

# Effects of Free Primary Education on the Quality of Education in Public Primary Schools in Kanduyi Sub-County of Bungoma County, Kenya

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of free primary education on the quality of education in public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-county, Bungoma County. While free primary education has increased participation, it is being viewed as having affected the quality of education in public primary schools. The study examined the effects of enrolment, facilities and human resources due to free primary education on quality of education. The research adopted a descriptive survey because it was concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular group. The research used stratified random sampling by dividing the population into a number of groups of strata, where the members of the group shared a particular characteristic or characteristics. The target population included 30 head teachers, 164 teachers, 270 pupils. The sample was based on 30% the number of members in each group. The researcher used questionnaires, interview schedule and documentary analysis to collect data. The questionnaire was the main instrument of primary data collection. The researcher randomly picked 2 head teachers, 10 teachers and 20 pupils who participated in the pilot study. These subjects were however omitted from the final research. Both construct and content validity were applied in this study to ensure that the dimensions that were being measured by the instrument of data collection adequately covered what was intended. In order to test reliability, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires before undertaking the actual research, and a 0.74 reliability coefficient was obtained. Primary data was collected using open ended and closed ended questionnaires and this data was supplemented by secondary data. The data was then analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively by first data coding, error checking and pre-analytical computer check. On a 5-point Likert scale, the relevant variables' dimensions were processed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20 computer software. This study found that education management should focus attention on strategies to increase enrolment of learners in each school in order to make FPE a success, communities need to be sensitized on the need to enroll children in FPE through offering support to ECDE to prepare the pupils going into primary level, and large numbers of pupils in classroom is responsible for the poor performance in Kanduyi Sub-County. It is there recommended that the government should take an active role in the implementation of the FPE program to ensure adequate enrollment. The government should review its policy on FPE so as to allow communities to supplement its effort in pursuit of effective impact and successful delivery FPE programme. It is therefore recommended that the government should take an active role in the provision of necessary funds, equipment and manpower if FPE programme has to succeed. The inferences drawn from this study will assist stakeholders in improving the quality of implementation of FPE by appropriately controlling the factors that affect quality of education. The data was analyzed using a descriptive statistical method, guided by the statistical packages of social science.

**Keywords:** free primary education, quality of education, implementation

## Background of the Study

Education is widely seen as one of the most promising paths for individuals to realize better, more productive lives and as one of the primary drivers of national economic development. The citizens and the government of Kenya have invested heavily in improving both the access and quality of education, in an effort to realize the promise of education as well as to achieve the education-related Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2030. In 2000, prior to FPE, the gross enrolment rate in primary school was 87%. However, the introduction of FPE led to a surge in enrolment, pushing the gross enrolment rate to just over 100% (World Bank, 2004).

Many countries significantly expanded access to primary education during the 1990s, but the building of new schools has often not kept pace with the increase in the student population. In these cases, schools have often had to expand class sizes, as well as the ratio of students to teachers, to accommodate large numbers of new students. A UNICEF/UNESCO survey conducted in 1995 in 14 least developed countries found that class sizes ranged from fewer than 30 students in rural and urban Bhutan, Madagascar, and the Maldives, to 73 in rural Nepal and 118 in Equatorial Guinea (Postlewaithe, 1998).

Education development goals state that education in the world is a single most important means of sustainable development (World Bank, 2004) globally, education plays an important role in reducing poverty (Sifuna, 2003).

Free Primary Education (FPE) in the world was to ensure that children from the poor families complete a full course of primary schooling. Statistics from the World Bank (2008) shows that global net enrollment rate (NER) was 86.4% in 2001 and in 2006 it reduced to 83.2% of primary school age pupils. However, most developed countries of Europe, Central Asia, Latin and Middle East have seen very little improvements in NERs from 2001 to 2006. East Asia, Latin America and Caribbean had not reached the target hence no region had more than 86% in 2006. Education indicators in the world showed that poor children were disadvantaged in terms of education opportunities and achievements because the effects of poverty leading to poor enrollment in school.

In Africa the study towards universal primary education led to the expansion of enrollment in most countries over the recent years, but still despite relative high growth enrollment rate worldwide there were children who had never entered primary school (FAWE 1997). It was observed that the majority of these children were in regions of sub – Sahara Africa and South Asia, and within these countries, girls were greatest disadvantaged in receiving access to education at the primary ages (KESSP, 2005).

The United Nation Millennium Development Goals were to achieve universal primary education. The target was “to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike were enabled to complete a full course of primary schooling. But many children in less industrialized countries were still denied the opportunities of going to school. Many pupils repeated classes, many dropped out before completion and yet others did not access primary education (UNESCO, 1993). This problem affected developing countries because the enrollment was not keeping up with population growth; education expenditure and attainment of universal education (Graham – Brown, 1998). African regions were noted to lag behind. According to the World Bank report (2008), it was noted that 69% countries were off- track and 86% countries were seriously off –track and were in sub-Sahara Africa. Therefore the effort of achieving the goals of 2015 was not to be achieved.

The Nation Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government introduced FPE in January 2003 through a manifesto Bank reported that there were emphasis mainly on the provision to access primary education because of its importance. There was a rapid expansion of enrollment in primary school because fees levies for tuition in primary education had been abolished. The government and development partners were to meet the cost of teaching and learning materials, wages for critical non- teaching staff and co – curricular activities. Despite the enrollment figure rising to estimate figure of around 6, 314,000 to 7, 614, 326 it was estimated that 3 million were not enrolled in school. (MOEST, 2003)

The Amman Mid-Decade Review of Education for All (1996) reaffirmed the commitment to the Jomtien resolutions. It observed that the provision of basic education, especially for girls, has remained elusive in many less industrialized countries. This was said to be particularly so in Africa, where ethnic tensions and conflicts had displaced many households, thus denying children opportunities of going to school. The Dakar Conference of 2000 reviewed developments in achieving UPE in the Africa continent. It set as one of the EFA goals “Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015” This was further endorsed by the so-called Millennium Developments Goals (MDG). Among other things they set targets “to ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling”. This is as per the Republic of Kenya and United Nations (1990).

Within this broad policy framework, since independence in 1963, the expansion of learning institutions has been one of the greatest achievements in the education sector. Kenya has achieved an impressive progress in expanding access to education during the last four decades largely by establishing a comprehensive network of schools throughout the country. The substantial expansion of education has generally resulted in an increased participation by groups that previously had little or no access to schooling. Enrollment of a greater percentage of girls and indeed the attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) has been the long-term objective in the primary education sub-sector (MoEST, 2003). The policy sounds commendable as a means of cushioning children from poor social-economic backgrounds from failing to participate in education or dropping out of school as well as being determinative of efforts to achieve UPE and EFA. However it is argued that the numerous constraints that have bedeviled the implementations of the interventions, and the fact that the cost of it is beyond the current education budget allocation casts very serious doubts on the viability of the current FPE experiments, (Sifuna, 2003).

#### ***Statement of the Problem***

While the free primary education (FPE) program has increased access to primary education especially among poorer households, the provision of quality education remains a challenge. In Kanduyi Sub-County, the continued and consistent dominance of private schools in the KCPE has raised concerns about the rising disparity in quality between public and private schools. Despite the fact that International and National agencies

are committed to ensure that every child is enabled to complete a full course of primary schooling, the graduates of FPE cannot read and write effectively. While large enrollment is a laudable achievement and a sign of universal education, the problem is that this sudden upsurge of pupils in schools was not planned therefore, there is likelihood that the quality is affected. These emerging challenges have called for the need to take stock of the effects of the FPE programme on quality of education in primary school. Meanwhile, there isn't any previous study known to the researcher carried out on effects of FPE on quality of education in public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub County of Bungoma County. An important question to address is whether this increased quantitative access has been realized without compromising quality standards in primary schools. This study therefore will act as an important initial step towards finding an answer to this critical question.

### ***The Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of free primary education on the quality of education in public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-County, Bungoma County.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### ***Enrollment and Free Primary Education in Kenya***

World Bank (2004) Education Development goals state that education is developing. It created choices and opportunities for people, reduced the burden of poverty and diseases and gave a strong virile in the society. For nations, it created a dynamic workforce and well informed citizens able to compete and co – operate globally and opening the door to economic – social prosperity. The world conference of education for all realized that the need for UPE had been the world's greatest challenge in the history of education. World Bank (1990) Ultimate goal were to provide the basic needs which consisted of knowledge, skills attitudes and values upon which individual could build their lives if they did not receive more formal education. These basic learning needs enable the individuals the ability to read and write, to work with numbers, adapting to change of culture social and economic life of their community, their nation and the world. Therefore primary education could be said to be the most universal and significant level of formal education where most pupils could be said to be most universal and significant level of formal education where most pupils should get schooling.

Statistics from World Bank (2000) showed that despite this much effort on EFA, about 115 million school – age children were not in school. Graham – Brown (1991) observed that by 1980's the growth in education had slowed down in some countries being reversed. The article further recorded that in low income countries less than two – thirds of those who enrolled in primary school completed the entire cycle this proportion had been declining in the recent years. Despite the efforts of the UN charter and world education conferences the goals to achieve by 2005 and Education for all by 2015 may be a mirage especially in some less developed countries. United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 1990) stated that Africa was one of the regions in the world where primary education status declined in 1950's. The same report showed that the Gross enrollment growth declined by 7 percent between 1975 and 1980 and by 20 percent in 1980 to 1990. By 1993 the net primary school enrolment in sub – Sahara Africa was 40 percent. Graham – Brown (1991) observed that in Africa and other less developed countries (LPCS0 there was always the common crisis often compounded by Military and political conflicts as such the number of children enrolling in school fell and a marked increase in drop- out rates as well as pupils who did not start school. South Asia and sub – Sahara Africa always lagged behind the EFA and the pace of reaching 2015 would not be reached. While the developing countries Europe and Central Asia and the Middle East and North Africa picked up their pace of enrollment to achieve EFA goals.

The UNICEF Report (2005) noted that more children than ever were going to school but about 115 million children mostly girls were deprived basic education. There was a significant progress in getting children in but it said the progress was still too slow. The rate it was going they might not reach the target of UN millennium development goals by 2015. It was noted that 82% of children who did not attend to school live in rural areas and this was the biggest barrier to enrollment in primary school. The meaning of free primary education according to the Kenya education commission report (1964) was the education that shifted the burden of fees from the parents to the community as a whole. Its purpose was to allow children to access education without discrimination at all. However enrollment of FPE was effected seriously with the inflow of pupils in primary education in the second year of FPE implementation. Districts that registered a 20 % increase in enrollment hardly recorded more than 5% of standard one enrollment the following year. FPE initiative was to recognize education as a human right which was to be provided by government to their citizens (Republic of Kenya, 1994.)

FPE saw the comeback of over age pupils who were out of school due to poverty, (WERK, 2004) the current curriculum gave no room for such pupils and no adjustments for them were made hence affecting their motivation to learn. Retention to keep pupils in the school system after enrollment was high while completion dealt with ensuring pupils to go through the 8 years of primary education without dropping out due to various

reasons. Having been out for working further complicated the situation where they tended to miss school in preference to make money and hence their colleagues who had the idea to go to school surrendered.

The UN charter stated that, every child had a right to education. According to the declaration of human rights article 28 of 1979 stated that education should be at least free in the elementary stage. In its member state through various world conferences on education for all (EFA) which was held in Jomtien, Thailand. Another meeting was held in Dakar 2000 as follow up to Jomtien after ten years. The recommendation of the two meetings considered the attainment of UPE as a development strategy and considered a literate population as key to the overall development of any nation (Republic of Kenya 2003). Through Dakar forum identified that education was a foundation to higher living standards and democratic society the two conferences (Dakar and Jomtien) acknowledged that as much as the countries of the world declare red basic education available to all resulting in higher enrollment, bigger challenges appearing to reverse the goals of EFA, For instance more than 100 million children world wide were out from school with majority of these being girls UNESCO (2001).

FPE was a joint responsibility. The government of Kenya considered the provision of primary education as central to poverty reduction. It was clear that parents had a role to play. The parents were required to meet the cost of examination fees for class eight, provide school uniforms, provide meals, and transport to and from school boarding facilities as well as health care. The government on the feeding programs in arid and semi arid lands (ASAL) areas UNESCO (2003). However parents failed to play the role towards FPE.

In the guideline of FPE, it is stated clearly that all public primary schools are expected to enroll all children of school going age without discrimination including those with special needs, street children from various backgrounds including children with special needs. Street children who had been exposed to drugs and or had emotional stress need to be rehabilitated so as to fit in the regular schools while average children of particular enabled to attend school by establishing one class to serve children up to were to be enabled to attend school where necessary. Double shifts were to be encouraged in schools, which had enrolled in school more pupils than they had the capacity to handle. Everything was to be done to keep all those in school not to drop out (Republic of Kenya 4, 2003). According to Koskei (2004), some teachers have been accused by parents of misleading children in school following FPE program. Some had been accused of referring to the new children as NARC Children” and paid less attention to them. He added that they mistreat children from poor families and sent them home for other hidden payment. This attribute affected the enrollment in public schools at the levels.

The guidelines of FPE did not require parents and communities to build more schools but rather encourage the communities to improve, refurbish and use existing facilities such as religious buildings as classes were absolutely necessary and there was need (Olungah, 2011). They were to use locally available materials. However FPE did not stop community initiatives to maintain certain facilities and services for pupils such as lunches, transport and boarding facilities (Republic of Kenya, 2003). Olungah (2011) further observed that communities failed to play their role in basic education because of failure of awareness. It was evident that the overwhelming enrollment of pupils across the country showed that many children had been locked out of school because of levies, thus curtailing their potential and subsequent contribution development of the Nation.

Overcrowded classrooms is a major effect of FPE where classes have recorded over 40 pupils in a class, this has been occasioned by the massive enrollment due to FPE with enrollment shooting from 5.9 million in 2002 to 6.9million a GAR of 99% that lead to overstretched facilities and overcrowding in schools, Republic of Kenya (2003). As at the moment massive enrollment is creating ripples in quality of education under FPE program, Otieno (2003). The standard classroom is mean t to accommodate the internationally recommended number of 40 pupils and the same number of desks has to be done away with, this then directly indicates that teachers are not able to monitor each individual learner hence compromising on standards. The average school size in 2002 was about 360 students with the largest primary school having less than 1,600 pupils (Gichura, 2009).

Overcrowding of classrooms especially in densely populated areas which have led to very high pupil teacher ratios in some cases going up to PTR of 1:100 to ensure that quality is enhanced in such schools, the government has introduced double shift with a view to maximizing utilization of space. There are also plans to construct temporary classrooms to accommodate the extra numbers and also build new schools, especially in slum areas. However, Kenya is proceeding very cautiously in construction of new schools before the existing ones have been utilized to full capacity. A school mapping exercise is under way and it's only after completion that a full scale for construction of new schools will be developed. This is one of the lessons that Kenya has learnt from those countries that have been implementing FPE, that after a few years, enrollments start to stabilize and schools have



been left with underutilized facilities that have cost the government a lot of funds that would otherwise have been channeled to provide quality inputs.

With the new FPE, these figures have increased to about 400 and substantially over 2000 respectively. Adequate and timely data is not available in most cases and it is therefore difficult to determine the number of children still not reached and even the number of those who will enter the system in any one given year so as to plan for them (Gichura, 2009). Tordley (2005) points out that the quality of education is being compromised in government primary schools due to large class sizes and that teachers cannot cope with more than hundred pupils. Notebooks go untouched for weeks as homework or marking is done. He cites teacher in Olympic primary school Mrs. Namulanda attributing the KCPE performance in the school to increase class sizes of up to eighty pupils in a class of initially forty pupils.

Tordley (2005) further illustrates the issue compromising quality of FPE, with eighteen thousand primary schools accommodating two million children has arisen a problem of overflowing classrooms. In Nairobi Primary School where the only pupil from public primary school in the top one hundred KCPE candidates came from. Mr. Karugu a teacher sites lack of desks, no additional classrooms built, pupils sitting on the floor and other learning from under trees as challenges compromising the quality FPE. This clearly goes against his tenets of quality education. The British chancellor of exchequer, Gordon Brown in his visit to Kenya in 2004 observed this situation has been worsened by lack of enough teachers as will be discussed latter.

Action Aid (2007) also sites this problem of overcrowded classrooms and calls for the need to build more classrooms to match enrollment. Enrollment does not necessarily mean attendance, attendance does not necessarily mean receiving education and receiving education does not necessarily mean better education. High enrollment in FPE may give the mistaken impression that a high proportion of school age children are being well educated, there is a need to look at the quality of education that the many numbers are receiving in such overcrowded classrooms.

#### ***Facilities, Funding and Free Primary Education in Kenya***

Education is one of the most expensive undertakings by any government comparable only to military expenditure. In Kenya expenditure on education accounted to 40% of the budget (Buhere, 2007). Despite this, Kenya has tried to achieve education target since Independence. In 2003, the government decided to implement free primary education in public schools. According to the Republic of Kenya (2003), the government allocated Ksh.1020 per child per annum. This allocation was to purchase teaching and learning materials, general maintenance and operation maintenance. Due to the high cost of purchasing this material made them inaccessible to the majority of pupils in public schools. The provision of learning materials that was allocated to this child was not enough to complete a year. 12 exercise books, 2 biro pens and 1 pencil required the poor families to cost share additional materials when they are needed. To assure that enrollment in public primary schools was managed, direct adequate funds required to be committed to education (Leary, 2006) so that to close the enrollment gap of gender. It had been noted in the past recent years that the enrollment rate for boys at primary level had been reduced than girls. Therefore education required meeting several District challenges among them was funding. This called for a need to overcome this significant obstacle by spending more money on education. According to Republic of Kenya (2003), there is a need to increase availability of books to pupils, text book ratio of 3:1 in higher grades. But this has not been the case despite the government's allocation of Kshs 1020 millions per annum for the purchase of teaching material general maintenance and operational maintenance, this is due to the high cost of purchasing this material hence making them inaccessible to the majority of these pupils in FPE.

Quality education needs to ensure provision of tools for transformation of current societies to more sustainable societies (UNESCO, 2003). It is not possible for pupils in FPE to access libraries in and out of school, computer services and books in general due to the cost involved. The impact on basic instructional materials, especially those directly related to reading and writing is consistent across several studies. Buhere (2007) quotes Oshungbohun (1984) affirming that there are three prerequisite that determine good quality education namely physical facilities, competent teachers and adequate and relevant instructional resources. Thus greater availability of textbooks and reading materials rise quality of learning activities and hence increased achievements, (Fuller, 1986). Kenya has had a long standing policy of providing textbook for pupils. However, in some areas, the pupil/ book ratio still remains high at ratio 1:10. For effective learning and teaching and to maintain quality of FPE program, the government will provide textbooks at the ratio 1:2 for upper primary and 1:3 for lower primary which face severe book shortages as teachers concentrates on purchasing books for upper classes which are preparing for examinations .

The current cost of FPE was beyond the normal education budget allocated. It was also a fact that the country's economy had not been performing well in recent years and could not support the realization of the UPE goals

without the infusion of outside funds. For the country to sustain universal access there would be need for economic growth to generate public funds for education (Republic of Kenya, 2009). Otherwise, prioritizing UPE was most likely to take away from the provision for other sectors of education as well as from the health sector. WERK (2004) cites too much bureaucracy in accessing any funds as a hindrance to the smooth operation of school activities and hence leading to low enrollment in public primary schools. There has been a constant need to employ teachers provide, more learning resources, provide support and nutritional support. The government on its part has claimed to do all these but sometimes contradicting research finding. This provided us with a gap of finding in order to find sustainable measures of decline in enrollment in primary school level. For the project GER at primary level was depicted as 41.7% by the year 2015.

In Kenya, expenditure in education accounts for 40% of the budget (Buhere, 2007). Despite this, Kenya has continued to lag behind in achieving education targets since 1993. The education commission part II (1964) predicted 1980's universal schooling target from a UNESCO conference of African states as unattainable due to the challenge of funding the Harambee movement. In 1976 funding still proved to be a challenge with school fee and other overheads. A waiver of school fee was suggested for children from disadvantaged homes; later classes one to four were made free. In 2003 the government decided to bite the bullet and made primary education free. It earmarked Kshs 71 billion for FPE with Kshs 28 billions as salaries and Kshs 770 million as bursary. This aimed at integrating quality service delivery. Demands for quality education have seen financial demands rise to unmanageable levels. Laaru (2006) reiterated this by stating that directing adequate funds to FPE require commitment to education. Closing the gap between the current state of global education and the goal of providing all the children with high quality education require meeting several distinct challenges top among them funding. This calls for a need to overcome this significant obstacle by developing innovations in education practice and spending more money on education. This clearly underscores the challenge of FPE that has a great impact on its quality (UNESCO, 2003).

On this front the World Bank has come out to try and assist in funding through Kenya Education Sector Project (KESSP) build on bank's grant financing for the Free Primary Education Support Project (FPESP), which helped deliver instructional materials to all 18000 primary schools throughout Kenya. About 1.5 million children who had previously dropped out or never attended school have benefited since the project was implemented on January 2003 (World Bank, 2006). Apart from to the logical problems in the implementation of FPE, the key question remains, is the program suitable? In the 2003/04 financial year, the government increased its education budget by 17.4 % billion, with over Kshs. 7.6 billion specifically allocated to FPE program. The donor community, which received the FPE policy with high enthusiasm, was quick to assist the government. The World Bank, for example, gave a grant of Kshs .3.7 billion, while the British government through the department for international development gave Kshs 1.6 billion. Other donors included the organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Kshs. 1.2 billion, the Swedish government Kshs. 430 million and UNSEF Kshs. 250 million. It goes without saying that such donor funding is usually temporary (Sifuna et al, 2004).

A research report, Patrick. A.F, (2010) has raised questions over the sustainability of the free, primary education policy. The report compiled by CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity), which is based at Sussex University and is funded by DFID, reviews recent research on the progress made by Kenya Tanzania and Uganda towards universal education. The 2007 report, titled polices on free primary and secondary education in East Africa highlights research which states that the Kenyan government raised its education budget in 2003-2004 by 17.4% and was strongly supported by donor funding in its free primary education initiative, this may not be sustainable.

The cost of providing free primary education is beyond the scope of the ordinary education budget, economic performance has not been strong and donor finance is often temporary. The free primary education initiative of 2003 was pursued as a matter of political expediency. It was not adequately planned and resourced and thus had the consequences of increased drop-out and falling educational quality, states the report. In view of these challenges, the research concludes that the attainment of sustained free primary education is an illusion in the context of Kenya (Gichura, 2009). The current cost of FPE was away beyond the normal education budget location. It was also a fact that the country economy has not been performing well in recent years and cannot support the realization of the UPE goals without the infusion of outside funds, for the country to sustain universal access there will be a need for economic growth to generate public funds for education. Otherwise, prioritizing FPE is most likely to take away from the provision for other sectors of education as well as from the health sector, WERK (2004) cites too much bureaucracy in accessing any funds as a hindrance to the smooth operation of school activities and hence to the quality of FPE. There has been a constant need to employ more teachers, build more schools, provide more learning resources, provide bursary support, nutritional support,

health care, better the salaries of teachers, develops ICT, have better management in schools and quality assurance all in an effort to ensure quality FPE and all this has meant more and more funding. The government on its part has claimed to do all this sometimes contradicting research findings. This provides us with a gap of finding out the impact of government allocation and the real need of schools in terms of funding to achieve quality FPE.

#### ***Human Resources and Free Primary Education***

People are a fundamental component with any successfully developing organization. Take away the people and the organization is nothing. Take away peoples motivation, commitment and ability to work together in well-organized teams, and again, the organization is nothing. Conversely, inspire the people to work well, creatively, productively, and the organization can fly. Logically therefore the development and proper utilization of people are vital to the success of all quality management initiatives (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

As a result of the free primary education, the situation of the teaching force in most of the districts is generally bad. Teachers complain of increased pupil teacher ratios. Many primary schools are understaffed as a result of the free primary education program. This does not augur well for the quality of education being delivered. Many school management committees are opinion that as a result of the ban levies, they are unable to recruit extra teachers through PTA and this has also seriously affected the pre-schools units' (Sifuna et al, 2004). The study by Action aid (2007) cites lack of teachers to handle the large number of pupils in FPE program. The number of teachers since 1998 has remained the same 235,000. This has been attributed to the government's inability to hire more teachers due to world Banks IMF ceiling to hiring of more teachers. The impact of this to the pupil teacher ratio (PTR) in public primary schools has seen teachers unable to handle the large number of pupils under them. Todley (2005) cites cases of PTR of 80:1 with some schools having a shortage of up to 20 teachers. With the government replacing only 7,500 teachers who went out of service through natural attrition. This demonstrates the kind of shortage that is bedeviling FPE and the biggest challenge the government faces in its attempt to ensure quality education in public primary schools.

Action aid (2007) further demonstrated the effect of teacher shortage when it stated in its research on teacher shortage that teachers were advising parents to move their children to private schools which had enough teachers. It further adds that parents were paying a minimum of Kshs. 500 per month for extra tuition in an attempt to make up for poor learning in public schools due to lack of enough teachers. The report goes further to reveal that pupils in most public schools were no longer given homework because the number of pupils each teacher is supposed to handle is too large for such exercises or individual attention and that schools which pretend to give homework had turned parents to Para teachers as they are expected to mark their children's work and sign them. These two practices being two components in the learning process then means children are not receiving a quality education and the teacher is not blamed for this and is a big compromise to the quality education in the FPE program.

In Nigeria with similar programs of FPE introduced in 1999, it is reported that the program may fail due to lack of enough qualified teachers, while in Zambia, the Government failed to employ 9,000 trained teachers has led to failing standards in public primary schools with the same FPE program Ruth N.O, & Isaac, I.O (2010). This themselves serve to show that achieving quality education with a limited number of teachers remains a pipe dream in sub-Sahara Africa, UNESCO (2005). This report further states that born out of the realization that quality education is at the core of any education system, it sited challenges facing governments in the implementation of UPE and FPE and the need to assure quality in the provision of education as the upsurge in enrollment resulting to among other factors shortage of teachers and teacher work overload. The practice would have been a PTR of one to forty to ensure adequate preparation of the teacher, personal attention to pupil and ensure a teacher involves the maximum learning activities, is able to monitor and address this challenge, the government proposed a system of hiring teachers on a part time basis, Republic of Kenya (2003), which is making little difference as of now.

UNESCO (2003) stresses that status, morale and professionalism of teachers should be enhanced. This is necessitated by the fact that teachers are essential in promoting quality education whether in school; or in more flexible community based program. Teachers are advocates of and catalyst of change. Kilemi Mwiria, Daily Nation February 15th 2003, states that no education reform is likely to succeed without active participation and ownership of teachers.

An upsurge in enrollment in FPE by 68%, 75%, and 22% in Malawi, Lesotho and Kenya respectively is the first of FPE created a problem of textbooks and other learning materials Laaru (2007). A major cause of scenario is the way FPE was introduced without adequate preparation and planning. Despite the increased enrollment, there

has been increased allocation of resources in Kenya on education but it seems ineffective as increased expenditure on education goes to recurrent expenditure, that is, pay salaries, Kimenyi et al (2007) and not on learning materials. Without adequate learning materials most schools in FPE program cannot comprehend and implement the curriculum, Tordley (2005), this then clearly points to compromised quality of FPE. Sifuna et al (2004) reiterates that as a result of the high influx of new pupils, classrooms are congested. Many of the preliminary surveys seem to show that existing facilities make a mockery of the free education program. Many school management committees feel that they are seriously constrained to improve the state of learning facilities due to the government's ban of school levies. At the same time, the conditions laid down to request for concessions to institute levies are so cumbersome that they hesitate to embark on the process.

In addition, the school based choice of learning and teaching materials from an approved list of competitively priced textbooks are being implemented to ensure value for the shilling to the child. The provision of decentralized demand- side purchasing of teaching learning materials under the control of staff and the parents of individual schools will ensure that children receive books on time (Gichura, 2009). Poor economic growth in Kenya has led to the persistent poverty among Kenyans. Official document showed about 50% of Kenyans lived below the poverty line were therefore unable to access basic services like food, shelter and health. Households and communities had therefore been unable to invest and support the development of basic education (National development plan 1997 – 2001). These girls are married off at the early age in some communities. Other children who could not access education are employed as child laborers while others engaged in unwanted behaviors that exposed the to diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

As the level of poverty rose, child labour becomes crucial for family survival (Abagi, 1997 and MOEST, 1996). Child labour was increasingly employed in domestic activities, agriculture and petty trade in both rural and urban Kenya. It had been noted that parents relied heavily on their children to collect firewood, water planting and harvesting. Such parents would require more than pronouncement in order to take their children and keep them in school. Poor house holders and in some cases children themselves had to carefully analyze the opportunity cost of education. As a result, parents had continued to send their children particularly girls into the labor market mainly s domestic workers in urban areas thus denying them the chance to go to school. In some places such as in ASAL area girls got married to fetch much income for family sustenance or pay school fees for their brothers. This situation was however difficult to overcome given that child labour was most fundamentally caused by the extent and nature of poverty (World Bank 1984). Boys from coastal regions in rich agriculture areas did not go to school in order to earn money as beach boys and tea or coffee pickers respectively (Abagi & Odipo, 1997). In a situation where parents and children had negative attitude towards school and did not see the immediate benefits, the consequence was low enrollment rate. Because poverty was often linked to the limited education attainment and low occupational status of the parents, poor families did not reinforce the value of education for instance in Egypt most parents frequently cited the cost of schooling as the reason they did not take their children to school (Robinson et al, 1984). In poor families those who worked had little or no time to attend to school. They therefore had no time to study so it weakened their academic performance and achievement level.

#### ***Evaluation and Free Primary Education***

Quality assessment or monitoring and evaluation are the evaluation of specific, measurable learning outcomes or competency based on set objectives UNESCO (2007), while management is the function of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling human and physical resources in order to achieve set objectives (Koontz et al, 2002).The need of assessment is due to the quantitative growth in FPE than can easily compromise quality. It also involves putting in place corrective measure. FPE and MDGs introduced this concept of quality education into their goals and international development targets on the premise that providing any education regardless of quality is not the goal but to equip all people to be fully participating members of their own community and citizens of the world.

One essential characteristic of quality is that it views learners as individuals, a family member, community member and global citizen and that quality education are measurable, (UNESCO, 2003). A total quality organization generally benefits from having an effective Quality Management System (QMS). A quality management system is typically defined as: A set of co-coordinated activities to direct and control an organization in order to continually improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its performance. Customer expectations inevitably drive and define 'performance' criteria and standards. Therefore quality management systems focus expectations and ongoing review and improvement.

At one time quality in the projects was seen primarily as the responsibility of quality control department, great reliance was placed on inspection and testing to discover fault (called non conformance) and then arranging for this fault to be rectified. In more recent years organizations have embraced the concept of total quality



management (TQM). In work processes and with responsibility for quality shared by all the staff and workforce from top management downwards, quality considerations extend beyond industrial projects to service and other businesses. The ISO 9000 series of standards is widely accepted as a base from which to design, implement and operate an effective quality management system with the ultimate objective of creating a quality culture through the organization, ([www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)). Juran defines quality as a service or product that is fit for the purpose for which it was intended (Juran and Godfrey, 1999). Quality can be achieved without extra cost; quality should not be downgraded or compromised. No contractor or project manager should contemplate a result that is 'not fit for purpose', therefore, quality is not negotiable or an option. You can only review performance specifications to save on costs which would not compromise quality which should remain serviceable, safe, and reliable fit for purpose.

Quality assessment is meant to ensure there is leadership, teamwork and that learning lead to success and to ensure their emphasis, resources and commitment to build a better school, with FPE there has always arisen the issue of falling standards demonstrated more expressly more expressly through KCPE performances. Tordley (2005) cites KCPE results of 2004 where only one candidate for public primary school was among the top 100 candidates. The rest came from private schools and 60% of places in secondary schools were taken by pupils from private schools which accounts for only 10% of all primary schools in Kenya. This then points to the fact that there is weakness in the monitoring and evaluation of FPE program which are impacting negatively on quality.

The domination of exam oriented teaching where passing exams are the only benchmark of performance illustrates this lack of internal systems of monitoring learning achievement at other levels of the educational cycle, that is, standards 1-7 especially in FPE program with its myriads of challenges. The assessment process should be criterion referenced to measure outcomes rather than compare performance among students. There is need to set up internal system of monitoring learning achievement for primary school children to that it is possible to plan for any intervention measures (Republic of Kenya, 2003).

To achieve this, the government has had the good will from development partners like Britain, Japan, WB, UNESCO and UNICEF in this regard there was facilitation of the strengthening of mathematics and sciences in secondary schools (SMASSE), the WB through free primary education support project (FPESP) whose review recommended the implementation of and safeguards for the KESSP including public disclosure of performance indicators, independent monitoring of performance and an annual independent audit of procurement, implementation of the safeguards is essential to assuring the project will secure results in improving enrollment and quality of education, World Bank (2006). Other quality measures taken by the government is the invigoration of the inspectorate division of the ministry of education and restructuring of TSC to target quality education in regard to universalizing access (Tordley, 2005).

Management is an important aspect of FPE and to ensure its quality in FPE, it is involved in ensuring proper utilization of limited resources to achieve the set goals. In this respect we will look at management from the school level comprising of the head teacher and the school committee responsible for allocation, and managing resources in the school. Education Management focuses attention on strategies for keeping education resources current, up to date, and accessible. It is ensuring that people have the most recent and suitable education to do work (Wanderi, 2008).

The Education Act, 1968 defines a manager as any person or body of person's responsibilities for the management and conduct of a school, and includes a Board. The Act, read together with the Teachers Service Commission Act, Cap. 212, confers extensive powers on the Minister of Education over the management and regulation of education in Kenya. The two acts give the minister extensive latitude to delegate his powers to local authorities, District Education Boards of Governors.

Primary schools are managed by School Committees appointed by local authorities. The committees are responsible for the hire and remuneration of support and subordinate staff in public schools. They also act as the custodians and trustees of the movable and immovable property of their schools. The headmasters of these institutions serve as the executive officers to the school committee. The Teachers Service Commission delegates the management and utilization of funds under respective FPE to SMCs. It is presumed that members of the SMCs and teachers are knowledgeable in Law, Human Resources Management, Supply Chain Management, Accounting and Project management.

Wanderi (2008) asserts that school boards are composed of members who do not possess managerial skills. Apart from appointing representatives to the board, religious organizations which sponsored or founded most

public schools in Kenya, play a peripheral role in managing the schools. They should get more involved since they can play a complementary role in guiding and counseling adolescent students. Religious leaders exercise both temporal and spiritual authority and can exert moral pressure on delinquent students to infuse behavioral change. Whereas parents are very quick to blame the school administration when things go wrong in a school, they also shy away from making a conscious effort and practical contribution to the management of the institutions. They are content to play the perfunctory roles of paying school fees, electing Parents Teachers Association (PTA) representatives and attending annual general meetings once a year. Parents should get actively involved and support the school administration in matters of enforcing discipline, (Wanderi, 2008).

Poor management and internal inefficiency in schools has been cited as impacting negatively on quality of FPE in schools, poor prioritization of funds and projects in terms of budget allocations and misappropriation of funds have been reported cases in many public schools (Kimenyi et al, 2007). The government has also been blamed for this situation as funds have been put in the hands of people with no accounting skills or any kind of management skills. This has contributed to the poor state of learning resources and inefficient use of funds. This has led to deterioration of quality. Lack of proper hiring policy of part time teachers has also seen schools hiring untrained teachers; this has not assisted in lifting the quality of learning in most FPE schools. Cases of parents paying levies illegally charged by school committees and head teachers have been reported, Action aid (2007) and can be attributed to lack of awareness of the part of community members.

To improve management there is a need to strengthen capacity of school management committees, head teachers and DEO to ensure quality in FPE. There is a need to deploy senior and experienced managers to lower level structure, expand capacity of program of KESI to provide in service training to headmasters, members of the school management committee and BOG, UNESCO (2005) report on improving the quality of education. It sited difficulties in school management as a challenge affecting quality of education in FPE and called on the government to address this problem through training and capacity building.

#### ***Access, Retention and Completion***

Quality education can only be assured through high access, retention and completion rate. This ensures UPE and meets the universal goals of education, Children's Act (2001) unequivocally stipulating that every child is entitled to an education. This then provides a basis for improvement of access in FPE is over 80%. Retention refers to keeping pupils in the school system after enrollment while completion is ensuring pupils go through the 8 years of primary school without dropping out due to various reasons. Completion is an important mark of quality of education as it indicates that the system achieved in guiding the through the many factors that could contribute to lack of completion. Ironically, these are contributing to high school dropout rates, just as they did during the 1974 free Primary education intervention. They also seriously affect the inflow of pupils in primary education in the second year of FPE implementation. A district that registered over 20% increase in enrollment in 2003, hardly recorded more than 5% of standard one enrollment the following year. FPE saw the comeback of overage pupils who were out of school due to poverty, WERK (2004), the current curriculum gives no room for such pupils and no adjustment for them can be made to hence affect their motivation to learn. Having been out for a long time and working further complicates the situation where they may tend to miss school or drop out all together in preference of making money.

To improve access the government is sensitizing communities on need to enroll the children in FPE and also by supporting ECDE to prepare the pupils going into primary level from ECDE. This ensures quality, education from the lower levels. Due to the effects of HIV/AIDS many children are still at home, the government with collaboration with other organs has been able to come in to support these families and ensure enrollment in FPE. This has gone a long way to ensuring quality in FPE, Republic of Kenya (2002). This has gone a long way in ensuring quality in FPE. To improve retention, challenges have been many overcrowding, lack of learning resources and illegal charges charged by school committees have contributed to this. There is also need to increase the bursary program to cover at least 10% of school fees for enrolled students with emphasis to ASAL areas and other vulnerable groups in the Republic of Kenya, (2003). FPE was born of the realization that standards of living were falling demonstrated by increased illiteracy; decline in primary school enrollment, high drop rates especially girls and the vulnerable, Republic of Kenya (2002). Completion ensures that the cycle of primary school first phase has been covered and is as important as retention. These issues are important in ensuring FPE in achieving its quality measures.

#### ***Theoretical Framework***

This study was guided by the theory of socialist economics of education (Selowsky, 1979), a theory that was propounded by a French writer and historian called Louis Blanc. The theory underscores the need to create an economy that redistributes income from the rich to the poor so as to create equality of well-being The socialist economics theory also forms the basis of the Lorenz curve, which advocates for the geometric representation of

the distribution of income among families in a given country for quality output, at a given time (Baumol and Blinder, 1979). The Lorenz curve measures the cumulative percentage of families from the poorest to the richest on the horizontal axis, while the cumulative percentage of income is put on the vertical axis. In the present study, the cumulative percentages were described in terms of quintiles. When quintiles are used, the population is divided into five equal portions. The measures are then used to compare the relative share going to specific groups such as the top quintile or the bottom quintile.

According to the socialist economics of education theory, free education can help enhance equity in access to secondary schools. Otherwise, if education were offered without bursaries only those who can afford to pay school fees and other related costs would enroll in school. Under such circumstances, inequalities would be perpetuated. In this particular study, if the recipients are identified impartially based on their parentage, academic performance and socio economic status, the Lorenz curve will not show a lot of sagging, an implication of equity inequality free educations. However, in the event of partiality in the selection criteria, the sagging will be distinct, implying the presence of inequalities in the allocations. Equitable quality and affordable education can help enhance those children from poor economic background access equitably quantity and quality education. The enhanced access to education on the other hand helps to redistribute income and to raise the incomes of the poor and effectively making their purchasing power to afford their children more quality education. As a consequence of these, an equitable society is created.

This theory is applicable in this study since primary school education is very basic and critical in any education system because of the crucial role, it plays in catalyzing national development and thus the level and quality education achieved should never be compromised. Consequently, maintaining a high pupils' enrolment at this level should be a priority for all countries. With the communal involvement in decision-making, it was anticipated that there would be fairness and efficiency in the free education process. However, contrary to the high expectations; cases of complaints about the quality of free education still persist thus making the end impact lower than anticipated.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research adopted a descriptive survey because it was concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular group. The research used stratified random sampling by dividing the population into a number of groups of strata, where the members of the group shared a particular characteristic or characteristics. The target population included 30 head teachers, 164 teachers, 270 pupils. The sample was based on 30% the number of members in each group. The researcher used questionnaires, interview schedule and documentary analysis to collect data. The questionnaire was the main instrument of primary data collection. The researcher randomly picked 2 head teachers, 10 teachers and 20 pupils who participated in the pilot study. These subjects were however omitted from the final research. Both construct and content validity were applied in this study to ensure that the dimensions that were being measured by the instrument of data collection adequately covered what was intended. In order to test reliability, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires before undertaking the actual research, and a 0.74 reliability coefficient was obtained. Primary data was collected using open ended and closed ended questionnaires and this data was supplemented by secondary data. The data was then analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively by first data coding, error checking and pre-analytical computer check. On a 5-point Likert scale, the relevant variables' dimensions were processed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20 computer software.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

*Effects of Human Resource on the Quality of Education in Public Primary Schools in Kanduyi Constituency*  
Objective one sought to determine the effects of human resources on the quality of education following the implementation of FPE. The researcher required head teachers to give information relating to the total number of teachers, year of registration, total number of lessons per week and the average number of lessons per teacher per week. Other details that were required from heads of schools were on the average number of pupils per class, the total number of classes and streams in their respective schools. The researcher grouped the provided responses into categories per each item for easy analysis and reporting. The researcher then analyzed the effect that each aspect had on the general performance of pupils in the research area under consideration.

The total number of teachers per school within Kanduyi Sub-County was put into three groups; 1 - 20 teachers and 21 – 40 teachers above. 9 of the 30 studied schools representing 25 percent had between 1 to 20 teachers, 10 schools representing 41.97 percent had between 21 to 40 teachers whereas the remaining 11 schools representing 33.33 percent had at least 41 teachers. The total number of pupils per class on the other hand was higher than the globally recommended number of about 40 pupils per class. Such low numbers of teachers in schools within the sub-county under consideration coupled by large classrooms is a possible explanation for poor performance leading to low transition rates that has been experienced over the recent past. Table 2 gives information relating to the average number of teachers per school.

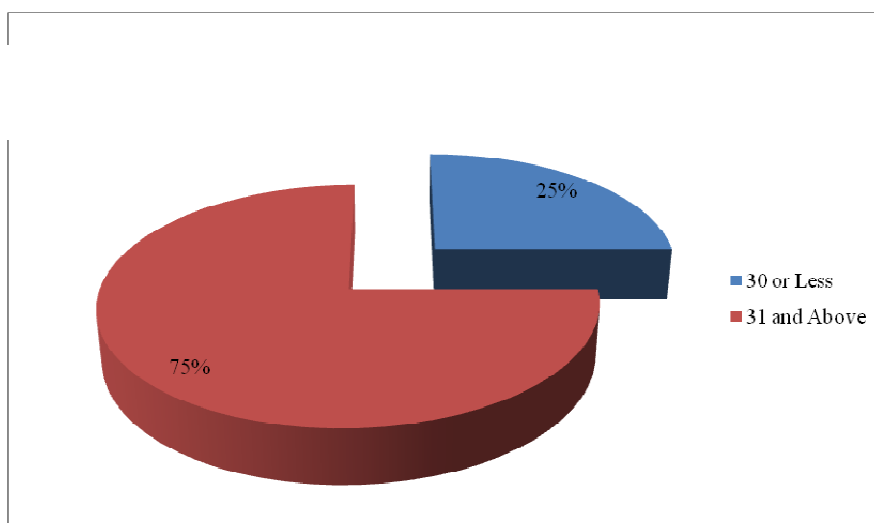
**Table 4: Average Number of Teachers per School**

Number of Teachers	Number of Schools	Percentage (%)
1 – 20	9	25
21 – 40	10	41.97
41 and Above	11	33.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 100</b>	

The researcher was interested in establishing whether or not the selected schools had been in existence before 2003, a time when FPE was introduced in Kenya. All the 30 schools from whom the respondents were selected were in existence before 2003. Most schools in Kanduyi Sub-County were registered by 1972. The lowest number of lessons per week for the 27 studied schools was 144 while the highest number of lessons per week was 219. The researcher grouped information relating to average number of lessons per teacher into two categories – 30 lessons or less and 31 lessons and above. 9 of the 30 schools representing 25 percent had an average of 30 lessons or less while the remaining 18 schools representing 75 percent of the studied schools had a minimum of 31 lessons per teacher per week. This in effect leaves the few teachers with a lot of work to cover within a short period of time. Table 6 and Figure 3 represent average number of lessons per teacher per week.

**Table 5: Average Number of Lessons per Teacher per Week**

Average Lessons	Number of Schools	Percentage (%)
30 or Less	9	25
31 and Above	21	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 100</b>	



**Figure 3: Average Number of Lessons per Teacher per Week**

The average number of pupils per class was grouped into categories; 1 – 100 pupils and 101 pupils and above. 9 of the 30 studied schools representing 33.33 percent had an average number of pupils within the 1 -100 bracket while the remaining 21 schools representing 99.99 percent had an average number of pupils exceeding 100. The lowest average number of pupils per class was 75 pupils per class while the highest number was 170 pupils per class. Most schools within the sub-county are understaffed leaving the teachers with a lot of class work making it hard for them to monitor each individual learner’s progress. This research agrees with the UNESCO’s (2005) research in respect to the drop in the quality of education following overcrowding of pupils in class.

The researcher involved 379 teachers in the filling of questionnaires. The 379 teachers were grouped based on their qualifications into four groups; P2, P1, S1 and graduate. The researcher put them into groups based on their teaching experience as well as whether or not they have any responsibilities that they undertake. With regard to qualifications, 95 of 379 teachers representing 20.83 percent and another similar number had P2 and S1 qualifications, 132 teachers representing 42.31 percent had P1 qualifications while the remaining 50 teachers representing 19.03 percent were graduates. Figure 4 are a summary of qualifications of the teachers that took part in the filling of the questionnaires used in this research study.



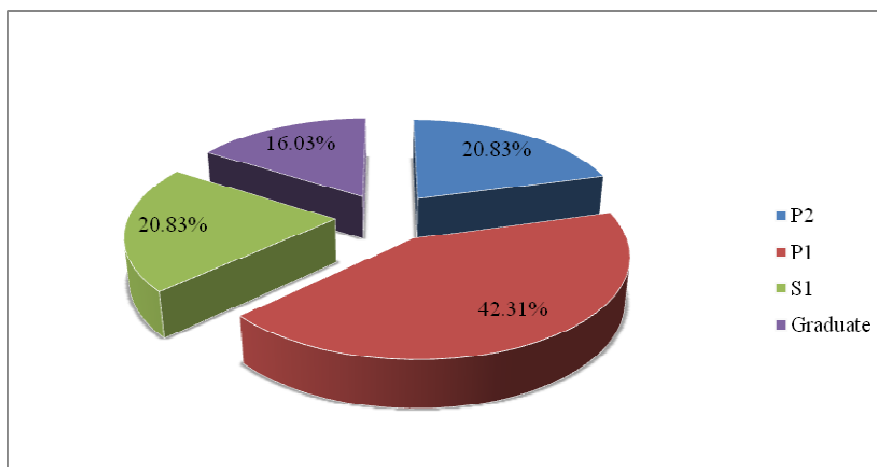


Figure 4 Teachers by Qualification

32 teachers out of the 379 teachers representing 10.29 percent had an experience of not more than two years, 97 teachers representing 21.47 percent had an experience of more than two but less than four years of teaching experience while the remaining 213 teachers representing 98.27 percent had over six years of teaching experience. 45 teachers out of 312 representing 14.42 percent were actively involved in the running of the affairs of their respective schools in different responsibility capacities while the remaining 297 teachers representing 85.58 percent serve as classroom teachers. All the 379 teachers agree that FPE has to a greater extent negatively affected the quality of education not only in Kanduyi Sub-County but in Kenya as a whole. According to the teachers, FPE has led to an overall rise in the number of pupils that are admitted into primary schools within the sub-county while the number of teachers employed by the government remains relatively low.

***Effects of Enrolment on the Quality of Education in Public Primary Schools in Kanduyi Constituency***

Objective two sought to determine the effects of enrolment on the quality of education following the implementation of FPE. The head teachers were to give a general understanding of FPE. All the 30 head teachers were well aware of the FPE due to their experience with the education sector in Kenya over the past two decades. 25 of the 30 head teachers approached representing 83.33 percent consider the introduction of FPE an unwise move on the part of the government while the remaining 5 head teachers cannot state whether or not FPE had a positive or negative impact on the quality of education in Kenya. The 83.33 percent against the introduction of FPE in Kenya consider it unwise due to lower transition rates that are experienced every year across the country. Lack of adequate funds on the part of the government coupled by delayed remittance of pledged amounts by the same is also an explanation given by the school heads.

FPE education was accompanied by an overall growth in numbers of pupils that are enrolled in schools especially in lower primary. The average enrollment of pupils in standard one in all the 30 schools under consideration was 100 pupils. The average number of pupils enrolled reduces as one progresses to standard eight with 90 percent of schools admitting less than 20 pupils in standard eight. All the 30 head teachers agree that increased average enrolment each year coupled with low levels of annual teacher recruitment have continued to raise pupil-teacher ratio. The average pupil-teacher ratio for the 30 schools with Kanduyi Sub-County that were studied is 73-1 with most schools registering high pupil-teacher ratios of 100-1 following strict government rules that require all children within the school going age to attend school until they attain the minimum age of 18 years. The head teachers employ a number of methods to address the challenges of FPE. Close to 90 percent of head teachers of schools under consideration seek the services of both trained and untrained teachers to reduce pupil-teacher ratio in an attempt to improve the quality of education in the said schools. The remaining 10 percent of the head teachers strictly utilize trained teachers who are yet to be employed by the teachers' service commission due to their belief in professionalism.

The questionnaires reveal that the average age of standard eight pupils is 19 with the youngest pupils being 12 years while the oldest being 25 years. The differences in engage is due to late enrollment by some pupils with some pupils having been forced to redo a class or two in the course of learning. 228 pupils out of the 270 respondents representing 95 percent are not directly involved in school responsibilities while the remaining 12 students take an active role in the running of their respective schools. The studied schools lack an average of two classes and pupils especially those within lower classes are forced to take their classes under trees. The situation in some schools is worse with more than four classes being forced to take their classes under shades. An average

of about 200 pupils per school does not have access to a present day classroom in all the 30 schools that were selected for this study by the researcher in Kanduyi Sub-County.

According to the 300 standard eight respondents, teachers concentrate mainly on the teaching of examinable subjects particularly English, Mathematics, Kiswahili, Science and Social Studies. An interaction with the pupils reveals that subjects that are not examined are considered unimportant and are as such never given any emphasis. 100 percent of the standard eight pupils get pens, pencils and rulers from their parents and sponsors due to the failures of the government to deliver such facilities to schools in time. The parents bear the largest burden in the provision of learning facilities to the pupils within Kanduyi Sub-County.

#### ***Effects of Facilities on the Quality of Education in Public Primary Schools in Kanduyi Constituency***

Objective three sought to determine the effects of facilities on the quality of education following the implementation of FPE. The total number of classrooms per school was grouped into three categories; 10 classrooms or below, 11 – 20 classrooms and 21 and above classrooms. 10 schools representing 41.99 of the total never of schools under consideration had 10 classrooms or less and were therefore single streamed, 9 schools representing 25 percent had between 11 and 20 classrooms and were mostly two streamed while the remaining 8 schools had above 21 classrooms and managed three streamed classes. The low number of classrooms coupled by high enrolment levels has witnessed overcrowding in classrooms in most schools in Kanduyi Sub-County. Such high numbers of learners in schools has led to a significant drop in the levels of direct supervision by teachers resulting to a drop in the quality of education.

All the 30 schools representing 100 percent of schools under this study have inadequate access to physical facilities with particular reference to classrooms, playgrounds, staff area and desks. In all the 30 schools studied, there is a strain on the available textbooks, supplementary books, teaching material particularly dusters, chalks, registers and charts. All the head teachers agree that an inadequate number of exercise books and pencils are released to schools by the government. According to the head teachers the government should work on logistical issues and increase FPE funding with a view to ensuring that adequate amounts of all the materials required to improve the quality of education in schools not only in Kanduyi Sub-County are released in the right quantities and time. Lack of adequate facilities in schools has lowered access to information by learners thereby compromising on the quality of education in public primary schools within Kanduyi Sub-County since the introduction of FPE.

All the head teachers, the teachers and the pupils who took part in the filling of questionnaires think that the introduction of FPE has had a strain on classrooms, desks, exercise books, pencils and teachers, facilities that were adequate and in some instances more than enough in schools before the introduction of FPE in 2003. The last section of the questionnaire for teachers required teachers to suggest the best ways of implementing FPE in the areas of distribution of teachers, instructional materials, retention and physical facilities. The teachers were also supposed to give their experience with regard to distribution of instructional material, teaching methodology, teacher/parent commitment, enrolment in school and their general view on FPE.

The teachers who took part in the filling of questionnaires suggest that the distribution of teachers and instructional materials be made based on student enrollment and the current school population. Funds meant for the construction of physical facilities should continue to be calculated and implemented based on the target student population. This is important as it will go along way in ensuring that public primary schools have enough classes to take care of the growing levels of pupils that are admitted every year. According to the 379 teachers who took part in the filling of the questionnaire, there are irregularities in the distribution of instructional material and teaching methodology. 270 teachers representing 89.54 percent of the 379 teachers believe that teacher/parent commitment levels have gone low due to the drop in the level of interest in education today especially on the part of parents. All the teachers that took part in this research consider student enrollment as being too high to be supported by the current facilities that are available in public schools. According to the teachers more funding is required to achieve better results from the FPE system.

All the teachers that took part in the filling of questionnaires either disagree or strongly disagree that the implementation of FPE has been excellently done with regard to the distribution of teachers, instructional material and other physical facilities. They also hold a similar opinion on whether or not the government has been able to attain its set targets in relation to enhancement of teacher/parent commitment, pupil retention and distribution of instructional material across the sub-county over the recent past.

#### ***Summary of the Findings***

The first objective sought to find effects of human resource on the quality of education:

Findings on the effects of human resource show that there has been a constant need to employ teachers, overcrowding of classrooms has seen high pupil-teacher ratio with Kanduyi Sub-County having an average of 100:1. Teachers are not able to monitor each individual learner thereby compromising on the quality of education. The quality of education in public primary schools in the sub-county has over the years continued to deteriorate due to large class sizes and that teachers cannot cope with more than hundred pupils. Notebooks go untouched for weeks as homework or marking is done.

Research findings on the effects of enrolment indicate that, young people within the school going age in Kanduyi have continued to respond positively to the government call. This is evident through faster growth in the levels of enrolment in the period following the introduction of FPE with the total enrolment levels doubling in most schools across the Sub-County especially in the last three years. The reduction in the levies charged during the enrolment process has boosted enrollment thereby increasing literacy levels within Kanduyi Sub-County.

FPE has led to the growth of overcrowded classrooms in the Sub-County with classes recording over 40 pupils per class, the recommended class holds, 40 pupils, following massive enrollment leading to overstretched facilities and overcrowding in schools in the Sub-County. This research agrees with Otieno's (2003) research that enrollment continues to create ripples in quality of education under FPE program.

Findings on objective three sought to find out the effects of facilities on the quality of education: Findings on the effects of facilities show that there is need to work on overcrowded classrooms by building more classrooms to match enrollment. Inadequacies have been felt in the provision of learning and materials allocated to children. The government has not been able to provide enough learning materials that are required to sustained pupils for a budgeted period of one year. Parents therefore continue to play a critical role in offering additional resources required to improve the quality of education. Bureaucracy in accessing any funds as a hindrance to the smooth operation of school activities leading to a drop in enrollment levels of pupils in public primary schools.

#### ***Conclusions***

Based on the research objectives, the following conclusions were made;

Findings of this study indicate that the need of assessment is due to the quantitative growth in FPE than can easily compromise quality. It also involves putting in place corrective measure. Education Management should focus attention on strategies for keeping educational facilities and resources current, up to date, should consider enrolment of learners in each school and employ enough manpower. Poor management and internal inefficiency in schools has been cited as impacting negatively on quality of FPE in schools, poor prioritization of funds and projects in terms of budget allocations and misappropriation of funds have been reported cases in many public schools in most schools across the Sub-County.

Communities need to be sensitized on the need to enroll the children in FPE through offering support to ECDE to prepare the pupils going into primary level. This ensures that proper quality education is realized from the lower levels and is continuously improved throughout the learning process. Most pupils fail to go through early learning institutions which end up ruining the quality of education within the expected eight year course across the Sub-County.

Large numbers of pupils in classrooms is responsible for the poor performance in Kanduyi Sub-county. This is based on the fact that of the 10 schools 44.67 percent had between 21 and 40 teachers, while 33.33 percent of the 9 schools had at least 41 teachers. On the other hand, 11 schools out of 30 schools representing 25% had between 1-20 teachers.

#### ***Recommendations of the Study***

The following recommendations were made:

The government should also take an active role in the implementation of the FPE program to ensure that quality issues are continuously addressed so as to boost the benefits that are associated with the program. Funding should be based on the current and projected enrollment levels thereby ensuring that the available resources are not strained.

- i. The government should employ enough manpower and replace on time teachers who leave the profession through attrition. This will reduce teachers workload and every pupils be will be given due attention from teachers. At the same time this will eliminate overcrowding in classes.
- ii. The government should put in place plans to construct temporary classrooms to accommodate the extra numbers and also build new schools in congested areas of the larger Kanduyi Sub-County to lower enrollment levels to manageable . The government should restrain from building new schools before the existing ones are fully utilized to capacity. A school mapping exercise should be done to completion

that a full scale for construction of new schools will be developed. This is one of the lessons that Kenya has learnt from those countries that have been implementing FPE, that after a few years, enrollments start to stabilize and schools have been left with underutilized facilities that have cost the government a lot of funds that would otherwise have been channeled to provide quality inputs.

- iii. The provision of adequate facilities such as exercise and textbooks and enough teachers will promote the quality of education making it possible for the country to achieve the initial goals behind the introduction and implementation of FPE. This can be realized by engaging heads of schools in determining the amounts required as they are in a better position to estimate future enrolment levels and requirements.

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