

Influence of Free Primary Education Programme on Pastoralists' Pupils' Participation in Primary Schools in Turkana County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study investigated influence of free primary education programme on pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya. The research hypothesis was H01: There is no significant relationship between free primary education programme and pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya. The study was based on Human Capital Theory, developed in 1964 by economist Gary Becker who posits that investment in education increases individuals' economic productivity, benefiting both individuals and society. The study was also based on Social Exclusion Theory, proposed in 1994 by Hilary Silver. The study targeted 45250 pupils, 907 teachers, 219 head teachers, 9050 parents from 219 schools, 3 Sub-County Directors of Education (each representing the three sub-counties of Turkana Central, Loima and Turkana West) and 1 County Director of Education. Simple random sampling was deployed to sample schools, pupils, teachers, head teachers and parents of the state-owned primary schools in every sub-county while purposive sampling was utilised to select the Sub-County Directors of Education, County Director of Education and County Commissioner. The results indicated that there is a statistical significant relationship between FPE and pupils' participation in primary schools in regular and mobile schools. Table 6 shows that the predictor displayed significant relationships, Free Primary Education (PA) ($\beta=.429$, $p<.05$) had the highest influence on the criterion variable This leads to rejection of the null hypothesis that "Free Primary Education does not significantly affect pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular and mobile primary schools in Turkana County". The study concluded that Overall, FPE has a significant effect on pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular and mobile primary schools in Turkana County. It was then recommended that there is need to recruit more teachers, especially those who understand the unique challenges of schools in Turkana County. From the outset, the state should provide sufficient funds to support teaching and learning activities fully. The government should also build more infrastructure for schools and increase security in the area. The government should subsidize or fully cover costs that parents incur, such as for school uniforms and meals not covered within the school feeding programme. is also a need for timely disbursement of tuition fees to schools to ensure instructional activities are not disrupted by delays and Moreover, parents should be sensitized on the exact education amenities for which the government pays to avoid confusion. In general, it is necessary to create awareness to parents on the benefits of education.

Keywords: Influence, Free Primary Education, Pastoralists' Pupils' Participation, Primary Schools

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1.0 Introduction

Lewis and Thompson (2022) analyzed the effects of free public education in the U.S. and explored the funding mechanisms, social support structures, and inclusive practices needed to enhance participation, providing insights relevant to FPE's influence on access and retention, especially for rural and underserved populations (Lewis & Thompson, 2022). Robertson, Patel & Kumar, (2024) examined mobile learning solutions in remote areas focused on digital learning access in underserved UK areas and addresses mobile education's potential in facilitating participation among geographically isolated populations, similar to pastoralist students benefiting from FPE. Xiao and Zhuang (2020) examined the use of boarding schools in China's western regions as a strategy to improve educational access for nomadic populations, drawing parallels to FPE and revealed that boarding facilities effectively address attendance issues caused by mobile lifestyles.

In Nigeria, Ibrahim and Usman (2023) studied the impact of FPE on rural and pastoralist communities in northern regions and found that FPE policies have increased initial enrollment; however, pastoralist students still struggle with regular attendance due to seasonal migration. In a comparative study, Adeoye and Mensah (2022) analyzed FPE's impact on pastoralist communities in Nigeria and Ghana and found that while FPE reduced cost barriers, structural obstacles such as the distance to schools, lack of culturally relevant curriculum, and absence of pastoralist-focused policies continue to impact pastoralist children's full participation. In South Africa, Kgatla and Mokoena (2022) explored how FPE policies influence participation among children from transient or rural backgrounds and discovered that while FPE has improved enrollment among underserved communities, structural inequalities, such as transportation challenges and lack of localized schools, persist. A study in Ghana by Owusu and Adusei (2020) examined the FPE program's role in improving school attendance in rural and semi-nomadic regions and reported increased enrollment rates due to FPE but identified significant challenges related to resource availability, infrastructure, and teacher distribution in pastoralist areas. A cross-border study by Wondimu and Mwangi (2024) examined the FPE model in Ethiopia and Kenya, specifically its impact on pastoralist students in border areas and found that FPE contributed to higher enrollment, but without the support of mobile classrooms or boarding facilities, attendance remained inconsistent among pastoralist communities and suggested a hybrid model that incorporates distance and mobile learning as part of FPE initiatives in these regions. Nyaga and Auma (2022) conducted research on the gendered effects of FPE on educational access for pastoralist communities in Ethiopia and found that while FPE positively influences participation, cultural expectations for girls and boys create disparities in school attendance and retention and FPE program contributed to more inclusive enrollment. Yusuf and Noor (2024) examined policy gaps in FPE implementation for pastoralist populations in Somalia and found that while FPE policies increased enrollment, pastoralist families' reliance on livestock migration affected children's consistent participation.

In Tanzania, Mollé and Shilla (2023) found that while FPE programs initially boosted school participation rates, retention challenges due to mobility and household economic pressures persist and that integrating mobile schooling units and flexible schedules would be essential to accommodating pastoralist lifestyles, which are often incompatible with traditional school models. In Uganda, Kabirisi and Anyango (2021) examined FPE's impact on pastoralist pupils, with a focus on gender disparities and found that while FPE increased overall access to schooling, girls from pastoralist communities were less likely to attend school regularly due to additional cultural expectations and responsibilities. Nabiryo, Okwiri & Musoke, (2023) explored the influence of FPE policies on pastoralist pupils' participation, particularly in northeastern Uganda and highlighted that while FPE policies have reduced cost barriers, many pastoralist children face other challenges such as long travel distances, seasonal migration, and lack of culturally relevant curriculum. Munyaneza and Nshimiyimana (2022) researched how FPE influences school participation among mobile and marginalized populations, including pastoralists in Rwanda and found that while FPE has increased access, barriers such as limited schooling infrastructure in remote areas and socio-cultural factors continue to affect consistent school attendance.

A study by Otieno and Kamau (2020) evaluated the influence of supplementary school feeding programs on pastoralist pupils' participation in FPE settings in Kenya and found that FPE's success in increasing participation was enhanced when paired with feeding programs, as food security is a significant concern for pastoralist families and the feeding programs were a strong incentive for regular attendance, which improved both engagement and performance among pupils. Mwangi and Kareithi (2021) assessed the FPE program's effectiveness in Kenya's northern pastoralist regions, noting a significant increase in initial enrollment among pastoralist pupils and found that despite these gains, high dropout rates persisted due to seasonal migrations and family reliance on child labor and while FPE alleviates direct schooling costs, it does not fully address the economic and cultural factors influencing pastoralists' participation in schooling.

In Turkana County, Lomuro and Etyang (2021) conducted a study on the effects of the FPE program on enrollment and retention of pastoralist pupils and found that while FPE has increased enrollment rates, issues such as seasonal migration, inadequate infrastructure, and distance from schools negatively affect student retention. Atieno and Ndung'u (2022) examined socioeconomic factors that impact the effectiveness of the FPE program in Turkana and found that, despite the reduction of direct school fees, indirect costs such as uniforms and transportation limit pastoralist children's school participation. Lokuruka and Lemerian (2023) researched the alignment of the FPE program with the specific needs of pastoralist pupils in Turkana County and indicates that while FPE increases enrollment, it falls short in adapting to the mobile lifestyle of pastoralist families, which affects regular attendance. Kiptoo and Esikuri (2020) analyzed how cultural norms and FPE implementation

impact school attendance among girls from pastoralist backgrounds in Turkana and found that while FPE has improved access for boys, girls are often kept out of school to assist with domestic chores. The study therefore seeks to investigate the influence of free primary education programme on pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The Ministry of Education has been at the forefront of promoting FPE by eliminating school fees, providing instructional materials, and funding infrastructure development. These efforts have helped improve overall enrollment rates across Kenya, including Turkana, where access to education has been historically low. Data from the Ministry of Education indicates that FPE has positively influenced school participation among pastoralist pupils by reducing financial barriers. Additionally, policies aimed at strengthening the education sector, such as the deployment of more teachers and enhanced teacher training, have attempted to bridge educational disparities faced by pastoralist communities. The Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) has also been involved in capacity building and management training for school leaders, providing head teachers and school management teams in Turkana with skills to manage FPE resources effectively. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) has made strides in curriculum adaptation by introducing content that is more inclusive and culturally relevant for diverse Kenyan communities. For pastoralist pupils in Turkana, the KICD has worked to ensure that the curriculum is more accessible and adaptable to the unique needs of children in nomadic settings. However, despite these efforts, Turkana County still records some of the lowest retention and completion rates in primary education, highlighting persistent gaps in the effective integration of pastoralist children into the schooling system and due to the high teacher turnover in pastoralist areas and a mismatch between educational provisions and the pastoralist way of life, the TSC has faced challenges in ensuring teacher stability and continuity, impacting the quality and consistency of education delivery. The lack of local engagement and limited understanding of pastoralist cultures among some school leaders have affected the implementation of FPE, as school management practices often do not align with the pastoralist community's needs. therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of free primary education programme on pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The study was based on the following Objective:

1. To determine the influence of free primary education programme on pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The study was based on the following research hypothesis:

H01: There is no significant relationship between free primary education programme and pastoralists' pupils' participation in primary schools in Turkana county, Kenya.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Free Primary Education

The FPE program, launched in Kenya in 2003, aimed to increase access to education by eliminating school fees. Studies show that this policy resulted in a significant increase in enrollment rates, particularly among marginalized communities. According to Wanjala (2020), the implementation of FPE has been marked by a substantial rise in the number of children enrolled in primary schools, with the gross enrollment rate reaching over 100% in some areas. However, challenges related to infrastructure and teacher shortages persist, affecting the quality of education delivered. Ndung'u and Nyambura (2021) highlights that FPE has significantly increased enrollment among girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds, contributing to narrowing the gender gap in primary education and emphasizes that while the program has made education more accessible, regional disparities remain, particularly in arid and semi-arid areas where pastoralist communities reside. A report by Mugo et al. (2022) suggests that while enrollment rates have increased, the lack of adequate resources and trained teachers has negatively impacted the quality of education and urgent interventions need to be addressed on teacher training and resource allocation to enhance educational quality and learning outcomes for pupils.

According to Karanja (2021), issues such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and high student-to-teacher ratios continue to undermine the program's effectiveness and suggests that addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach involving government, non-governmental organizations, and community stakeholders. Kibet and Alando (2024) proposes several policy recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the FPE program such as increasing funding for educational resources, implementing targeted programs for rural and marginalized areas, and improving teacher training and retention strategies. Ochieng and Okwiri (2023) underscores the importance of community involvement in the success of the FPE program and found that when parents and community members are actively involved in school governance and decision-making, there is a noticeable improvement in student performance and school management which is crucial for sustaining the benefits of the FPE program.

2. 2. Free Primary Education Programme and Pastoralists' Pupils' Participation

Ekai, Luvuno & Ndung'u, (2021) highlights that despite increased enrollments, maintaining regular attendance among pastoralist pupils remains a challenge and seasonal migrations tied to the pastoralist way of life lead to fluctuating attendance rates, making it difficult for children to consistently progress through the curriculum. FPE policies, while effective in urban and settled communities, have shown limitations in Turkana, where flexible, context-sensitive learning structures are needed. Kipkorir (2023) notes that these attendance issues require innovative policy adaptations to support the mobile nature of pastoralist communities. Teachers deployed to Turkana County often face challenges like inadequate housing, limited resources, and high student-teacher ratios, leading to high turnover and teacher shortages (Ndung'u & Wamalwa, 2020). According to Okutoy, Otieno & Ochieng, (2024), constraints negatively impact pupils' learning experiences and lead to lower participation and retention rates and FPE policy has increased the demand for teachers and infrastructure, but implementation has lagged in pastoralist regions like Turkana due to logistical and resource limitations. Ekal and Makara (2022) points to the cultural mismatch between pastoralist lifestyles and the current FPE curriculum, which is primarily sedentary. For example, pastoralist communities prioritize skills related to livestock rearing, which is central to their way of life. FPE's one-size-fits-all approach does not accommodate this, resulting in a lack of culturally relevant education for pastoralist children. Studies recommend that education policies be adapted to reflect the pastoralists' cultural contexts, potentially through mobile schools or seasonal education programs that align with migration patterns (Ng'etich, 2023). Ekwenye, (2024) posits that improving FPE for pastoralist communities include creating mobile school units, recruiting locally trained teachers familiar with pastoralist communities, and engaging community leaders in school management and such changes could address the specific needs of pastoralist children and improve both participation and completion rates in primary education.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on Human Capital Theory, developed in 1964 by economist Gary Becker who posits that investment in education increases individuals' economic productivity, benefiting both individuals and society. Education is viewed as a means of acquiring skills and knowledge that lead to greater economic value and improved quality of life. The introduction of free primary education (FPE) can be seen as an investment in human capital. By providing free education, the government is reducing financial barriers, enabling pastoralist children to access education. The theory suggests that improved access to education will result in increased participation and potentially better future opportunities for these pupils. The investment in education can be expected to yield returns in terms of individual productivity and societal benefits, particularly as pastoralist communities gain skills to diversify their livelihoods in a challenging economic environment

The study was also based on Social Exclusion Theory, proposed in 1994 by Hilary Silver who explores how marginalized groups are systematically excluded from full participation in society due to factors like poverty, ethnicity, and geographic location. This theory highlights the impact of societal structures that prevent marginalized groups from accessing resources like education. In Turkana County, where pastoralist communities have traditionally been marginalized and often face barriers to accessing education, the FPE program aims to reduce this exclusion. By examining the impact of FPE on pastoralist pupils' participation, the study can investigate whether the policy effectively mitigates the barriers pastoralists face. Social Exclusion Theory helps contextualize the challenges pastoralist pupils encounter and assesses whether FPE reduces the social and structural barriers that hinder their educational participation.

Combining Human Capital Theory and Social Exclusion Theory provides a comprehensive framework to analyze how free primary education influences pastoralist pupils' participation. Human Capital Theory explains the potential long-term benefits of education for the pastoralist community, while Social Exclusion Theory highlights the immediate barriers to access that FPE aims to address. By examining both the economic benefits of increased participation and the reduction of social exclusion, the study can provide a holistic understanding of FPE's impact on pastoralist pupils in Turkana County

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was used as it allows the researcher to describe characteristics of an individual or group as they really are (Shikokoti, Okoth and Abungana, 2024). Descriptive survey is only concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held and process that are ongoing. The target group was 45250 pupils, 907 teachers, 219 head teachers, 9050 parents from 219 schools, 3 Sub-County Directors of Education (each representing the three sub-counties of Turkana Central, Loima and Turkana West) and 1 County Director of Education. To identify respondents, the study utilized simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Simple random sampling was deployed to sample schools, pupils, teachers, head teachers and parents of the state-owned primary schools in every sub-county while purposive sampling was utilized to select the Sub-County Directors of Education, County Director of Education and County Commissioner.

Five standard seven pupils, three teachers, one head teacher and one parent were sampled in every primary school in each sub-county. In Turkana West Sub-county, the researcher had a sample size of 5 mobile and 20 regular primary schools, 5 and 20 head teachers from the mobile and regular primary schools, respectively, 15 teachers from mobile schools and 60 teachers from regular schools, 5 parents from mobile and 20 from regular schools, and 25 pupils from mobile and 100 pupils from regular public primary schools, as well as 1 Assistant County Director of Education. In Loima Sub-County, the researcher had a sample size of 5 mobile and 15 regular public primary schools, 5 head teachers from mobile and 15 head teachers from regular schools, 15 teachers from mobile and 45 teachers from regular schools, 5 parents from mobile and 15 from parents regular schools, 25 pupils from mobile and 75 pupils from regular schools, and 1 Assistant County Director of Education. In Turkana Central Sub-County, the researcher sampled 30 public primary schools, comprising 18 regular schools and 12 mobile schools. Out of these schools, 12 head teachers were picked from mobile schools and 18 were picked from regular schools. Moreover, 36 teachers from mobile schools and 54 teachers from regular schools were selected. Additionally, 12 parents from mobile and 18 from regular schools were selected. Regarding pupils, 60 were selected from mobile schools and 90 were drawn from regular schools. Lastly, 1 Assistant County Director of Education was selected from the Sub-County. In order to select the lecturers, a 20% sample was used which was deemed to be a big sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019) and large enough to identify a significant effect (Kothari, 2019). According to Cohen, Manions & Morrison (2018), simple random sampling technique allows a researcher to get a representative sample without biasness. Therefore, all lecturers had equal chances to participate. Simple random sampling was used to select the Lecturers while census sampling was used to select Deans and Chair of Departments. Google forms were used to collect data from the lecturers, while Interviews were used on Deans and Chair of Departments. To enhance the content validity of the instruments a pre-test of the instruments was carried out. Piloting aimed at testing the clarity of test items, suitability of language used and the feasibility of the study. The reliability of the instruments was determined using test-retest technique. Pearson product moment correlation was used to compute the reliability coefficient (Shikokoti, Okoth and Abungana, 2024). Descriptive statistics were used in the analyses of the collected data. For inferential statistic, Pearson product moment was used for Hypothesis One and Chi-square test for hypothesis two to test the relationship between the hypothesis. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 22, was used to code and enter the data into the computer for analysis after the questions were reviewed for completeness.

4.0 Results

Table 1 shows the state of FPE in public Primary schools

Table 1: State of FPE in Public Primary Schools

FPE interventions	Regular Schools		Mobile Schools	
	Yes(%)	No(%)	Yes(%)	No(%)
Do you pay fees in this school	0(0.0)	253(100.0)	0(0.0)	120(100.0)
Does this school have enough teachers	0(0.0)	253(100.0)	0(0.0)	120(100.0)
Does this school have enough T/L materials	1(0.4)	252(99.6)	1(0.8)	119(99.2)
Does school give free sanitary pads to girls	23(9.1)	230(90.9)	11(9.2)	109(90.8)
Does school have electricity	228(90.1)	25(9.9)	97(80.8)	23(19.2)
Valid n		253		120

Data contained in Table 1 shows that all the pupils in regular, 253(100.0 percent), and mobile, 120(100 percent), schools indicated that they did not pay school fees. This implied that the schools complied with the state policy of FPE where parents are not supposed to cater for any portion of the tuition fees required by schools.

On whether the schools had adequate teachers, all of the pupils in both the regular and mobile schools 253(100.0 percent), and mobile, 120(100 percent), schools indicated that they did not have adequate teachers. This implied that even though the government had implemented the FPE policy, it had not provided adequate teachers to schools. This could be attributed to the fact that once FPE was rolled out there had been an increase in pupils' enrolment, which had put a strain on the existing number of teachers.

The results also indicated that in both regular and mobile schools, the teaching and learning materials were not adequate. This was attested to by 252(99.6 percent) of the pupils from regular schools and 119(99.2 percent) of the pupils from mobile schools. This also implied that the tuition free policy was not effectively implemented. The lack of sufficient instructional resources may lead to parents spending money to provide such materials hence violating the free tuition policy.

Among the mechanisms of ensuring that girls have access and fully participate in school is the availing of sanitary pads to girls. To this effect, the study compared the availing of sanitary towels in mobile and regular schools. The results indicated that only 23(9.1 percent) of the pupils from regular schools said that they were provided with sanitary towels. The rest 230(90.9 percent) said they never received sanitary pads. This was indicative of the fact that there was low provision of sanitary pads to girls in most regular schools in Turkana County. Similarly, a majority, 90.8 percent, of pupils from mobile schools said they never received sanitary pads in school. Only a paltry 9.2 percent said they received the sanitary pads. This suggested that the participation rate for girls, especially during the time they were experiencing menstruation, in both regular and mobile schools was threatened by the absence of sanitary pads in school.

Installation of electricity in schools was among the Jubilee government manifestos aimed at strengthening the FPE intervention. It was aimed to facilitate the supply of laptop computers for pupils in grade one. To this effect, the researcher found it important to ask the pupils to indicate whether or not their schools had been connected with electric power. The findings indicated that most, 90.1 percent, of the regular schools had had electricity installed. Majority, 80.8 percent, of the pupils from mobile schools also hinted that their institutions had been supplied with electricity. These findings implied that more regular schools had been connected to electricity compared to mobile schools.

The above findings corresponded with those of Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) (2013) that in a bid of Kenya to implement a long-standing goal of achieving universal primary education targeted since independence, the state launched FPE in 2003. Since then, enrolments rates have increased sharply while the quantitative goal has not been accompanied by any clearly articulated policy for maintaining enrolment and quality of instructional resources.

The teachers from both the regular and mobile schools were also asked to give their views on the proposed measure to improve the effectiveness of FPE on participation in schooling among pupils. Their responses were as summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Teachers' Views on Measures for Effective FPE in Regular and Mobile Schools

Measures	Regular schools		Mobile schools	
	N	%	N	%
Provide free uniforms and other personal effects to pupils	79	71.2	75	78.1
Provide free education	19	17.1	10	10.4
Free pupils from pastoralist activities	46	41.4	56	58.3
Provide free pads to girls	14	12.6	16	16.7
Educate parents on the need for education	12	10.8	8	8.3
Settle pastoralists with water and pasture	60	54.1	46	47.9
Valid n	111		96	

The data contained in Table 2 above shows that majority of the teachers from the regular, 79(71.2 percent), and mobile, 75(78.1 percent), schools proposed the need to provide free uniforms and other personal effects to pupils. Therefore, like the head teachers, the teachers took government's provision of school uniforms as an important priority in supporting participation in schools by pastoralists' pupils in Turkana County. The findings concur with Kipkorir and Mulongo (2021) who highlights the impact of providing free uniforms on school enrollment rates in arid and semi-arid regions like Turkana County and found that the provision of uniforms not only removes a financial barrier for many low-income families but also fosters a sense of belonging and pride among students, which enhances their willingness to attend school and for pastoralist communities, this support is crucial, as it alleviates some of the economic burdens associated with schooling

The teachers also suggested the need to provide free education, which was proposed by 19(17.1 percent) of them from regular and 10(10.4 percent) of the teachers from mobile schools. Since the government was already providing free tuition in the form of FPE, perhaps the teachers meant, by this suggestion, referred to a complete elimination of other costs levied on the parents, such as school uniforms.

Another popularly supported strategy was to free pupils from pastoralist activities. This was affirmed by 46(41.4 percent) teachers from regular schools and 56(58.3 percent) from mobile schools. It is interesting that the teachers thought it was the role of government, and not parents, to free pupils from pastoralist activities. Perhaps these teachers had experienced some level of resistance to attempts to put children in school from the parents and, as such, thought that only the government could force the parents to bring children to school.

Moreover, the teachers also suggested the provision of free pads to girls in schools, which was supported by 14(12.6 percent) of the teachers from regular and 16(16.7 percent) of the teachers from mobile schools. A greater percentage of teachers than the head teachers in both the mobile and regular schools suggested this idea of provision of sanitary pads to girls. This implied that the teachers were more informed on how lack of sanitary pads was affecting pastoralists' pupils' participation in education in Turkana County.

The last suggestion made by the instructors was to educate parents on the value for education, which received support from 12(10.8 percent) of the teachers from regular and 8(8.3 percent) from the teachers from mobile schools. Therefore, it was concluded that the instructors believed it was necessary to sensitize parents on the value of educating children.

Many other teachers, 60(54.1 percent) from regular schools and 46(47.9 percent) from mobile schools, thought it would help bolster FPE is the government settled pastoralists by providing them with stable sources of water and pasture. This strategy was also given a high priority by the head teachers.

These findings were in line with the Republic of Kenya (2006) and Bold *et al.* (2009) who contend that UNESCO used a sample of 162 public primary schools in Kenya in 2005 to carry out a survey that showed that the average pupil-teacher ratio stood at 58:1 against the recommended average of 40:1. The survey revealed that FPE programme had put much pressure on instructors such that some in the rural regions were handling 100 learners while some of their colleagues in the urban slums were handling 120 learners in a class and hence there was very little teacher-pupil interaction and teachers opted to attend bright pupils at the expense of slow ones. Traditionally teachers in private primary schools handle smaller class sizes which has allowed most institutions to produce very good end of school exams to an extent that owners of the institutions are complaining that the ministry is segregating their learners when it comes to placement in form 1 class under the pretext that these learners have been spoon-fed with knowledge all along (UNESCO, 2005).

The study further sought head teachers' views on the effect of FPE on pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular schools. The responses from the head teachers were as summarised in Table 4.30.

Table 3: Head Teachers' Views on Effect of FPE on Pupils' Participation in Regular Schools

RS-Regular Schools (n=49), MS-Mobile Schools (n=22)

Statements on FPE Measures	Schools	SD	D	A	SA
Parents do not pay tuition fees in this school	RS	-	-	2.0	98.0
	MS	-	-	-	100.0
The number of pupils increased after the introduction of FPE	RS	-	2.0	14.3	83.7
	MS	-	-	9.1	90.9
Teaching and learning material are availed by the government	RS	-	14.3	57.1	28.6
	MS	4.5	13.6	59.1	22.7
The teacher to pupil ratio is commendable	RS	81.6	18.4	-	-
	MS	81.8	18.2	-	-
The government has provided textbooks to the pupils	RS	2.0	2.0	85.7	10.2
	MS	9.1	86.4	-	4.5
The government has provided free sanitary pads to girls	RS	42.9	28.6	18.4	10.2
	MS	50.0	31.8	13.6	4.5
The government has brought electricity to this school	RS	10.2	4.1	14.3	71.4
	MS	31.8	-	9.1	59.1

The results contained in Table 3 show that almost all, 98.0 percent, of the head teachers in regular schools said that parents did not pay tuition fees in their schools. In the mobile schools, all, 100.0 percent, of the head teachers from mobile schools affirmed that parents did not pay tuition fees in their schools. It was unclear why 1 head teacher in the regular schools admitted that parents paid tuition fees in his school, considering that this was against the state policy on FPE. Nevertheless, that almost all the regular schools' heads indicated that their schools never levied parents for tuition fees was evidence of the rollout of FPE in the area.

Majority of the regular school head teachers, 84.7 percent, strongly agreed while 14.3 percent agreed that the count of pupils had increased after the launch of FPE. The number of those who strongly agreed with this statement in the mobile schools was slightly higher than in the regular schools, at 90.9 percent. This was indicative of the fact that FPE had encouraged participation in schooling in the study area. This finding affirmed that FPE had been effective in increasing pupil enrolment in state-run primary schools in Turkana County. It was further consistent with statistics which showed that pupil enrolment in Kenya's primary schools had increased since the advent of FPE in 2003 (ADEA, 2013). The results further reinforced findings from other countries such as Uganda (World Bank, 2003) and Malawi (Save the Children UK, 2002) which showed that the elimination of tuition fees had increased intake in primary schools. Only one head teacher, 2.0 percent, disagreed with the statement, meaning that there were some schools that had not seen any changes in enrolment since the introduction of FPE.

Moreover, 57.1 percent of the regular school heads strongly agreed and 28.6 percent agreed that instructional materials had been availed to their schools by the state. An almost similar number of mobile school heads, 59.1 percent, agreed, that the state had provided instructional materials to their schools. Those who strongly agreed with this statement in the mobile schools were 22.7 percent. These figures showed that most of the regular and mobile schools had received instructional materials from the government at the time of the study. However, 14.3 percent of the regular school heads disagreed with this statement. Similarly, in the mobile schools, 13.6 percent and 4.5 percent head teachers disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively, with the statement. These findings also implied that instructional materials had not been availed by the government in some regular and mobile schools in Turkana County. This could be explained by the fact that perhaps some schools had not met the requirements for receiving the supplies.

Additionally, the study found that the introduction of FPE had negatively impacted the teacher-pupil ratio in regular schools. This was attested to by 81.6 percent and 18.4 percent of the regular school heads who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively. It was further evidenced by 81.8 percent and 18.2 percent of the mobile school heads who strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, that the teacher to pupil ratio was commendable. As

such, it was deduced that the increased enrolment of pupils brought about by the FPE interventions had put a strain on the available teachers in public primary schools in Turkana County. These results confirmed the earlier finding that the government had not provided sufficient teachers to schools in the County. This finding was consistent with that of Vreede (2003) that most states that introduced FPE failed to pre-empt the challenge of teacher-pupils ratio.

In Kenya, an evaluation of the effects of FPE on teacher-pupils ratio by UNESCO (2005) found that FPE project had greatly impressed upon instructors so that in certain instructors in up-country schools taught 100 learners whereas others in metropolitan areas taught 120 learners per class. Therefore, there was hardly any instructor-learner interaction and instructors preferred to attend to bright pupils at the expense of slow ones. Conventionally, instructors in private learning centres teach fewer learners at once (UNESCO, 2005). This explains why most of these institutions register better academic outcomes than their public counterparts.

It was nonetheless encouraging to note that the state had provided textbooks to the pupils in many of the regular schools. This fact was indicated by 85.7 percent of the principals who agreed and 10.2 percent who strongly agreed. As such, it was interpreted to mean that most of the regular schools received textbooks as part of the governments' FPE programme. Only a few of the regular school heads, 2.0 percent in each case, disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Unfortunately, most mobile schools had not received textbooks from the government as attested to by head teachers who disagreed, 86.4 percent, and disagreed, 9.1 percent, disagreed. Only one head teacher, 4.5 percent, from the mobile schools agreed with this statement. The disparity in provision of textbooks to mobile and regular schools was attributed to the fact that most of the mobile schools were more geographically dispersed than the regular schools.

The research also established that the state had not provided free sanitary pads to girls in most of the regular schools. This was attested to by 42.9 percent of the school heads who strongly disagreed and 28.6 percent who disagreed that the government had provided free sanitary pads to girls. Again, in the mobile schools, 50.0 percent of the heads strongly disagreed and 31.8 percent disagreed that the government had provided free sanitary pads to girls. As such, it was deduced that most of the school girls in both the regular mobile schools had never been provided with free sanitary pads by the state. Only 17.6 percent agreed and 9.8 percent of the head teachers from the regular schools strongly agreed with this statement. Similarly, at least 14.3 percent and 4.8 percent of the mobile school heads agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that the government had provided free sanitary pads to girls. These results were concurrent with those of the pupils, majority of whom said the government had not provided sanitary pads to girls in the schools. It was unclear, however, how some of the institutions had received sanitary pads had received the pads while others had not.

Lastly, the study established that the state had provided electricity to many of the institutions. To this statement, majority of the regular school heads strongly agreed, 71.4 percent, and a good number agreed, 14.3 percent, that the government had supplied electricity to their schools. Moreover, in the mobile schools, 59.1 percent and 9.1 percent of the head teachers strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that the state had brought electricity to their schools. This finding concurred with those of the pupils who said the government had supplied electricity to most of their schools. Considering that similar findings were reported by the heads of regular schools, it was deduced that most of the schools in Turkana County had received electricity supply from the government. It was nonetheless evident that some schools had not received electricity supply since 10.2 percent of the regular school heads strongly disagreed and 4.1 percent disagreed while by 31.8 percent of the head teachers from the mobile schools disagreed with the statement.

The above findings on the effectiveness of FPE concurred with those of Otieno (2009) who gave a descriptive account of the implementation of FPE in Kenya. According to Otieno, Kenyans responded happily by enrolling massively. However, as the supply of facilities and the number of teachers were not prepared in advance, there is a big problem of extremely large class size resulting in overcrowding especially in the rural areas, high pupil/teacher ratio and eventually, a difficult teaching and learning environment. Additionally, during the rollout of the programme, the government had frozen the hiring of teachers for purposes that are not explained; this crippled the FPE programme from the beginning as the number of children was increasing. Otieno, therefore, claims that this may not have been the best time to implement this policy. This view by Otieno is not necessarily true since FPE has gained considerably good results in regions that had good facilities and instructors. The argument that these authors should have made was perhaps that improved facilities and instructor numbers should have preceded the implementation of FPE. Besides, since FPE has already been implemented, it is best to simply examine its effectiveness in order to identify and address the inherent gaps.

The study also sought head teachers' views on ways to guarantee the effectiveness of FPE on participation. The head teachers' responses on measures to ensure effectiveness of FPE were as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Head Teachers' Views on Measures for Effective FPE Programme

Measures	Mobile schools		Regular schools	
	N	%	N	%
The government should provide uniform to pupils	18	81.8	41	83.7
Settle pastoralists with water and pasture	15	68.2	31	63.3
KPR to take care of pastoralists	19	86.4	28	57.1
Create awareness to parents on benefits of education	8	36.4	13	26.5
KPR/police/army to provide security to pupils	1	4.5	2	4.1
Provide free sanitary pads to girls	-	-	4	8.2
Valid n	22		49	

Data contained in Table 4 indicated that majority of the head teachers from mobile schools, 18(81.8 percent), and regular schools, 41(83.7 percent), suggested that the government should provide uniform to pupils. Therefore, according to most head teachers in Turkana County, the most critical strategy by which the government can strengthen the FPE programme effectiveness is to cater for the pupils' school uniform.

Another strategy proposed to enhance FPE effectiveness on pupil participation was settling pastoralists with water and pasture. This was attested to by 15(68.2 percent) and 31(63.3 percent) of the head teachers from mobile schools and regular schools, respectively. As such, the second most significant strategy for enhancing the effectiveness of FPE in Turkana County, according to the head teachers, was for the government to provide water and pasture for the pastoralists' to enable them to have a more settled life.

Majority of the participants from the mobile schools, 19(86.4 percent), proposed the strategy that KPR should take care of pastoralists. A good number of head teachers from the regular schools, 28(57.7 percent), also supported this idea. This finding concurred with the proposals on the improvement of government security interventions in which the pupils, the teachers and head teachers supported the use of KPR as the second most critical means of securing schools after provision of more police officers.

Some of the head teachers also proposed the need to create awareness to parents on benefits of education. A total of 13(26.5 percent) of the heads of regular schools and 8(36.4 percent) from mobile schools proposed this idea. This showed that the head teachers understood that one of the causes of low participation by pupils in education was lack of proper parental education on the importance of education.

Very few head teachers, 1(4.5 percent), from the regular schools and 2(4.1 percent) from the mobile schools thought that a mixture of KPR, police and army should provide security to pupils. Again, this suggestion supported the earlier proposals on measures to strengthen the government's security intervention on pastoralists' pupils' participation in school in Turkana County.

A few of the school heads from the regular schools, 4(8.2 percent), also suggested the need to provide sanitary pads to girls to enhance FPE effectiveness on participation in education by pupils. Although the head teachers from the mobile schools had earlier indicated that the state had not provided sanitary pads to pupils in their schools, none of them proposed this measure as a way to strengthen FPE. The fact that the head teachers who suggested provision of sanitary pads from the regular schools was also low indicated that, perhaps, the issue of lack sanitary pad either did not have so much severe effect on participation or the head teachers did not seem to understand how this issue affected pupils' participation in the first place.

The researcher held focus group discussions with the parents on the effectiveness of FPE on pastoralists' pupils' participation in public primary schools in Turkana County. During the FGDs, the parents were asked questions concerning the effectiveness of Free Primary Education interventions that the government had provided to both the regular and mobile schools in Turkana County.

The first question relating FPEs discussed in the FGDs was on whether or not the parents still paid any amounts to schools to cater for tuition for their children. All the parents said that the tuition was fully subsidized by the state in the schools. Majority of the parents said they would not afford to bring their children to school if they had been required to cater for the tuition fees.

Asked if there were other payments that they made to schools, the parents said the schools levied them fees for examination, school uniforms, stationeries and learners' personal effects. Most of the parents said they could not afford many of these levies and were thus often forced to retain their children from going to school. A parent in the FGD narrated how her child was unable to sit his long-awaited examination just because she could not afford the required fees. The parent said, following that incident, the child was very discouraged and stopped going to school thereafter. This finding resonated with that of Sifuna (2005) that school levies are a major impediment to school access and participation among pastoralist communities.

The parents were also asked to state if the government had recruited enough teachers, provided sufficient instructional materials and sanitary pads to the schools where their children went. The parents said the teachers in all the schools were few. However, majority of the parents reported that in many schools, the instructional resources were sufficient. Concerning sanitary pads, the parents reported that sometimes the schools provided the pads to pupils with the help of government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Lastly, the parents were asked to identify the measures they would want the government to put in place to ensure their children participated fully in schools without interruptions. The most recommended measure was for the government to provide sufficient funds to schools to support their teaching and learning operations. The parents also suggested that the state should provide school uniforms, stationaries and cater to the personal effects of learners. Moreover, the parents asked the government to cater to examination fees for the learners. They also urged that the state should recruit enough teachers for their children's schools. Lastly, the parents suggested that the state should provide sufficient and balanced diet foods.

The Education Officers were also interviewed concerning the efficacy of FPE. First, the Education Officers were asked to describe the government policy on FPE. All the Education Officers affirmed that the FPE was based on the need to ensure every school-age going child had access to universal primary education. One of Education Officers stated that it was the task of the County Directorate of Education and all officers under him in the County to ensure that this policy was realized in Turkana County.

The researcher asked the Education Officers to describe how the FPE intervention had affected pastoralists' pupils' participation in education in their respective sub-counties. Like the CDE, each of the Education Officers affirmed the increase in enrolment as the first most visible effect of FPE in their respective sub-counties. In explaining this fact, one of the Education Officers stated thus:

You see most of the families in this sub-county, in fact in the entire Turkana, are poor. This is a marginalised area in Kenya. So, the FPE initiative was a really welcome thing for our people. Most people welcomed the fact that their children would go to school without them having to pay school fees. Of course, there is still some amounts required from them [parents] but it is better than nothing (Education Officer, Turkana County, Personal Communication, 2017).

The researcher further asked the Education Officers to state if the government had provided sufficient teachers, instructional materials and sanitary pads to girls in all their schools. In general, the Education Officers said the number of teachers was not sufficient. According to one of the Education Officers,

Although the government has provided some teaching and learning materials, more needs to be done. For instance, some of the learners study under trees. The government needs to build more classes and expand existing ones to accommodate the increased number of pupils (Education Officer, Turkana County, Personal Communication, 2017).

An Education Officer stated that, with a rise in enrolment, more sanitary pads were required for girls in school in his sub-county.

The Education Officers were also asked to state the measures they would want the government to put in place to improve FPE in order to enhance participation of pastoralists' pupils in schools in their respective Sub-Counties. An Education Officer said some schools still requested parents to contribute funds for certain meals, such as breakfast, which were not catered for in the school feeding programmes. He said the government should subsidize these fees. The same Officer also said the government should help parents meet the cost of uniforms, especially the neediest families. Another Officer urged the state to guarantee there was early or timely disbursement of tuition fees to schools to ensure schools worked within set academic timetables. The Officer also proposed the was need to educate parents on what FPE catered since, as he explained, most parents thought the government paid for everything required in school. Therefore, as he stated, some parents were upset when asked to provide small fees for things like uniforms and some meals.

Lastly, the County Director of Education was interviewed on the efficacy of FPE. First, the County Director of Education was asked to give an outline of the state policy on FPE. In his response, he stated that the state had put a policy in place to ensure that each child had access to basic education. The CDE said the policy was informed by the millennium development goal number 2, which sought to attain universal primary education for all children, especially in developing countries.

The researcher asked the CDE to describe how the FPE intervention had affected pastoralists' pupils' participation in education in Turkana County. The CDE acknowledged the introduction of FPE in Kenya in 2003 had enabled many families in Turkana County to enrol their children in school. He said prior to FPE introduction, most children who are now in school used to be home, serving in family chores and taking care of cattle. He added that since most pupils, especially young boys, had joined school, cases of Turkana youth engaging in cattle raids to neighbouring communities had reduced leading to more peace with neighbours.

The researcher also asked the CDE to state if the government had provided sufficient teachers, instructional materials and sanitary pads to girls in all the schools in the County. In the CDE's view:

The government has made enough efforts to provide teachers and all those other requirements. However, as you must be aware, there is a shortage of teachers everywhere, not in Turkana alone. Plus recently you heard incidents in which teachers from our neighbouring regions were attacked and killed. So many teachers, especially those who do not come from around here, are feeling nervous about working in these regions (CDE, Turkana County, Personal Communication, 2017).

Lastly, the CDE was also requested to state the measures they would want the government to put in place to improve FPE to enhance participation of pastoralists' pupils.

Of course we need more teachers, more than anything. And what we want is more teachers from Turkana who understand the unique educational needs of the people here. Second, we need to ensure there are good school structures, classrooms and all, including teaching and learning materials of course. We also need to ensure these schools are safe. The government must enhance security in the entire region to allow parents to send kids to school without worry. The children and teachers also need to feel safe in school (CDE, Turkana County, Personal Communication, 2017).

The null hypothesis stated that FPE does not significantly affect pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular and mobile primary schools in Turkana County. This was tested using single regression whose results are as presented in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5: FPE and Pupils' Participation in Education Model

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.429 ^a	0.84	0.81	0.975

a. Predictors: (Constant), Free primary education

Source: Field data (2018)

The results in Table 5 indicates that 81 percent of the total variability in the pupils' participation was explained by FPE. The results showed that the adjusted R² was 0.81, which implied that FPE accounted for 81 percent of the variance in pupils' participation in primary school in mobile and regular schools. To establish the relationship between FPE on pupils' participation in education a simple regression test was conducted. This is as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Simple Regression on FPE and Pupils' Participation Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.29	0.159		14.42	0.000
Free Primary Education	0.400	0.053	0.429	7.58	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Pupils' participation in school, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6 shows that there is a statistical significant relationship between FPE and pupils' participation in primary schools in regular and mobile schools. Table 6 shows that the predictor displayed significant relationships, Free Primary Education (PA) ($\beta=0.429$, $p<0.05$) had the highest influence on the criterion variable This leads to rejection of the null hypothesis that "Free Primary Education does not significantly affect pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular and mobile primary schools in Turkana County". This implies that FPE influences pupils' participation in primary education, hence enhancement of FPE leads to increase participation and vice versa.

Conclusion

From the results of the study, it is concluded that the national government has put a policy in place to ensure that every child receives basic education based on the Millennium Development Goal number two, which sought to realize universal primary education for all children, especially in developing countries. Therefore, none of the learners or parents pay school levies. Many of the parents understand FPE as government paying all of the tuition fees for their pupils. However, the parents cater for school uniforms, stationeries and other personal effects of the learners. Most of the parents find these extra levies too high for them to afford. The launch of FPE has enhanced enrolment in schools. Interestingly, there have been reduced cases of cattle rustling from Turkana community because most of the young boys have enrolled in school. As such, increased education courtesy of FPE has a direct effect of reducing cattle rustling in Turkana County. To enhance the effectiveness of FPE, the state has made some efforts to provide teachers, instructional materials and sanitary pads for girls. However, more of these resources are needed in the schools. In most schools, the teacher to pupil ratio has been impaired by the increased pupil enrolment resulting from the introduction of FPE. Recent attacks on schools in the north-eastern regions of Kenya by bandits and terror groups have had a negative impact on teachers' motivation to teach in schools in and around Turkana County. Overall, FPE has a significant effect on pastoralists' pupils' participation in regular and mobile primary schools in Turkana County.

Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of the FPE programme, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is need to recruit more teachers, especially those who understand the unique challenges of schools in Turkana County.
2. From the outset, the state should provide sufficient funds to support teaching and learning activities fully.
3. The government should also build more infrastructure for schools and increase security in the area.
4. The government should subsidize or fully cover costs that parents incur, such as for school uniforms and meals not covered within the school feeding programme. The government should adopt this recommendation, especially for hardship areas like Turkana County.
5. There is also a need for timely disbursement of tuition fees to schools to ensure instructional activities are not disrupted by delays.
6. Moreover, parents should be sensitized on the exact education amenities for which the government pays to avoid confusion. In general, it is necessary to create awareness to parents on the benefits of education.
7. The state should also strive to settle pastoralists with water and pasture to ensure they are in a better place to educate their children.

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