2.4 Free Primary School Education in Kenya

Since independent in 1963, the Kenya government has pursued policies aimed at expanding and improving the quality of education. The most significant government reports and commissions include The Ominde report of 1964, The Gachathi report of 1976, Mackay report of 1981, Kamunge report of 1988, and the Koech report of 2000. The initial reports aimed at policies fostering national unity and creation of sufficient human capital and were adopted from the colonial government. The reports in the 1980's were more focused on redefining education to foster national unity, social, economic, and cultural aspiration of Kenyans.

The abolition of school fees in standards 1 – 4 in 1978 and in standard 5 – 7 in 1987 are some of the key indicators of the government's commitment to providing UPE to the children. Increased enrollment in subsequent years, however, constrained the government's ability to fully meet the

needs of schools and pupils. As a result of cost sharing programmed was reintroduced. The cost sharing programmed shifted the entire burden of book provision to the parent when the government abolished Kenya school equipment scheme (KCSE) in 1989.

In 2002, NARC Government implemented the FPE policy, which was campaign pledge to the voters. The National Rainbow Coalition Party (NARC) made the provision of free primary education (FPE) part of its election manifesto. It introduced FPE in 2003 and this resulted to massive enrollment in public primary schools. Over aged children were enrolled since there was no age restriction and this brought congestion in schools. It was presumed that FPE would guarantee access to education, equity, quality and relevance. The government should provide the necessary facilities and resources to enable Kenyans to join and remain in school and complete the primary school education. In 2003, the major government task was to provide public primary schools with basic learning and teaching materials like chalk and text books and abolish all kinds of fees levied and charges that had kept a large number of children out of school.

The government channeled funds to individual schools through the district. The money disbursed was in accordance to the number of pupils in the schools. An individual pupil was entitled to a total of ksh.1020 per child per annum. The money was used for the purchase of teaching and learning materials, for operations of general purpose and maintenance. The funding was strongly supported by donors. This has been quite challenging with the dwindling economic performances and the donor funding temporally. This is also worsened by the fact that, FPE was pursued as a matter of political expediency and was not adequately planned, the consequences being adverse impact on the management of primary school. This in turn leads to drop out and falling educational quality.

While FPE has increased participation in primary education, it has at the same time created considerable problems. For instance, the high influx of new pupils in public primary schools has led to congestion in classrooms. There is a high demand for teachers, stationery, equipment and physical facilities in the public primary schools in the country. The teacher – learner ratio has increased from 1:40 pupils per class to 1:60-90 pupils per class. An increased pupil population poses serious challenges to classroom interactions. The teacher may not be able to interact with individual learners and mark the assignments where there is a large class.

Economic values attached to education have made it so popular that the government declared free universal primary school education soon after political independence. It appears that the government interpretation of free education is that nobody is required to pay fees for education. There are still uneducated Kenyans since their parents took the option of not taking their children for formal schooling. Other alternative ways of collecting money from parents were substituted for “school fees” using different concepts like building fund, activity money among many others. To demonstrate the government’s seriousness regarding the promotion of social equity, bursaries are set aside to be offered to children from poor families. However, due to limited resources the bursaries offered are always inadequate.

The government of Kenya has emphasized the importance of education, recognizing the close links between poverty alleviation, economic growth and human development. The Kenya education sector support programme (ESSP) , a five year investment programme, aims at delivering quality equitable education and training to all Kenyans as guided by the board principles stipulated in the economic recovery strategy (ERS), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for all (EFA).

2.5 Rationale of Free Primary Education

The rationale of FPE is all inclusive. After attaining independence in 1963, the prioritization of the education policies in Kenya was driven by the manpower needs of the nation. The government identified ignorance and illiteracy as major problems and education was meant to tackle these problems. This meant access to Primary education. Individuals who had completed secondary education secured many government positions and were considered to be among the Kenyan elite (Oketch.O and Rolleston M. 2007) .Access to primary schools was Limited by the colonial government and completion further hampered by the policies and compulsory national examinations. Since then, policies have been pursued to facilitate rapid access to those who had been excluded. The overall goal of FPE is to build the human capital capacity through investing in children at an early age. Basic skill not only helps individuals but also have an impact on the income, growth, potential, population and public sector performance.

Economic performance in Kenya has led to rising poverty levels which impact negatively on education performance indicators. By offering FPE, the government is making a link between education and economic development. FPE improves people's ability to shape their lives, strengthening their functioning in society and contributing to their welfare directly. According to Thomas, Daitami, Dhareshwar, Kausffman, Kishar, Lopex and Wang (2000) , Educating women, for example not only increases their income-earning capacity, but also improves their reproductive health, lowers infant and child mortality and benefits both current and future generations. Investing in human capital is therefore crucial for economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental protection. Furthermore, Thomas et al (2000) stated that investing in people improves human rights and social justice which provides direct satisfaction. Mankiw, Romer and Weil (1992) stated that additional years of education per person increase real output or growth rates.FPE programme aimed at providing more school opportunities especially to the

poor communities. The argument was that payment of school fees tended to prevent a large proportion of the children from attending school (centre for Research and Development (CRD) 2004). The FPE programme prohibits public schools from charging fees, and parents are now able to send their children to any public school within a possible range of commuting. Under these circumstances, good-performing public schools have experienced a massive inflow of pupil.

In Tanzania the programme aimed to ensure that no child would be denied the opportunity to participate in education because of poverty, gender, disability or because of lack of school uniform, fees or other contributions or because of lack of school facilities, materials or teachers. Its Primary aim was to increase gross and net enrolment of girls and boys and to improve the quality of Primary education. Several approaches were followed to ensure that the targets would be met. The abolition of school fees and all other mandatory parental contributions was an important component. Recruitment of more teachers, improved teacher training, relation of the uniform requirement and construction of new and rehabilitation of additional classrooms and schools were other elements of the program. The plan is a five-year effort (2002-2006) to improve both educational quality and access in standards 1-7. It is considered by some observers to be the most significant intervention in the primary education sector in the last two decades because of the impressive gains in enrolment, provision of text books and classroom construction that occurred between 2002 and 2006.

In Nigeria FPE was launched in 1999 by President Obasanjo and a strategy and desire to bring high standard and good quality education to every child. However, it faced challenges of poor implementation strategy, management and lack of quality assurance (Omotayo, Ihebereme and Maduwesi (2008) . According to Egwu(2009), other problems facing FPE in Nigeria are: wide

disparity between the expected school enrolment and the actual enrolment which lead to conflicting statistics, financial problems, high drop outs rate and lack of quality control.

2.6 Challenges of Free Primary Education

2.6.1 Teaching and Learning Resources on Quality Education.

Shiundu and Omulando (1992) assert that learning environment should be healthy, safe and protective. This should include adequate water and sanitation facilities access. Basic Education caters for the majority of school age children of 6-13years. This level has been getting declining resources from the total government expenditure, compared to other levels of education. There is inadequate supply of learning and teaching materials such as textbooks, teaching aids and stationery. The bulk of available resources is going to the running of the secretariat at the ministry of education headquarters and in the districts and the teachers' salaries (central Bureau statistics 2004)The government and other stakeholders must provide physical facilities in order to create an environment in which implementation can take place.

Schools have got very poor infrastructure and needs support in capital for development of classrooms and furniture acquisitions. Parents are not supportive in maintaining the school because according to them education is free. Government funding is insufficient and is not able to cater for direct and indirect costs of the schools. Countries that have implemented FPE for example Uganda, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Mauritania are experiencing problems with the funding which has resulted to teacher shortage, inadequate teaching and learning materials (Arcadia Education Features 2003). According to parents, the definition of free education was reduced to “fee free” education (Tomaserski, 2006)

As a result the quality of education has deteriorated considerably as schools committee and head teachers are facing problems supplementing these other costs. They are forced to send children

back home to get school levies. As a result many miss lessons for several weeks and others drop out of school. This has compromised the quality of education.

The head teachers are not able to actively engage the parent and explain what free education means and the role parents should play. Thus there exist a gap between the schools and the parents on matters of funding.

2.6.2 Financial Management of FPE and Quality Education

The free primary Education was received with a lot of enthusiasm. The government of Kenya allocated 56 billion to education. Funds trickled down to school level where the actual implementation of FPE was to take place through the head teachers and stakeholders of the school. The management of finance in education is concerned with the cost of educational sources of income to meet the costs and spending of income in an objective manner (Okumbe 1998). The responsibility of collecting and accounting for the money in the school is upon the school committee. The head teacher however is the accounting manager of the school besides being the secretary to the school committee should be conversant with the principles governing sound financial management.

The Kamunge Report (Government of Kenya 1988) recommended that the school committee should establish sub-committees to guide and support heads of schools in the management of schools. Therefore, the head teachers must be persons with appropriate academic professional qualifications, experience, ability, competence and integrity. They must also have undergone courses in institutional and financial management. The Education Act (1980) further spells out in part that a good record keeping and inventory should show how all physical resources in the possession of the school are acquired, utilized, registered, maintained and expended. Without

these records the head teacher will not provide any documentary proof of any transaction relating to management of school resources.

Financial accounting system should provide a complete history of all transactions to the school committee and information necessary for management and operation of the school. Omar (1996) in the research findings on the administrative training needs of secondary school head teachers reported that accounting procedures, auditing, budget preparations, resource acquisition, purchasing and allocation of resources, investment and emoluments, banking receipts, acquisition of public funds has more to do with training.

Verspoor (2008) argues that increases in public spending will be inadequate to generate increases in education attainment and learning achievement unless accompanied by reforms in that aim at a more efficient use of available resources and find sources of additional funding. Mbugua cited in Chabari (2010) says that one of the duties of the head teachers in Kenya is to develop the school's physical facilities. She argues that in dealing with physical facilities, a head teacher has to bear in mind where to house the educational programme, the population to be served in the facility and ensure that financial resources are readily available for the whole expansion.

Financial management that accompanies the implementation of FPE programme posed new challenges to head teacher. This is because head teachers had no management skills, they had been promoted to the post of headship after serving as teachers.

Misappropriation funds by head teachers have been cited as one of the challenges to the FPE programme. Some head teacher deliberately refuses to buy the required materials; others are accused of diverting the funds to unintended purposes which lead to inadequate learning materials thus decline in quality of education. However, the government started a programme to train head teachers in financial management to curb mismanagement of funds.

2.6.3 Teacher – Pupil Ratio on Quality Education

Teachers' distribution in schools has been a key challenge. This is an area of concern as schools in some areas are overstaffed while others suffer shortage (Republic of Kenya 2001). The then KNUT National chairman' Mr. Nganga says the government needs to employ 60,000 teachers to support the FPE programme because the quality of education is at stake following increased enrolment. However, independent estimate show that 34,000 teachers are needed. While addressing a meeting of donors, the minister for education Prof Saitoti acknowledged the serious shortage of teachers and appreciated the shift by donors from their previous stand on teacher pupil ratio of 1:50 to 1:40.

The rapidly growing number in school brought about an increase in the number of pupils per teacher or per class. As a result wealthy parents especially in urban areas had to transfer their children from public primary schools to private primary schools because of the declining quality of education. In fact, the number of private primary schools increased by approximately 38 percent in the first three years of FPE implementation from 1441 in 2002 to 1985 in 2005.

The acute shortages of teachers and the mass enrolment in schools introduced double shifts where some classes came in the morning and others in the afternoon. Teachers were forced to combine classes for a number of grade or classes. Too few classrooms were available for children thus were forced to learn outside under trees.. There was too much workload for teachers especially in the marking of books where some classes had children of more than one hundred. This contributed to a decline in the quality of education because most of the teachers were not able to complete the syllabus. Overcrowding of children in classes brought poor class control, the teacher was not able to maintain discipline and there were over aged children who had serious indiscipline problems. This posed a major challenge in the quality of education in public primary schools.

2.7 Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review has focused on the rationale of Free Primary education and the many factors that have led to decline of quality education in public primary schools have been cited. The factors cited are similar in most African countries. These factors include, inadequacy of teaching and learning resources, shortage of teachers and poor management by the head teachers. These affect effective implementation of FPE thus decline in the quality of education. These factors have led to decline of quality education globally and they should be addressed to minimize their effect on access, equity, retention and relevance in education.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on two theories namely the goal setting theory developed by Edwin A. Locke and Garry P. Latham and the systems theory. The goal setting theory shows how the field of organizational behavior should progress from sound theoretical foundation to sophisticated research and the actual application of more effective management practice. The theory postulates that if an organization has to succeed in its mission, it has to have goals and objectives which are set and have to be adhered to. The government and all stakeholders should set goals in place and a system of getting feedback to establish whether the goals were achieved or not. This theory ensures that policies are implemented. In order for FPE programme to succeed, the government has to plan to ensure there are adequate teachers, trained head teachers, adequate teaching and learning materials.

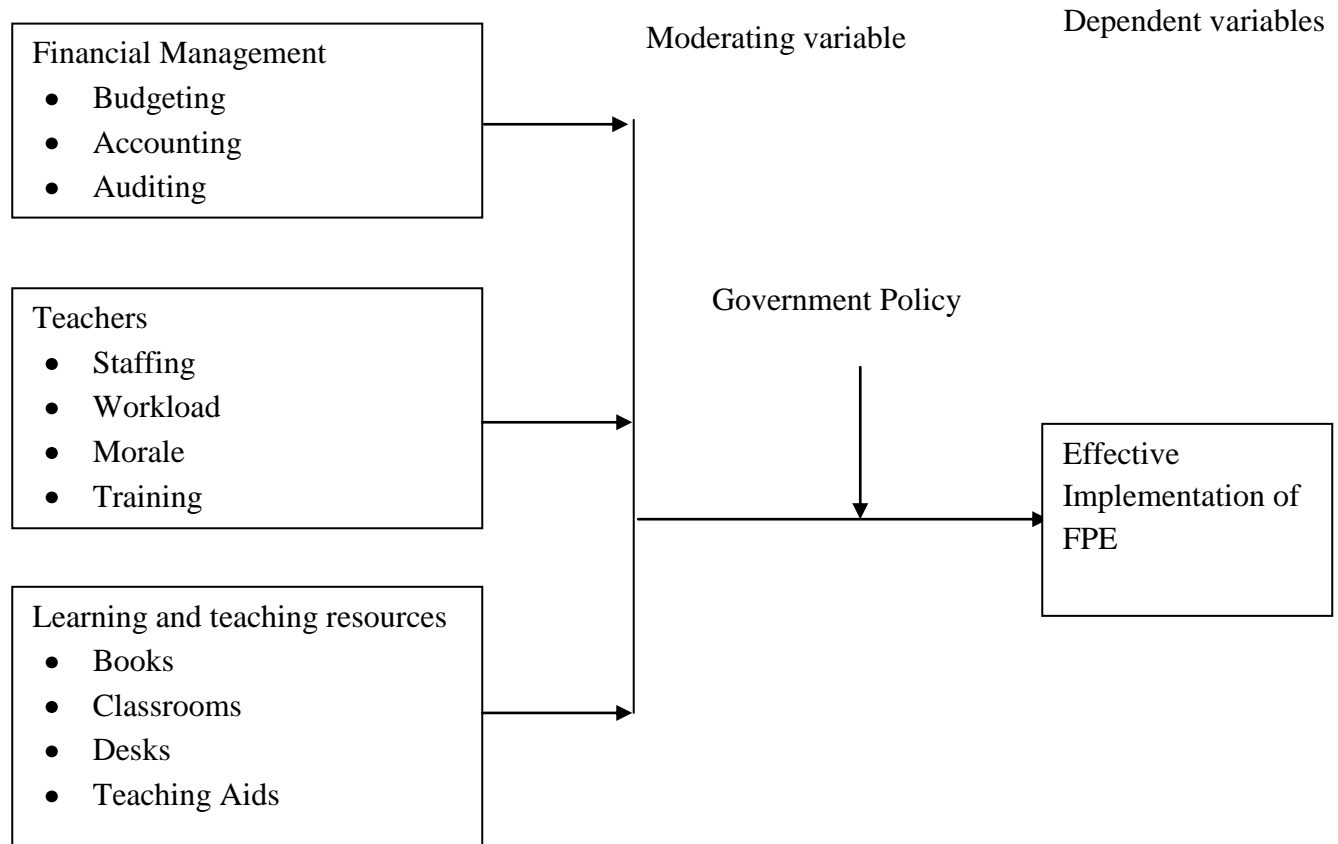
The system theory was developed by Biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy. Little John (1983) defines a system as a set of objects or entities that interrelate with one another to form a whole. System theory is basically concerned with problems of relationships of structures, and of interdependence, rather than with the constant attributes of object. The system theory views an

organization as a social system consisting of individuals who cooperate within a formal framework, drawing resources, people, finance from their environment and putting back into that environment the products they produce or the services they offer.

The systems approach is concerned with both interpersonal and group behavioral aspects leading to a system of cooperation (Koontz, 2001). Plomp and Pelgrum (1993) noted that an educational system is a complex system comprising of subsystems at different levels and at each level, educational decisions are influenced by different actors, for example the school committee, the head teacher, parents, government and other stakeholders. It emphasizes unity and integrity of the organization and focuses on the interaction between its component parts and the interactions with the environment. The implementation of the free primary education should be a concern for all stakeholders at all levels. Free primary education cannot succeed if it does not get support from all corners. It is the success in implementation of free primary Education that will lead to attainment of Education for All and hence Universal Primary Education.

2.9 Conceptual Frame Work.

The study was guided by the following conceptual framework.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology which was used to conduct the study. It entails the research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instrument and data analysis technique.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. According to Best (1970) and Cohen and Manion (1980) surveys can be defined as systematic descriptions of the facts and characteristics of a given population accurately and objectively. A survey can be extensive and cross-sectional, dealing with a relatively and objectively a large number of cases at a particular time. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) gives the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the way things are. Borg and Gall (1989) noted that descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators. The study fit within the provisions of descriptive survey because it can be carried out within a short time frame, as it is cross-sectional and the researcher will collect data, report the way things are without manipulating any variables and it can allow for a variety of data gathering techniques

3.3 Target Population

Target population is a large population from which a sample population is selected (Brinker 1988) Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a population as an entire group of individuals' events or objects having common observable characteristics. Kothari (2004) Target population

is the number of respondents in the total environment of interest to the researcher. The Target population for this study consisted of all the public primary schools in Gachoka division, Mbeere South sub county .According to the statistics from Mbeere South Sub County Education office there are 38 public Primary schools in Gachoka division, Mbeere south sub County. The target population for this study was 38 head teachers from schools in Gachoka Division, Mbeere south sub county, 304 teachers and 3 quality assurance and standards officers in the sub county

3.4 Sample and Sampling

A sample is a small population selected for observation (Best and Kahn 2002) an ideal sample should be large enough to serve as an adequate representation of the population about which the research wishes to generalize and small enough to be selected economically in terms of subject availability and experience in both time and money.

Gay (1992) recommends that when the target population is small (less than 1000 members) a minimum sample of 20% is adequate for educational research. The study used 20 head teachers who were purposively sampled out of the 38. Out of the 20 schools the study used simple random sampling to select 6 teachers from each primary school to make a total of 120 teachers. The study purposively sampled 3 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. This resulted to a sample size of 143 respondents. This forms 20% of the target population, which is in line with Gay's 1992) recommendation.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

Data was collected by the use of questionnaires. Wiersman (1986) asserted that the most suitable instrument for descriptive research is the questionnaire. Questionnaires were used because they present an even stimulus potential to large numbers of people simultaneously and provide the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaires give

respondents freedom to express their views or opinions and also to make suggestion. There were two types of questionnaires, one for the head teacher, and the other for the teachers. Each questionnaire had two sections; the first was to establish the background information about the teacher, the head teacher or the school. The other section was to establish information related to the challenges faced in the effective implementation of FPE in relation to adequacy of teaching and learning resources, teacher workload and financial management.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

Validity according to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences based on research results. It is the ability of the instruments to measure what it purports to measure. The items in the questionnaire were tested for content validity and reliability. To test for content validity, the items were ordered from general to specific and were related to the research questions. A pilot study was carried out prior to the actual study consisting of a sample of 6 head teachers and 24 teachers, giving a total of 30 cases, which is the minimum number of cases required for conducting statistical analysis as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) This was to ascertain the reliability and validity of the instrument and to improve the instruments and procedures.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability is the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates (Best and Kahn 2002). Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. To test reliability of the instruments, the researcher employed split half reliability method. Koul (1994) states that the split half method can be used to establish internal consistency during pre-testing. The test was divided into two halves of even and odd numbered items. These were administered

to 1 % of the sample population. Results from one half were compared to the results from the other half. From the reliability of half the test self correlation of the whole test were then moderated using Brown correlation formula to obtain a correlation co-efficient. Mugenda and Mugenda asserts that a high co-efficient implies that the items in the instruments correlate highly among themselves and there is a consistency among the items measuring the concept of interest.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

A research permit was obtained from the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation after approval by the University. A copy of research permit was presented to the District Education officer for Mbeere South Sub County. The researcher visited the selected schools and administered the questionnaires to the head teachers and the teachers. Face to face interviews were done with the quality assurance and standards officer of Mbeere South Sub County.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

After data collection, the questionnaires were checked for incompleteness. The completed questionnaires were then coded for analysis. Conclusive data analysis was done using descriptive statistical such as percentages and frequencies. Detailed description and use of appropriate tables and figures was employed where necessary. The first section of the questionnaire which solicited for demographic information of the respondents was analyzed and the second part, which answered the research questions were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The results of data analysis were presented using frequency distribution tables and bar graphs.

3.9.1 Ethical Issues

Consent and confidentiality was valued during the entire duration of this study. This is because the study touched on topical issues on FPE and Quality Education. The researcher assured respondent that all data gathered and the study will be protected from unauthorized access

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data and presentation of findings of the study on the impact of free schooling on quality of education in public primary schools in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South sub county Kenya. It also presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their work experience. It presents data on effect of availability of learning and teaching resources on implementation of free primary education, effects of teacher pupil ratio and effect of management on the implementation of FPE.

4.2 Demographic Data

The study collected data from twenty public primary schools head teachers, one hundred and twenty teachers in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County and three Quality assurance and Standards Officers in Mbeere South Sub County.

The study sought demographic data of the respondents including gender, level of education and work experience.

Table 4.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Male		Female		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Head teachers	16	80	4	20	100
Teachers	48	40	72	60	100
Education officers	2	67	1	33	100
Total	66		77		143

According to the findings of the study out, of the 20 head teachers, 16 (80%) were males, 4 (20%) were females. On the other hand out of the 120 teachers 48 (40%) were males while 72 (60%) were females. This is because Gachoka Division is a potential area near the town where most of the female teachers are posted

4.3 The study sought to find out the education levels of head teachers and teachers in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South District.

Table 4.3 Cross tabulation on level of education of respondents

Level of education	Head teachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary school	1	5	2	1.7
Tertiary college	14	70	75	62.5
University degree	3	15	39	32.5
Post graduate	2	10	4	3.3
Total	20	100	120	100

The findings of the study in Table 4.3 shows education qualification of the respondents. Out of the 20 head teachers sampled 1 (5%) had secondary school education, 14 (70%) had tertiary education, 3(15%) had university degree while 2 (10%) had post graduate education. Out of the

120 teachers sampled, 2 (1.7%) had secondary education, 75 (62.5%) had tertiary education, 39 (32.2%) had university degree while 4 (3.3%) had a post graduate degree. The head teachers require adequate experience and skills to influence quality of service delivery at the school level. The knowledge the head teachers have should support teachers in implementing successful school reforms like free schooling. Such skills can be attained through formal training. The head teachers in the sampled schools had the appropriate qualification and training to impart the required skill and achievement levels in school management. This is because most of them had gone through college and university education.

4.4 The researcher sought information on work experience of respondents

Table 4.4 Distribution of work experience of respondents

Period	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 3 years	28	20
3 – 5 years	36	25.7
5 – 7 years	30	21.4
Over 7 years	46	32.9
Total	140	100

According to Table 4.4, 28(20%) respondents had worked for less than 3 years, 36 (25.7%) had worked for 3-5years, 30 (21.4%) had worked for 5 – 7 years while 46 (32.9%) had worked for more than 7 years. This shows they had enough experience in the implementation of free primary education and could have handled the challenges which they experienced by giving useful insights.

4.5 The effects of availability of learning and teaching resources on the implementation of FPE in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub County.

One of the objectives was on the adequacy of teaching and learning resources. To determine this, the teachers were asked to indicate whether the learning and teaching resources for free primary education in Gachoka division were adequate, enough or inadequate. Table 4.5 shows the findings:

Table 4.5 Adequacy of teaching and learning resources.

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate	24	17.1
Enough	30	21.5
Inadequate	86	61.4
Total	140	100

Table 4.5 shows majority of the teachers 86 (61.4%) indicated that teaching and learning resource were inadequate, 30 (21.5%) indicated the teaching and learning resources were adequate while 24 (17.1%) indicated that the teaching and learning resources were inadequate.

Teachers reported that the Ministry of Education was responsible in the provision of teaching and learning resources in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. Teachers reported the text books and other learning materials like desks and classrooms were inadequate. Shortage of these resources could compromise the quality of primary education in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. This is because the inadequacy of learning and teaching resources could make it difficult for head teachers and teachers to perform their administrative and teaching

functions effectively. The quality assurance and standards officers noted that free schooling had affected quality of education in public primary schools because of the rise in enrolment which led to overcrowding of classes and inadequate learning and teaching resources thus decline on quality education.

4.6 Effects of teacher pupil ratio on the implementation of FPE

The researcher sought information on the influence of teacher- pupil ration on quality education.

This was to find out whether there is overcrowding in the classrooms.

Table 4.6 Distribution of the pupils’ population per class

Status	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 pupils	14	10
31-40 pupils	52	37.1
40 – 50 pupils	36	25.7
Over 50 pupils	38	27.2
Total	140	100

The Table 4.6 shows 14 (10%) of the primary schools in Gachoka Division had 20-30 pupils per class, 52(37.1%) had 31 -40 pupils per class, 36 (27.7%) had 40 – 50 pupils per class while 38(27.2%) had over 50 pupils per class. This shows most of the primary schools had a high enrolment levels in class. This can be attributed to the introduction of free schooling which brought massive enrollment. This would be a problem where teaching and learning

materials were inadequate. Staffing of teachers was also not increased to cope with the massive enrollment. Under these circumstances it is difficult for the teacher to monitor and interact with learners. One of the quality assurance and standards officer noted that free primary education meant more pupils gaining access to basic education but it affected the quality of education.

4.7 Attention to pupils during lessons

Teachers and the head teachers were asked whether they give much attention to pupils during the lesson. Their responses were as shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Attention to pupils during lessons

Status	Frequency	percentage
YES	38	27.1
NO	102	72.9
TOTAL	140	100

Table 4.7 shows 102 (72.9%) of the respondent said that they did not have close attention to the pupils due to high enrollment number per class, while 38 (27.1%) said they were able to attend to all the pupils. This shows that most of the schools in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County had over crowded classrooms which affected the effectiveness of the teacher thus affecting the quality of education. Attention was mostly given to brighter pupils while weaker pupils were left behind (UNESCO 2005)A study carried out in Bungoma East District indicated

that inability of the teachers to give individualized attention to show learners was one of the greatest impact of FPE on teachers performance in delivering the curriculum (Mutua et al 2010) large classes leads to teachers inability to provide attention to individual pupils, this is also the case in this study

4.8 Effects of teachers pupils ratio on the implementaton of FPE

The third objective of the study sought to find out the influence of teachers pupil ratio on quality education. Teaching resources is the locus of classroom instructional activity and curriculum delivery. Teachers are the front line service providers in education (MOE, 1999). Delivery of quality education is hence, critically dependent on having a sufficient supply of appropriately trained and motivated teachers. How teachers are deployed also impact on equity and learning outcomes. One of the objectives was on the adequacy of staff in the public primary schools.

Table 4.8 Adequacy of teachers

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate	8	40
Inadequate	12	60
Total	20	100

Table 4.8 shows most of the primary schools in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County 12 schools (60%) had inadequate staffing while 8(40%) schools had no problem with the staffing. This adequate staff could probably be in schools within the potential areas where many teachers reside due to availability of resources and other socia amenities. In the Kenya vision 2030

document, it is proposed that an additional 28000 teachers be recruited under its flagship project by 2012 to address the shortage.

This was an indication that the number of teachers did not match the increased enrolment occasioned by free primary education. The quality assurance and the standard officer was asked how they deal with the shortage of teachers to ensure that the standards of education are maintained and pupils benefit from FPE. He said that they encourage the head teachers to partner with parents to employ teachers on contract basis. A much larger teacher workforce needed to respond to the burgeoning class sizes, this demand is rarely met. This has resulted to decline on quality education.

4.9 Marking of pupils written assignment

An item in the questionnaire was developed to seek information on whether the teachers check the students work with ease.

Table 4.9 Marking of pupils assignments

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Marked by teachers	75	62.5
Marked with the help of pupils	40	33.3
Marked by both	5	4.2
Total	120	100

As presented in Table 4.9, only 62.5% of the respondents reported that the assignments are marked by the teachers themselves, 33.3% of the respondents reported that marking is done with

the help of the pupils while 42% of the respondents reported they use both teachers and pupils to mark the assignments.

A study carried out in Bungoma East District (Mutua et al 2010) whose findings agreed with the findings of this study established that teachers' being unable to mark pupil's assignments in time was one of the major challenges in FPE. Following the implementation of FPE the number of pupils was quite high in most of the schools making the marking of assignments very difficult since there are many exercise books to be marked. This lowers the quality of education.

4.10 Preparedness and Management of FPE on Quality Education

The second objective sought to find out the relationship between head teachers preparedness on financial management and quality education in Gachoka division.

The head teachers were asked to indicate whether they procure for learning and teaching resources according to the Procurement Act.

Table 4.10 Procurement for learning and teaching resources according to the requirements of the Procurement Act.

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	80
No	4	20
Total	20	100

Table 4.10 shows that 16 (80%) head teachers follow the procurement act in acquiring learning and teaching resources for their respective schools, 4 (20%) head teachers admitted that they did not follow the procurement act in acquiring learning and teaching resources. The Quality

Assurance and Standards Officers reported that some of the head teachers had been trained in financial management but some were not. They reported that the school should procure for goods and services according to the requirement of the procurement Act. QASO added that funds were not supposed to be diverted to purchase other materials rather than what it was intended for. As a result there were no enough learning materials thus decline on quality education.

The head teachers were further asked to indicate the extent to which FPE funds were managed without corruption. The findings are shown in table 4.11

Table 4.11 The extent to which FPE funds is managed without corruption.

Status	Frequency	Percentage
No extent	2	10
Small extent	4	20
Moderate extent	6	30
Large extent	8	40
Total	20	100

The table 4.11 shows that 8(40%) of the head teachers indicated that FPE funds is managed without corruption to a large extent, 6 (30%) of the head teachers noted that FPE is managed without corruption to a small extent while 2(10%) of the head teachers reported that FPE funds is

managed without corruption to any extent. The QASO noted that the head teacher and the management committee had not been engaged in training opportunities on management of FPE funds.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study sought to find out the impact of free schooling on quality of education in public primary schools. In chapter one the background was clearly presented. The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of free schooling on the quality of education in public primary schools. Three objectives were developed to guide the study. The objectives were to determine the influence of learning and teaching facilities, to establish the relationship between the preparedness of head teachers on financial management and to establish the influence of teacher pupil ratio on quality education in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. Research questions were derived from the objectives. The results will be significant to the Ministry of Education, policy makers, education officers, head teachers, teachers and other researchers. The study was confined to head teachers, teachers and education officers in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. Literature review was presented under sub topics: overview of FPE, rationale of FPE and Challenges of FPE. Chapter two winds up by presenting the theoretical and conceptual framework.

In chapter three the research methodology was presented. The study was conducted using descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. The targeted population of the study was 38 head teachers, 304 teachers and quality

assurance and standards officer in the sub county. Simple random sampling was used to select 6 teachers from 20schools and 20head teachers out of the 30 who were purposively sampled. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used for data collection. Validity of the instruments was ensured through expert judgment of faculty members and supervisors.

A research permit was received from the National Council of Science and Technology, and the researcher administered the instruments to all the respondents. The research findings were coded and analyzed using SPSS 21. The research findings were presented in frequency tables, percentages and figures. The study found out that increased enrollment, inadequacy of teacher, inadequate of teaching and learning resources and mismanagement of FPE funds were the major impact of free schooling on quality education.

5.3 Summary of the major findings

The study found out that the teaching and learning resources were inadequate in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub-county. The shortage of these learning resources like desks, text books and classrooms made it difficult for teaching and learning activities to function effectively, this therefore led to decline of quality education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub-county. The study also found that there was inadequacy in staffing and teachers were not able to pay enough attention to pupils because the classrooms had high enrollment. This therefore compromised the quality of primary education in Gachoka Division, Mbeere South Sub-county. The study also found that the head teachers managed learning and teaching resources without corruption but they had not been engaged in management training to handle FPE funds.

5.4 Conclusions

A key finding of the study is that most of the head teachers and teachers (61.4%) described the availability of learning resources as inadequate. The study further established that 21.5% of the

head teachers and teachers described the availability of learning resources as enough. The results also showed that according to (17.1%) of the respondents, the resources were adequate. The study established that the availability of teaching and learning resources influenced the implementation of FPE to some extent as lack of some materials made it difficult for the learning process to continue smoothly thus decline of quality education. Another key finding of the study was that 56.7% of the schools had inadequate staffing while 43.3% had adequate staffing. The schools that had adequate teachers were those in potential areas but those in the interior had inadequate teachers. This made it difficult for teachers to check and mark the assignments on time therefore they were helped by pupils on marking (33.3%). This has led to decline on quality education.

Another key finding was in the area of management of funds 80% of the head teachers followed the procurement Act in acquiring learning and teaching resources while 20% did not follow the procurement Act. They agreed that availability of learning and teaching resources influences the implementation of FPE. This explains the importance of learning and teaching resources and thus the need to avail such resources for effective teaching and learning in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County. The study further found out that 40% of the head teachers managed FPE funds without corruption to a large extent, 30% to a moderate extent, 20% to a small extent and 10% of the head teachers managed FPE funds without corruption to no extent.

5.5 Recommendations

The study established there is need for the government to employ more teachers in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County to reduce the public-teacher ratio in pupil primary schools. Each teacher should be allocated to sizeable class which she or he is able to monitor and manage.

The study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should contribute more funds towards purchasing of teaching and learning materials for effective learning. There is need for head teachers to mobilize the community to pull resources together to help the government in building more facilities. The study also recommends that the management of school funds should be handled by skilled and trained members of committee therefore the government should come up with more training courses for the management team.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests that similar studies should be replicated in other parts of the country to compare with the findings in Gachoka division, Mbeere South Sub County.

The study suggests that further studies should be done on other factors affecting the implementation of FPE apart from the ones looked at in this study of adequacy of teaching and learning resources, adequacy of teachers and management of funds.

Further research needs to be carried out on the sustainability of the FPE policy and on the effects of the negative impact of FPE on performance in National Examination.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION,

P. O. BOX 30197-00100,

NAIROBI

DATE: _____

Dear Respondent,

REF: FILLING OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Master of Educational Foundation student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on the impact of free schooling on the quality of education in public Primary Schools.

Since you are directly involved, your cooperation and honest responses are important. All your responses will be treated with outmost confidence.

Thank you very much for your time.

Yours faithfully

PAMELA MUTHONI NDEGE

Other (specify)_____

5. How long have you been in the present station of work?

Less than 3 years () 3-5 years () 5-7 years ()

Over 7 years ()

6. What is the population of the pupils in your school?

Less than 500 () 500- 1000 () Over 1000 ()

Section Two: Effect of Availability of Learning and Teaching Resources on Implementation of FPE

7. How would you describe the availability of learning resources for free primary education in Gachoka Division?

Adequate () Enough () Inadequate ()

8. Who is responsible for the provision of the learning resources in your region?

Ministry of Education ()

Non Governmental Organization ()

Any other (specify) _____

9. State the extent to which you agree with the following statements with regard to learning materials on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree

Learning materials	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teaching and learning materials readily available					
Government provides all the learning resources					
The school has enough teaching and learning materials					
The parents are forced to provide teaching and learning materials due to insufficiency					

Section Three: Effect of Teacher Pupil Ratio on the Implementation of FPE

10. How many streams are there per class in your school?

One () Two ()

Three () Four () Five () More than five ()

11. On average how many pupils are there per class?

20-30 pupils () 31- 40 pupils ()

40-50 pupils () Over 50 pupils ()

12. How many teachers are there in the school? _____

13. Are you able to give the pupils the much attention during lessons? Yes () No. ()

14. How is marking of written assignment done?

Marked by teachers () Marked by both ()

Marked with the help of pupils ()

15. Explain how the teacher-student ratio has affected the implementation of FPE? _____

Section Four: Effect of Management on the Implementation of FPE

16. To what extent is the management of FPE effective?

No extent () small extent ()

Moderate extent () Large extent ()

Very large extent ()

17. To what extent is the FPE funds managed without corruption?

No extent () small extent ()

Moderate extent () Large extent ()

Very large extent ()

18. Does the school procure for goods and services according to the requirement of the procurement Act? Yes () No ()

19. Explain your answer _____

20. In your opinion has the management influenced the FPE performance in your school? _____

Other (specify)_____

5. How long have you been in the present station of work?

Less than 3 years () 3-5 years () 5-7 years ()

Over 7 years ()

6. What is the population of the pupils in your school?

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Non Governmental Organization ()

Any other (specify) _____

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13. Are you able to give the pupils the much attention during lessons? Yes () No. ()

14. How are the assignments marked? by teachers () with the help of pupils ()

By both ()

15. Explain how the teacher-student ratio has affected the implementation of FPE? _____

Section Four: Effect of Management on the Implementation of FPE

16. To what extent is the management of FPE effective?

No extent () small extent ()

Moderate extent () Large extent ()

Very large extent ()

17. To what extent is the FPE funds managed without corruption?

No extent () small extent ()

Moderate extent () Large extent ()

Very large extent ()

18. Does the school procure for goods and services according to the requirement of the procurement Act? Yes () No ()

19. Explain your answer _____

20. In your opinion has the management influenced the FPE performance in your school? _____

**APPENDIX 4:INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
STANDARDS OFFICERS**

1. What is FPE?

2. a) Has FPE affected quality education?
b) Explain your answer

3. How has teacher – student ratio affected quality education.

- 4 a) Do you think head teacher have been prepared adequately to manage FPE Funds
b) Explain your answer.

5. What do you think can be done to improve quality of education?