

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Quality Challenges of Free Primary Education Policy Implementation among the Nomadic Pastoralist Communities in West Pokot, Kenya

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Abstract:

Pastoralists are livestock keepers occupying the marginal lands of the world. Governments and development partners have been putting enormous resources to see success of Education for All. Participation of pastoralists in education still remains a challenge despite the efforts put on the sector. It is estimated that 104 million children are not enrolled in school and 80 percent of them are from pastoralist communities. In Kenya west Pokot County records one of the lowest enrolments. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the quality implications of free implementation in West Pokot County. In Kenya the nomadic pastoralists of west Pokot have lagged behind in education matters. It was to determine the quality indicators of FPE among the pastoralist's communities. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of head teachers, students, parents and the County Director of Education in West Pokot County. The study involved 401 respondents which comprised of 300 students simply randomly selected from 50 primary schools in the entire West Pokot county, 50 purposely selected head teachers, 50 parents and 1 County Director of Education. This study was grounded on the rational action theory by Golthorpe and Breen. This study adopted the pragmatist philosophical paradigm. Data was coded and analyzed with the help of computer package for social scientists. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics particularly frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. It is also realized that the people of Pokot cherish their culture and wish not to be interfered by education. The results of this study provides an insight to the Ministry of Education, county governments, school managers, teachers and parents in West Pokot County, on the measure of emphasis to engage in to ensure a sustainable education policy for all the children of pastoralist communities in Kenya. The study recommends that the County Government needs to take a holistic approach to assess and address the needs of pastoralist communities, groups and individuals. Secondly County Governments should strive to put in place quality and quantity of instructional resources, regularly in-servicing teachers to improve their pedagogical skills and economically empower parents. The County Government should formulate policies and strategies that will govern financing of FPE program. Furthermore the County policy makers need to listen to the concerns and opinions of pastoralist. Lastly the national government needs to increase the budgetary allocations to the schools in pastoralist counties to improve the quality and quantity of input such as instructional materials and physical infrastructure. Finally, a research of the same kind should be conducted in other Counties with similar pastoralist characteristic. This study acts as an eye opener to the inhabitants of pastoralist regions to adopt new strategies which may enable the FPE policy implementation sustainable and to wit stand the test of times in pastoralists regions.

Keywords: Pastoralist, quality, implementation, pedagogical strategy, policy

1. Introduction

Worldwide literature on pastoralists is extremely uneven and is determined by politics and security issues and as such, therefore, there is need for empirical data Krattli (2005). Bleech (2000) reports that the information about Indian pastoralists lacks or is supported by weak documented descriptions of their systems. However, screening of the anthropological literature as well as of development indeed confirms that pastoralists represent a subsector of society that has received much less attention in comparison to other social groups from both research and development angle

Globally, a number of countries have made a commitment towards achieving Education for All, but the high cost of implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE) has made progress towards the goal very slow (Sheila, 2006).

The UN Nomad study cites that many pastoralists and Nomads perceive themselves differently than other rural poor. They do not feel on the fringes of society rather they feel themselves as part of a different society. (International institute for education planning, 2005).

Pastoralist communities continue to adapt new coping strategies against the very numerous social and economic challenges facing them. Attempts to change them from their cherished culture and resources would likely be strongly resisted. The pastoralist groups in Africa are characterized by constant conflicts, mistrust and violence between their neighbours because of the battles for pasture and water. Pastoralists of East Africa in the past have engaged in cattle rustling and confrontation as a strategy for survival (Markakis, 1999).

According to Roy and Edwina (2005), it is estimated that nomads constitute six percent of the African population and can be found in no less than 20 African countries. In all the countries, the rate of primary school enrolment for children among the nomadic communities in East Africa is significantly below the national average. The rate of secondary enrolment is very low. In Nigeria, the nomads' major constraints to participate in existing basic education programs were found to result from constant movement in search of water and pasture (Roy & Edwina, 2005). There has been an attempt by government and nongovernmental organizations to analyze the role played by children in the pastoralists' production systems in a view to understand what makes parents and guardians reluctant to release them to join school (Otiye, 2006).

Education programs normally underscore the need to enhance access to education among pastoral communities but most fall short of changing the status quo of glaring statistics of poor enrolment to formal schooling in the regions. There are apparent challenges that keep the statistics of enrolments rates so low among the pastoralists as compared to the other regions of the country. Harsh and isolated environments are likely to put pressure on competent and performing teachers to seek for transfers from such schools. The complex relationship between the pastoral communities and their social economic background casts more doubts as to how the local people are involved in policy process of improving access to primary schooling, and later to secondary schooling (Mugwe, 2006).

Most countries in Africa have their education programs centrally controlled, though a few of them have decentralized where the local authorities and District Education Boards have the responsibility to supervise the programs. In the poverty reduction strategy paper (GOK 2001), the government of Kenya puts on focus the Universal Primary Education (UPE) of the hitherto overlooked arid and semi-arid lands in order to improve equity and reduce poverty. The governments' action is in agreement with the process to achieving the millennium development goals and government's commitment to international declarations, protocols and conventions as resolved in world conferences on EFA, Jomtien-Thailand, 1990 and Dakar- Senegal in 2000.

In Malawi, Free primary education was introduced in October 1994 following its announcement in June by the newly elected government brought into power through the first multi-party elections since independence. Just prior to that time, the Banda-led government had brought in tuition waivers, in phases, from Standard 1, but parents still had been expected to pay book fees and to contribute to school funds. From 1994, however, the government was supposed to be responsible for all costs, though in practice it continued to expect communities to contribute to school construction. Given the lack of an overall policy framework and an analysis of the resource implications of embarking on this route, it is not surprising that even today critics allege that the expansion of primary education has been at the expense of quality (Kadzamira & Rose, 2014). Indeed, it is worth noting that the sudden introduction of FPE by the new administration was opposed by the development community which preferred the more gradual, phased route and only came around when FPE was declared, what was essentially a political imperative. In the first year of FPE, enrolments increased by over 50% from 1.9 m in 1993/4 to about 3.2m in 1994/5. Net enrolments prior to FPE had been 58% for girls, increasing to 73% by 1996; and 58% also for boys, but only increasing to 68% by 1996. Gross enrolments increased from 67.9% in 1990/1 to 158.1% in 1999/2000. Male and female gross enrolment rates were comparable in 1999/2000, at 157.9% and 158.3%, respectively (Bernbaum et al., 1998).

Such rapid enrolment increased challenges to primary education in an already weak system that even before expansion had a pupil-teacher ratio of 70:1 with 13% of teachers being unqualified and an average of 100 pupils crowding existing classrooms. The ministry of education in Malawi stated that the biggest challenges were, not surprisingly, pressure on classroom facilities, insufficient teachers and an inadequate supply of instructional materials, all areas to which the development community responded, attempting to cater for shortfalls of the order of 38,000 new classrooms and at least 25,000 additional teachers. Some of the measures introduced to cater for such shortfalls included the creation of the Malawi Integrated In-Service Teacher Education Project (MIITEP), designed to produce 18,000 teachers at a lower cost and in a much shorter time than conventional full-time teacher training programmes, the building of associated teachers' resource centres, engaging communities in school and teachers' housing construction, and providing instructional materials. At the same time, the administrative and management capacities of the Ministry of Education were to be developed to cope with such undertakings. Alongside these reforms, other policies were introduced such as allowing no uniforms, prohibiting corporal punishment, revitalizing parent-teacher associations, introducing curriculum changes and a new language policy and decentralizing to the district level (ibid).

The impact of the new commitment to FPE can be judged at one level by the more than doubling of government recurrent expenditure devoted to education. Between 1990/1 and 1997, this proportion rose from 11% to 24%, much of the

increases going toward new teachers' salaries. Primary education's share of total educational expenditure went up from 45% to 65% in the early years of FPE, not least because of the conditions attached to external funds, which themselves constituted about 40% of the primary education budget (Kadzamira & Rose, 2001, citing Bernbaum et al., 1998). The larger external financial undertaking has been reflected in a larger donor role in the policy arena as well, though this influence had been present well before the introduction of FPE

The circumstances surrounding the rapid quantitative expansion of the primary sector, together with this donor dependence has raised a number of issues regarding the long-term impact of the 1994 FPE policy of the Malawi Government. Some observers have pointed to a "loss of national vision" at the macro level and the "corrosion of pupil, teacher and parent relations" at the more micro level (Kendall, 2003) as well as a loss of teacher professionalism.

It is possible that Malawi's dependence on donors has resulted in more reactive than pro-active policy visions although current curriculum development efforts have been more inclusive, seeking grassroots involvement and approval. Further, if one is optimistic, the on-going decentralization of the Ministry of Education could elicit a wider spectrum of opinion that potentially could influence the educational development path. Much weighs on a Policy Investment Framework bringing together coherent, phased plans for grappling with the variety of policies required to ensure that quality improvement goes hand in hand with continued enrolment expansion and increased retention and that groups not traditionally afforded access are reached, but underlying any such policies there needs to be a widespread understanding of the role education can (and should) play in modern Malawi. Otherwise, the educational system will continue to be in 'catch-up' mode, rather than defining, for Malawi, what is most appropriate for its long-term education and economic development (Kendall, 2003)

In Tanzania, Free Primary Education was announced in 2001, largely as part of the PRSP process, having been incorporated into the Education Sector Development Programme, which has provided the framework for partnerships with the international development community since its appraisal in early 1999. In 2001, the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) was launched, and tuition fees and other mandatory cash contributions to schools were abolished. This was consistent with the EFA target of ensuring the enrolment of all 7-13 year-olds by 2006. A gross enrolment ratio of 98% in 1980 had declined by the early 1990s to below 70%, and in 1999/00, the year before FPE was introduced, the gross enrolment rate was even lower, 63%, the net enrolment rate reaching only 46.7%. 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 (Government of Tanzania, 2001).

The first year of operation of the reintroduction of FPE in Tanzania clearly illustrates its great potential for the long-term development of the sector, but it also bears foreboding, with similar lessons from the past. It is recognized that primary education is insufficient in and of itself, and that for it to fulfil its macro, poverty-alleviating purpose, it is important that it be relevant and include practical skills. It is also recognized that its reintroduction requires that simultaneous attention be given to all the inter-related policies: recruiting and upgrading teachers, monitoring and supervising their professional development, the predictable and regular disbursement and appropriate use of capitation and development grants, school and financial management training, empowerment of school committees, etc. Capacity limitations, however, as elsewhere, constrain such simultaneity. In addition, given the gradualist approach taken by the PEDP, complementary basic education must be more than a second-best solution to out-of-school youth. In the balance, as ever, will be not only quantitative expansion and the qualitative content of basic education, but also the balance between what is essentially a centralized approach and the necessary decentralized empowerment for its appropriate implementation (Kendall, 2003).

Oxfam (2009) indicates that there are 72 million children in the developing world who are out of school. While the national enrolment rate is 94 percent, it stands at 78 percent in West Pokot County. Worse still is the realization that among the other herders or pastoralist's communities' enrolments is less than 40 percent. Table 1 shows the counties with the lowest number of persons (Age 6+) who ever attended school in arid and semi-arid lands in Kenya.

County	Male	Female	Total
Mandera	28.5	5	16.2
Turkana	26.6	6	16.3
Marsabit	20.5	14.6	17.6
Garissa	29.6	7.8	19.5
Wajir	35.5	7.1	21.2
Samburu	41	21.2	30.7
Isiolo	46.7	27.5	37.8
Tana River	38.5	23.4	30.8
National	82.5	71.2	76.8
West Pokot	49.7	36	43
Moyale	48.4	26	37.7

Table 1: Persons Whoever Attended School in Kenya's Pastoralist Counties

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics KNBS (2008)

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Sustainability of Free Primary Education (FPE) policy implementation among pastoralist communities needs to be investigated against a backdrop of emerging trends, existing education policy, interventions and strategies. Quality matters of FPE among the pastoralists has for a long time remained a contentious issue both to the individuals and the political elites. Quality results and outcomes are the ultimate concerns of the stakeholders in the pastoralist areas. The FPE policy implementation seems to bring solutions to only one group of citizens in the high potential areas and does contrary to the pastoralist groups who inhabit the marginal lands in Kenya. In view of this, it is evident that immediately after the policy is introduced it leads to an upsurge of enrolments but the same enrolments do not last long or even completion and Transition is not realized in the marginal areas of Kenya leave alone the quality outcomes. It is essential therefore to conduct a study to find out quality issues which contribute to the phenomenon and make possible remedial suggestion to make the Free Primary Education policy objectives sustainable and yield what is expected to yield. It is important to address educational disparities through policies which build on the rubrics of demographic environment of pastoralist communities.

Statistics at the county education office at West Pokot shows that education sector in the larger West Pokot community is characterized by low enrolment and literacy levels which stand at 44% and 6% respectively. This a demonstration of a policy not attaining what it intended to do having the main objective of the policy. The pastoralists regions has for a long time been a hotbed for cattle rustling, lawlessness, arsonist and backwardness which need to be addressed. Free primary education policy has been viewed as one way of offering the solution to the problem, but this hasn't been the case. Some counties in Kenya which are known to be non-pastoralists seem to have benefited more from FPE policy than those counties known to be pastoralists and demonstrate how Pokot County is yearning for effective policy options that would deal with one of the lowest enrolment rates in the country. This study therefore assessed the sustainability of FPE policy having in mind the desired expected outcomes from the policy since inception.

2. Literature Review

Historically, education policies have tended to neglect pastoralist areas. Education participation and attainment in pastoralist areas has been low in relation to other areas in Kenya (Kratli & Dyer, 2009). The colonial government was not interested in pastoralist communities which led to low rates of formal education. There was also low missionary activity in this area. Even after independence, little was done to rid disparities and marginalization of pastoralist communities. The status quo is at the moment putting the government on its toes in an attempt to formulate a working policy for the marginalized groups an exercise which is not easy. A ministry for ASAL regions has since been established to address the challenges of the region.

Constant review of the education policy for the nomads have been necessitated by the fact that the existing system of formal education is designed for sedentary groups, implying that the pastoral groups would have to settle down if their children would have to go to school. According to Dall, as cited in Roy and Edwina (2005), educational programs for nomads have failed primarily because decision makers have sought to use education as a tool for transforming nomadic population into sedentary ones. This may have made parents to see no value in education which appears to be in immediate conflict with their lifestyle and socio-economic activities.

Persistence of poverty and other unfulfilled basic needs are factors that constrain the social, political and economic opportunities available to Kenyans. Kenyan parents place a high premium on quality education as this is seen as the only opportunity to break away from poverty. This has further been reinforced by the government's adoption of the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy aimed at the provision of education and training for all Kenyan children as fundamental to the success of the government overall development strategy. While a lot has been written by the government on the success of the FPE in Kenya, implementation problems continue to be experienced at the grassroots level. It is important to examine the FPE impact and sustainability as the government is already pledging Free Secondary Education (FSE) if they remain in power. Could a shift in government affect the current funding of FPE, which is partly reliant on external donors? This research aims to review the impact and sustainability of the FPE policy in the hope that the challenges and lessons learnt can be addressed so as to retain the focus on 'Education for All' (EFA) as a development strategy for the nation (Ahmed&DeINinno, 2012).

Although Kenya introduced Free Primary Education in 2003, many children are still unable to access education due to long distances between home and school and poor quality of learning environment and teaching methods, among other obstacles. Retention and completion rates need to be improved, especially for girls and vulnerable children such as orphans, children living in arid and semi-arid lands or urban informal settlements, street children, child labourers/workers and children with special needs as these are all children at heightened risk of dropping out of school (UNICEF, 2010).

Many districts in Kenyan arid areas are amongst the poorest in the country who is pastoralists, where up to 70-80 percent of households live below the poverty line, often living beyond the reach of government services, weak village infrastructure and limited access to basic education. In addition, geographical and climatic characteristics leave them to cope with drought and depend on degraded natural resources for survival. This has created living conditions that are particularly detrimental as the majority of residents are pastoralists who depend on animal products as their sole source of food and income. These factors have a great influence to accessing basic education (Aga Khan Development Network, 2007).

The responsibility of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is congruent with the common sociologist assertion that education can be an instrument of cultural change. It is not out of place to imagine that parental

socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic achievement of children in school. Whatsoever affects the development environment of children would possibly affect their education or disposition to it. Parental status is one of such variables. When a woman's nutritional status improves, so too does the nutrition of her young children.

In line with the above assertion, Hill et al. (2004) argue that the socio-economic status of parents do not only affect the academic performance, but also makes it possible for children from low background to compete well their counterparts from high socio-economic backgrounds under the same academic environment. Moreover, Smith, Fagan and Ulvund (2002) assert that a significant predictor of intellectual performance at age of 8 years includes parental socio-economic status. In the same vein, other studies have posited that parental socio-economic status could affect school children as to bring about flexibility to adjustment to the different school schedules (Guerin et al., 2001). In a previous local finding in Nigeria, Oni (2007) and Omoegun(2007) averred that there is significant difference between the rates of deviant behaviour among students from high and low socio-economic statuses.

The health status of the children which could also be traceable to parental socio-economic background can be another factor that can affect the academic performance of the students. Adewale (2002) reports that in a rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and health problems are prevalent, children's academic performance is greatly hindered. This assertion is again hinged on the nature of parental socio-economic background. Moreover, Eze (1996) opines that when a child gets proper nutrition, health care, stimulation during preschool years, the ability to interact with and take optimal advantage of the full complement of resources offered by any formal learning environment is enhanced.

3. Materials and Methods

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The descriptive survey design is most suitable for collecting data that describes the nature of existing conditions or identifying the standards against which existing conditions can be compared better (Brown&Dowing,1998).Cohen(1994) notes that it is less complicated, less expensive and is adequate. There were 503 primary schools in the county and a sample of the 10 percent of the schools was done.50 schools were randomly selected. Head teachers were purposely sampled from the sampled primary schools. The researcher purposely picked a parent from the selected schools. The sample size of pupils was arrived at by use of the Reid and Boore (1991) formula. The total number of respondents was 300 pupils, 50 purposely sampled headteachers and 50 purposely selected parents. One County Director of education was purposely selected. According to Merriam (1998), purposive sampling emphasizes on a criterion-based selection of information rich cases from which a researcher can discover understand and gain more insight on issues crucial for this study.

Sampling process therefore selected individuals groups and organizations that would provide insight into the phenomena under study. Data were collected using structured questionnaire. Responses from all questionnaire items were crosschecked to facilitate coding and processing for analysis using the statistical package for social science version 20.0 (spss v 20.0) computer programme. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the relationship between variables. Simple linear regression analysis was computed to determine the statistical relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Analyzed data were presented in form of tables and charts.

4. Results

4.1. Quality Indicators of FPE Policy Implementation

Quality indicators of free primary education policy implementation are varied in the regions occupied by pastoralists. Pastoralists have lagged behind in matters education for a long period of time. This is evidenced by low enrolment rates among the Pokots and high dropout rates. This paper looked at how the high rise in enrolment following the introduction of Free primary education impacted on quality of the policy. To achieve this objective, the respondents were asked to respond to items in the questionnaire on a Likert scale of 1-5. The results are presented in table 2.

Quality Indicators of Education under FPE		SA5	A4	U3	D2	SD1	M	SDV
		%	%	%	%	%		
FPE has led to high pupil turn up in schools	Head teacher	39.8	60.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.70	.774
	Parents	30.3	48.2	9.7	4.3	7.5	4.443	.548
	Pupils	51.2	38	4.3	6.5	0.0	4.132	.935
FPE contributes to high premium on quality education as this is seen as the only opportunity to break away from poverty	Head teacher	44.1	34.4	0.0	12.9	8.6	4.505	.503
	Parents	49	26.3	8.6	7.5	8.6	4.423	.712
	Pupils	50.9	37.6	5.0	0.0	6.5	4.323	.470
FPE has increased academic performance of pupils from the pastoralist communities	Head teacher	53.8	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.172	.732
	Parents	53.8	34.4	0.0	4.3	7.5	4.580	.538
	Pupils	61.15	33.3	0.0	0.0	5.4	4.989	.700
FPE has improved the girl child enrolment to schools among the pastoralists	Head teacher	57	34.4	0.0	0.0	8.6	4.505	.503
	Parents	42.0	29	0.0	16.1	12.9	3.968	.667
	Pupils	39.8	26.9	0.0	17.2	16.1	4.559	.521

Table 2. Quality Indicators of Education under FPE

From the table 2, it is evident that majority (98%) of the head teachers agreed with the assertion that high pupil turn up in schools indicating that the pupils have been attracted to schools. This was supported by a mean of 4.600. On whether FPE has led to high premium on quality education as this is seen as the only opportunity to break away from poverty.

On whether FPE has led to an increased academic performance of pupils from the pastoral communities the head teachers agreed at 100% supported by a mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.744. When asked whether FPE has led to increase in girl child enrolment and participation in education the headteachers agreed at 78% and supported by a mean of 4.5. and a standard deviation of 0.503.

This implies that pastoralists of West Pokot have benefited from the implementation of FPE. These results are supported by the GOK (2005) observation that first and foremost states invest in infrastructure to create learning environments and opportunities for education of every child. Provision of schools, teacher's books, and equipment is fundamental prerequisite of education of every child. The increase in enrolments as noticed in many schools led to the learning resources being overstretched and jeopardizing of quality education among the pastoralist.

4.2. Efforts to Attaining Desirable Outcomes of FPE among the Pastoralists

The researcher sought to find out the efforts which can be used to improve on desirable outcome of FPE for pastoralists. The respondents were asked on whether public awareness would improve the outcome of FPE. 74% (37) of the head teachers agreed, 50% (23) of the parents agreed on this and 72.2% (159) of the pupils agreed. This implies that most of the pastoralist communities lack awareness on the FPE policy. This is supported by the Republic of Kenya Report (1999), popularly known as Koech report, which observed that the pastoral communities of Kenya require affirmative action in order to address the inequalities that had caused them to lag behind in accessing and participating in education. When asked on whether establishment of low cost boarding schools could improve on desirable outcome of FPE, all the head teachers in the selected schools agreed, 66% (33) of parents agreed and 91.4% (201) of the pupils agreed. This implies that establishment of boarding schools is the right way of improving access to FPE among the pastoralist communities because they could be able to evade cultural practices like female genital mutilation and early marriage. When asked whether maintenance of quality assurance and standards improves the outcomes of FPE, 78% (39) of the head teachers agreed, while 82% (37) of the parents agreed and 89.1% (196) of the pupils agreed. This implies that quality assurance and standards is a factor in improving access to primary schooling among the pastoralist communities. When the respondents were asked whether encouraging partnership in the management of FPE would bring a desirable outcome in FPE, 64% (32) of the head teachers agreed, 80% (36) of the parents agreed and 94.5% (208) of the pupils agreed. This implies that community involvement is effective in ensuring access to free primary schooling among pastoralist communities. This is supported by World Bank (2008) which emphasized on the increasing participation of various stakeholders in education. King and Hill (2007) also affirm that literacy leads to better health and education, reduced infant mortality, higher earnings, reduced fertility rates and improved quality of life for all nations

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Quality Indicators of FPE Policy Implementation among the Pastoralists

The objective of this study was to identify the quality indicators of FPE policy implementation among the Pastoralist communities in West Pokot County. The head teachers' findings on this indicated that FPE has had limited physical facilities. This was agreed at 81.3% with a mean of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 0.904. When asked whether poor infrastructure hinders access to schools, the head teachers agreed at 79.4% with a mean of 3.696 and a standard deviation of 1.201. On the issue of whether poor funding for FPE is normally experienced, the head teachers agreed at 77.9% with a mean of 3.757 and

standard deviation of 1.196. When asked whether difficulty in curriculum implementation hinders FPE policy, the head teachers agreed at 77.8% with a mean of 4.217 and a standard deviation of 1.024. Further, when asked whether limited community awareness affects FPE policy, the head teachers agreed at 83% with a mean of 4.035 and standard deviation of 1.162 and lastly when asked whether teachers' turnover has affected FPE implementation, the head teachers agreed at 80.8% with a mean of 3.600 and standard deviation of 1.283. These findings are supported by MOEST (2005), who stated that the challenges to FPE include: overstretched facilities; overcrowding in schools especially those in urban slums; high Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTR) in densely populated areas; high cost of equipment for children with special needs; diminished community support following their misconstrued role vis-a-vis that of the government in the implementation of the FPE initiative; gender and regional disparities; increased number of orphans in and out of school as a result of HIV/AIDS; and other reasons such as external inefficiencies.

Further, the findings indicated that 78.9% of the parents agreed that FPE has had limited physical facilities, with a mean of 3.817 and a standard deviation of 1.308, while 84.5% agreed that poor infrastructure hinders access to schools, with a mean of 4.635 and a standard deviation of 1.813. On the issue of whether poor funding for FPE is normally experienced, the parents agreed at 77.9% with a mean of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.691. When asked whether difficulty in curriculum implementation hinders FPE policy, the parents also agreed at 55.5% with a mean of 3.365 and a standard deviation of 1.447. Lastly, when asked whether limited community awareness affects FPE policy, the parents agreed at 84.4% with a mean of 4.643 and standard deviation of 1.843. These findings are supported by Mbatia (2004) who concurs with MOEST that FPE has encouraged more enrolment at lower primary levels and variables such as class size, pupil-desk ratio, pupil-book ratio, and school schedule and class control have changed.

The pupils' findings indicated that 72.1% of the pupils agreed that FPE has had limited physical facilities with a mean of 4.270 and a standard deviation of 0.967. When asked whether poor infrastructure hinders access to schools, the pupils agreed at 75.4% with a mean of 3.270 and standard deviation of 1.366. On the issue of whether poor funding for FPE is normally experienced, the pupils agreed at 100% with a mean of 3.818 and a standard deviation of 1.261. When asked whether difficulty in curriculum implementation hinders FPE policy, the pupils agreed at 88.9% with a mean of 3.696 and a standard deviation of 1.201. Further, when asked whether limited community awareness affects FPE policy, they agreed at 76.6% with a mean of 3.748 and a standard deviation of 1.198 and lastly when asked whether teachers' turnover has affected FPE implementation, pupils agreed at 79% with a mean of 3.600 and standard deviation of 1.283. These findings are supported by Williams (2000) who stated that all over the world, expansion of education access has not kept pace in the construction of new schools; therefore, increase in student population has led to expansion in class sizes and reduction in teacher's pupil's ratio.

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