

**INFUENCE OF SOCIAL- ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FACTORS ON
PROVISION OF FREE TUITION PROGRAMME IN SECONDARY SCHOOL
IN KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to GOD who in my view is the author of all 'knowledge', to the everlasting memory of mom and dad who engineered my education, my dearest husband Josphat and my loving children Victor, Charity and niece Dolly.

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ABSTRACT

Free Tuition Programme (FTP) for secondary schools and the high number of students who seem not to be reaping its benefits is one of the emerging issues facing the education sector. This study investigated selected factors (socio-economic and political) influencing the provision of FTP in Secondary schools. The main research question was, 'how do the socio-economic and political factors influence the provision of the FTP?' Many studies do not feature students schooling in the context of the aforementioned in the light of FTP. The study was conducted in Machakos County where student participation in secondary schooling has persistently remained low despite the government tuition efforts. The study was guided by the Human Capital Theory which considers education as critical for the facilitation of skills that lead to the growth of the individual and the society. It was a survey grounded within the constructivist paradigm based on the qualitative approach. The sample for the study was chosen using stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was used to strata the schools into Day and Boarding which formed 30% of the population. Purposive sampling was utilised to select 32 principals, 128 class teachers and 8 District Education Officers. Simple random sampling was used to identify 128 students. Data was generated using questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. Instruments were tested for reliability through test-retest method. Content validity was determined through critical review considering the objectives of the study. The data was coded, fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software programme and analysed using simple descriptive statistics. Themes were derived from narrative data. The findings and suggestions provide useful information to the education planners and policy makers on improving provision of FTP for secondary schools towards benefiting all students equally. The study recommends the need to develop an action plan towards strengthening adult education programmes so as to improve the education level of the parents, sensitise and empower the community so as to minimise retrogressive practices, and reduce wastage of tuition funds; develop sustainable poverty reduction mechanism in order to address the economic constraints that are influencing students' participation in schooling and review of the existing structures, rules and policies as far as political involvement in management of education and school administration is concerned so as to end politicians interferences and retrogressive politics in schools, all geared towards improving student participation in schooling for successful provision of the FTP.

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ACRONYMS

ASALS	-	Arid and Semi Arid Areas
BOG	-	Board of Governors
B.ED	-	Bachelor of Education Degree
CDF	-	Constituency Development Fund
DEO	-	District Education Officer
CBK	-	Central Bank of Kenya
DEB	-	District Education Boards
EFA	-	Education for All
EFT	-	Electronic Funds Transfer
FPE	-	Free Primary Education
FTSE	-	Free Tuition for Secondary Education
FT	-	Free Tuition
FTP	-	Free Tuition Programme
FDSE	-	Free Day Secondary Education
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Rate
JFA	-	Joint Financing Agreement
KCPE	-	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KESSP	-	Kenya Sector Support Programme
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MOEST	-	Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology

NET	-	Net Enrolment Rate
NAPE	-	National Action Plan on Education
PTA	-	Parents Teachers Association
SWAP	-	Sector Wide Approach to Planning
SMASSE	-	Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Subjects
SSA	-	Sub Saharan Africa
NARC	-	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition
UEFA	-	Universal Education for All
USA	-	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the background of the study and discusses the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the study objectives, research questions, justification, significance, scope, limitations and assumptions of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and operational definition of key terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

For decades, there has been a rising trend in educational expenditure worldwide in both developed and developing countries, perhaps due to perceived positive link between education and economic growth (Edwards, 1980; Simmons, 1990). According to Eshiwani (1993) and Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1997), public expenditure on education takes different forms that include development or capital expenditure, recurrent expenditure and transfer payments. Experts on education expenditure advance that, the ever growing demand of education, the resultant expansion of educational systems, the rising costs in education because of inflation and the need for more sophisticated equipment have all led to massive increases in spending on education all over the world.

The Human Development Report (2009) Indicators of Education index exhibit majority countries considered to be developed to have a score of 0.9 or above. Most of the third world countries present an index of 0.7 score and below. The Kenya context displays a score of 0.69. These scores significantly confirm that both developed and developing countries have made milestones over the years in making

education a key factor in development leading to increased enrolment of students in schools.

Churi and Kiumi (2005) advance that, in spite of education being an expensive venture, individuals and governments continue to spend enormous resources in pursuing and providing for it. The direct costs of education are financed largely by the taxpayers rather than the individual students although tuition fees are substantial in certain cases. Further, Social, economic and political arguments have been advanced to justify public investment towards education (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1997; Glewwe & Kremer, 2005). This is because education in itself is a determinant of lifetime income. Further as observed by Churi and Kiumi (2005), in enjoying the social, economic and political benefits of investing in education, the individual and the society have to incur costs which are classified into private and social costs respectively.

Sifuna, Chege and Oanda (2006) further advance that poverty, relevance, poor performance, social-cultural beliefs and practices, lack of facilities and equipment, evaluation and examination methods have slowed the secondary school level in Africa. Financial strains have greatly hampered effective provision of the education policies in most countries. Glewwe and Kremer (2005) reiterate that in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the expenditure per student as a percentage of GDP per capita is at 10.6 for primary and 25.8 for secondary schools respectively. According to Hirsch (1993), the first and second level of education is financed mainly from tax revenue of the state and is almost entirely provided. The Third World situation on “free education” offered, has had an element of earnings forgone in the cost to families (Eshiwani, 1993). Whereas cost sharing in education has characterised some of the countries, for others

school fees has been abolished from the primary to secondary school level (Lewin, 2007). Despite financial strains, the provision of the Free Tuition programme (FTP) for secondary schools placed Kenya among the ranks of few African countries that have rolled out a 9-12 years universal basic education plan in line with the goals of Universal Education for All (UEFA) (World Bank, 2002; Government of Kenya, 2009). However, challenges remain, especially in the SSA countries (Ohba, 2009). Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, points out that secondary schools do not match those operational at primary level in terms of enrolment rates versus physical facilities. According to observations in this Paper, Kenya has socio-cultural beliefs, economic, political challenges besides students wastage in terms of drop out, repetition, shortage of staff and poor performance in examinations and the Secondary school level remains to be equitably attained (Sifuna et al, 2006). The implication of this position to the government and policy makers is that the realisation of vision 2015 and 2030 may not be fully achieved. This is because efforts to democratise access to education fuelled by public subsidies do not seem to have had any significant effects on the participation rates of students from the lower end of the socio-economic status in Kenya (Boit, 1998; Lewin, 2007; Malenya, 2008; Ohba, 2009).

Further, UNESCO (2004) observes that besides school based factors that shape the educational experiences of students, a child's home background and environment in which schooling takes place is crucial. The exclusion of the poor from schooling is not only a poverty issue but also a geographical one because the poor tend to come from arid and semi arid environments. This agrees with a study by Mbelle and Katoros (2003) which revealed that differences between regions and school locations are significant toward student participation in schooling and performance.

Politics has also interfered with the provision of initiatives aimed at improving education management and general welfare of the education sector (Amutabi, 2003). Baker and Elmer 2009 reiterate and add that, school programmes are frequently the target of quick-fix, politically motivated types of reforms for personal gains leading to a lot of wastage of funds. Further, UNESCO (2004) observed that, failed implementation may be attributed to several factors among them lack of political support, inadequate finance, inadequate institutional arrangements among others.

This study was done in Machakos County which displays a high population growth with high Poverty level at 60.7% contributing to national poverty at 4.7% according to the Machakos District Plan 2008-2012, (Republic of Kenya, 2009). This means that the population is living below poverty line and majority cannot meet most of its basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, health and education. The enrolment rate of secondary schools in Machakos County was at 34% (Republic of Kenya, 2009) compared to eastern region net enrolment of 50% (World Bank, 2009) an indicator that secondary school remains a preserve of a few. According to statistics at the Machakos District Education Office (2010), distribution of secondary schools in Machakos County portrays a unique pattern, that is, most schools are either; Mixed Day or Mixed Day /Boarding schools, with a few single sex boarding schools with majority located in rural areas. Machakos County unlike other Counties in the region is heterogeneous with high population, low literacy levels and with majority homes surrounded by harsh geographical environment. Many children are locked out of secondary school and the possibilities of breaking from the cycle of abject poverty levels dims. The schools in this study are serving a disadvantaged community with persistent low student participation and accessibility is yet to be equitably attained despite increased government budgetary allocation. The provision of the FTP

therefore within the region has its influences and cannot be simply generalised because it is context bound.

Effective policy provision in education has remained a major challenge in the face of unpreparedness, lack of consideration of the costs involved and suitable infrastructural facilities and such salient facts as well (Sifuna et al, 2006). In regard to Machakos County, provision of FTP remains a challenge in the face of the persistent low student participation at the secondary school level as compared to the other Counties in the region.

According to Government of Kenya (2009), the FTP funding is being disbursed essentially as school vouchers valued at Ksh.10, 265 per student per year. Those in boarding schools, pay a maximum of Kshs.18, 265 to cater for boarding fees annually. The Government meets the full cost or part of tuition, repairs, travel and transport, administration, electricity and water bills, activity fees and non-teaching staff salaries, (See Appendix V). Nevertheless, parents are still left to bear the burden of paying for students' uniforms, boarding costs and maintaining school infrastructure and other charges agreed upon by the relevant stakeholders. It is against this background that this study investigated the influence of socio-economic and social factors on provision of the FTP in secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite massive spending in education all over the world (Psachapolous & Woodhall, 1997; Churi & Kiumi, 2002) and the increased student enrolments (Lewin, 2004, 2005), secondary school participation remains disproportionately skewed. Most literature point out that policies such as Free Tuition have been embraced by most

countries (Somerset, 2006; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007) leading to universality of secondary schooling in rich countries, for instance USA (Baker & Thomas, 2006; Carr, Gray & Holly, 2007). Nevertheless, access is a scarce luxury in majority of the developing countries and is a level yet to be equitably attained (Sifuna et al., 2006; Ohba, 2009). In the African context, despite countries like Uganda, Malawi, Ghana and others providing free tuition funds (Rose, 2002; Akyeampong, 2009) schools continue to levy for fees and the opportunity costs for the poor households remain low denying majority students (Lewin & Coillards, 2001; Lewin 2007; World Bank, 2009). This has posed a paradox of the Free Secondary Education. The available empirical studies showed that, low student participation has been an area of long interest to researchers and policy makers (Amutabi, 2003; Muthwii, 2004; Ohba, 2009; Oketch & Ngware, 2010). In the Kenyan context, government's efforts towards Free Tuition policy for primary and secondary schools was realised in 2003 and 2008 respectively, (Republic of Kenya, 2009). In the Machakos context, according to Republic of Kenya (2009) in the Machakos District Plan 2008-2012, despite the FTP, statistics indicated that continuous trends of low student participation in secondary schooling had persistently remained low at 34%. This was irrespective of increased net enrolments in the eastern region which rated at 50%. Although several empirical studies have been done on factors influencing low participation in secondary schooling, few of these studies have focused on the selected broad based variables that were found critical towards student participation in schooling and provision of the FTP. Therefore, the study investigated on the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of FTP for secondary schools in Machakos County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the influence of socio-economic and political social factors on provision of Free Tuition Programme in secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study intended to:

- i. Evaluate the influence of socio-economic factors on provision of the Free Tuition Programme in Secondary schools.
- ii. Assess the influence of political factors on provision of Free Tuition Programme in Secondary schools.
- iii. Assess education stakeholders perceptions towards government policy on provision of Free Tuition Programme in secondary schools..
- iv. Determine opinions on improving the provision of Free Tuition Programme in Secondary schools.

1. 5 Research Questions

The main research question in this study was: How do socio-economic and political factors influence the provision of the FTP in Machakos County?

The specific research questions were:

- i. How do the socio-economic factors influence the provision of free tuition programme in secondary schools?
- ii. How do the political factors influence the provision of free tuition programme in secondary schools?
- iii. What are the perceptions of education stakeholders towards government policy on provision of free tuition programme in secondary schools?

- iv. What are the opinions towards improving the provision of Free Tuition programme in Secondary schools?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Though studies have been done in Kenya in the light of factors influencing provision of education policies for instance FPE (Sifuna et al, 2006; Kattan, 2006), little or none had been done in regard to the selected factors influencing the provision of FTP in secondary schools. Most of these studies have however concentrated on low student participation ignoring the context within which schooling takes place. Despite the government efforts to ensure equity, access, retention and completion of schooling for all students, socio-economic and political factors are perceived to be critical determinants toward participation of students in secondary schooling and adversely influence the provision of the FTP. Moreover, there are no empirical studies known to the researcher that had been carried out in Machakos County which is characterised by persistent low student participation in secondary schooling despite the implementation of FTP.

The benefits of the free tuition seem to be more for students from middle-level and well to do families who can easily afford to pay for the other required levies than those from poor socio-economic backgrounds who are the majority. This latter group of students learning in such environments are further jeopardised where schools lack adequate political support. The study therefore investigated an important, yet pertinent under-researched aspect in education, that is, the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of the FTP that has seemingly led to wastage of government funds and resources. Moreover, the number of students in this country

experiencing the challenge of retention and completion at the secondary school level despite the free tuition funds is high. The continued trend of persistent low participation of students at secondary level is threatened and worsened by other schooling related factors rendering many students wasted and undermining the essence of the FTP. The situation is a threat to the future of this nation from all dimensions of life and is likely to undermine the realisation of the universal goals of education and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) of education in Vision 2030.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is very significant in various ways. On the basis of the findings, it was anticipated that it would come up with suggestions from which the stakeholders in education and especially policy makers would gain fruitful insight on the influences of socio-economic and political factors on the provision of FTP contribute towards national growth in terms of education and benefit all students on the whole. The addressed factors help to determine the appropriate policies towards enhancing student participation in education in the near future. The study's findings and recommendations too are useful in filling the gap in knowledge and can be replicated to other counties inclusive of developing countries with similar problems in the event of provision of such programmes in secondary schools. The findings stimulate interest and further research that will inform stakeholders of education on issues of tuition and student participation in secondary schooling to enable full realisation of access, equity, retention and completion.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The research focused on 32 selected public secondary schools within Machakos County. The study investigated on the socio-economic (gender, early marriage, home background, parents' occupation, income) and political (transparency, lack of political will, selective leadership, mistrust) factors influencing the provision of the FTP since it was implemented in 2008 to 2012. The participation rates have persistently remained low compared to other Counties in the Country. The respondents were District Education Officers, head teachers, class teachers and students who were considered relevant in providing required data for this particular study. The research was carried out between 2008-2012.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of this study were: The study considered specific thematic areas on influence of socio-economic and political factors on the provision of the FTP leaving out others. However, other factors that may influence the FTP have formed a basis for further studies in the provision of Free Tuition Policies. The researcher has proposed undertaking of studies on other thematic areas to ascertain their relationship with Free Tuition policies. This was a survey based study and the population recruited inadvertently excluded others. However, the researcher recommended a more comprehensive survey that would include others at a wider scope of region to help overcome this limitation. The study relied on information by DEOs, principals, teachers and students thus it was not possible to check the truthfulness of their statements leading to underestimation of the actual position and threatened the validity of the findings. The possibilities of some participants being biased in their responses to certain questions were quite high. Nevertheless, triangulation of the research methods helped overcome this limitation.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

This study made the assumptions that the principals of selected secondary schools would be honest and cooperative enough to provide required information; that school heads were in-serviced on the financial management and accounting procedures of the disbursed funds to their schools; and that all the selected public secondary schools had been consistently benefiting from the FTP. It was also anticipated provision of policy is not devoid of challenges and that FTP was not exclusive. Related challenges to the distribution of these Free Tuition funds were identified with realistic alternatives and possible solutions recommended.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

Several theories have been used to explain human behaviour. This study was guided by the Human Capital Theory which has its foundations in the 18th century work of Adam Smith that was later advanced by Heinrich Von Thuren and Alfred Marshal. From 18th century, education began to be seen as a significant factor in improving the well-being of the society (Becker, 1994). Many (thinkers) tended to view education as consumption rather than as an investment (Churi & Kiumi, 2005).

The concept of human capital gained momentum in the 1960s and saw the development of economics of education into a specialized discipline. Thus Human Capital Theorists use proxy evidence of various kinds to support the fact that education is an investment. The theory stipulates that human beings are a source that can be developed through investment in human capital. This means putting money in the social services that promote education, health, housing, job search and nutrition.

Glewwe and Jacoby (1992) affirm that investment in schooling in developing countries is one of the most important ways of raising productivity and ultimately the living standards of the citizens of those countries.

This theory was found relevant to this study because the government views education as an investment and the possible outputs are the increased enrolments reported especially with the provision of 'Free Tuition' in the schools which is the phenomenon under investigation. Machakos County is a beneficiary of the 'Free Tuition' funds. In regard to this, the Kenyan government is spending a substantial amount of its national budget. This is to ensure that all school age children receive quality education which is a form of investment on Human Capital in that there will be benefits for the country, that is, social, economic and political, and that those who are well educated have better skills, access prestigious occupations and incomes and lead better lives.

Critics of the Human Capital Theory however, while accepting the role of education in the acquisition of skills, argue that there exists no direct linkage between education, occupation, productivity and the commensurate income (Samuel & Herbert, 1975). Nevertheless when combined with an Education Production Function (EPF), the Human Capital Theory may help to explain the value of the acquired skills in education to the society and the individual and therefore justifies the Kenya government investment in education just like other countries.

1.12 Conceptual Framework

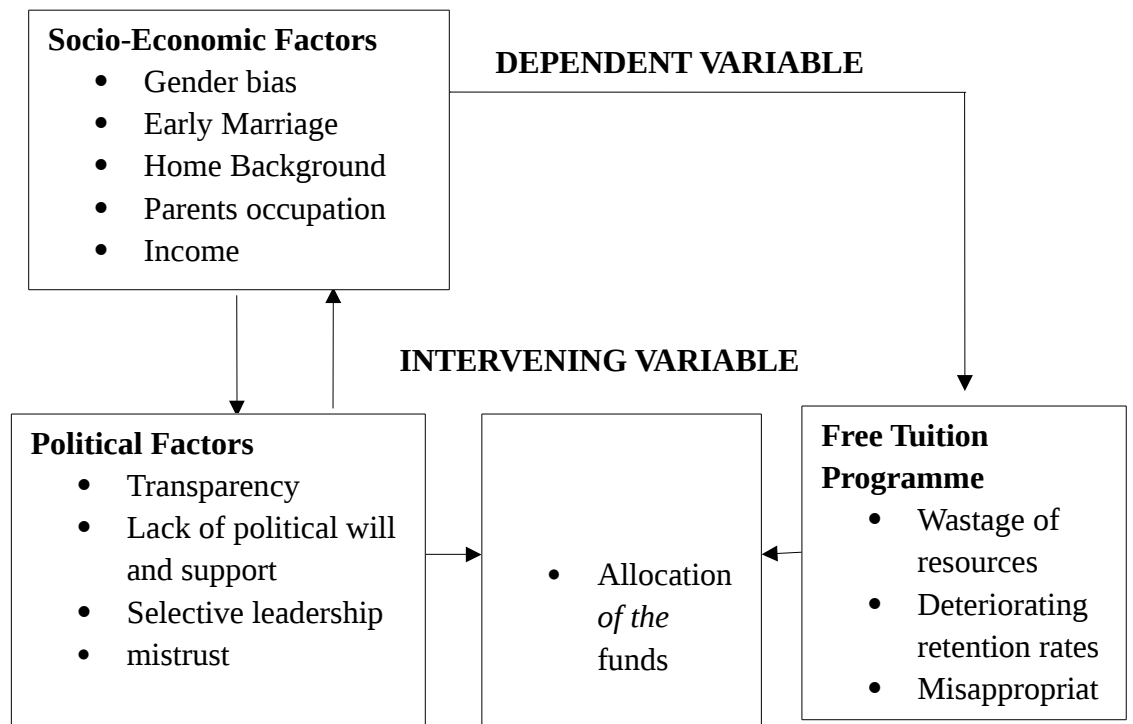
A conceptual framework was developed from the theoretical framework and studied variables derived from the objectives to show the relationship between the

independent variables and dependent variable. According to Churi and Kiumi (2005), the concept of education is determined by two factors, namely; the individual wellbeing and that of the society. They assert that both of these factors may be influenced by the school one is admitted to, social-cultural practices and beliefs such as early marriages, high dropout rates among others and these affect this noble idea of government initiative. In most cases those that undergo these practices drop from school for some time and resume much later, others just come to sit for exams if they were registered. Some of these experiences make students to disobey instructions from teachers since they view them as equals. Such cultural practices, perceptions, low expectations and attitudes counteract the government effort in subsidising education and leads to wastage of financial resources.

School-based factors such as the number of students enrolled and accurate records determine the amount of money allocated to a school. Human and material resources such as availability and quality of teachers, infrastructure, and size of the class among others reflect appropriate use of the funds.

There are other factors outside the school control like the pupils social-economic background, political factors, unemployment of guardians: that affect consistent stay of the student in the school and frustrate the governments Free Tuition initiative aimed at ensuring access and retention. In order to provide a systematic overview of various variables that are captured in this relationship, a conceptual model has been developed as well. See Figure 1.1.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE



Source: Author, (2012)

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework on Factors Influencing Provision of FTP in Secondary Schools.

1.13 Operational Definition of Key Terms

The researcher operationalised key words perceived important in the study to enable the reader to understand and the researcher to stay focused.

Free Tuition: This refers to subsidies towards public schools by the government with an aim of subsidising the students' education to enhance access, retention and completion (World Bank 2005). In the study, the free tuition funds refer to the government funds towards supporting secondary schooling.

Free Tuition Programme: This refers to introduction of programmes by governments in public schools towards improving participation in schooling (World Bank 2005). In the study, the free tuition programme refers to the government efforts towards supporting students in secondary schooling.

Provision: These refer to attempts by governments to translate well laid down strategies, programmes or plans to realities (UNESCO, 2004). In this study, provision refers to the carrying out of the stipulated education plans in regard to the government policy of the FTP for secondary schools.

Factors: These are the determinants of the provision of tuition policies in regard to use in public secondary schools (Ohba, 2009). In this study, the factors refer to selected aspects presumed to adversely influence the provision of the FTP in secondary schooling.

Social Factors: These are a community's values and practices and their impact on students' participation on education (UNESCO, 2004). In the study, social factors refer to social aspects that adversely influence students' secondary schooling despite the free tuition funds.

Economic Factors: These refer to the means of income and survival and the effect on the growth of education (Dessarollo, 2007). Here in the study, economic factors refer to the economic status of the region and the parents in regard to supporting the students in secondary schooling.

Political Factors: These refer to the government and leaders contributions, perceptions and influence towards the growth of education (Muthwii, 2004). Here in the study, political factors refer to government support and good will premeditated towards the provision of the FTP.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature related to this study. The aim was to identify, evaluating opinions, knowledge and attitudes of various studies in the area of Public subsidisation of education and provision of Free Tuition Policies for secondary schools. The materials that were reviewed in this section include researches in education that enabled exposure of the existing gap regarding financial policy provision of education at the secondary school level. It was reviewed under the following headings: Studies related to global perspective of public financing of education and free tuition policies, factors influencing provision of free tuition Policies, the free tuition programme and factors influencing its provision in Kenya.

2.1 A Global Perspective of Public Financing of Education and Free Tuition

Policies

Most studies and researches show that education subsidy is provided for by every nation and its dominance is an outstanding feature of most education systems. The States have a legal moral obligation to provide education as a fundamental right (Marcucci and Johnstone, 2007). UNESCO (2004), on Education Policies and Strategies, posit that Educational financing is a process by which Governments provide and manage necessary resources for satisfying the needs of the people and is critical for the successful implementation of educational plans. UNESCO (2007),

Information Magazine No. 8 in agreement recognizes that education is a key development issue that is indispensable for human capacity development and poverty eradication. It is therefore needed to promote economic growth, create employment opportunities, and foster civil participation and personal development. Falmer (2008) and Psacharapoulos and Woodhall (1997) assert that education is the most important function of the state and it can be seen from the way Governments in various countries both developed and developing are enormously investing in it. The spending is rising more rapidly than the rate of increase in the World GDP.

Thomson (1987), agrees with the assertions and adds that educationists worldwide tend to argue that education is a basic human right and that its function is to develop the talents of the individual to enable him participate freely within a free society. In 1960, the World spending on education by public bodies used up to 3.2% of World Gross National Product (GNP) and by 1974; had increased to 4.8% and by 1984 the proportion of the national government budget had risen to 16.1% (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1997). The fact that educational investment took an increasing share of the national budget reflected the high priority given to education.

According to Marcucci and Johnstone (2007), tuition fee policies and the financial assistance that accompany them are critical both for the very considerable revenue at stake and the potential impact on higher education accessibility and implications for equity and social justice. The scholars further assert that, the tuition policy of a country is generally dependant on a law or other type of legal instrument that provides the basis for charging or prohibiting tuition fees. Bray, (2003) recommends sustainable cost effective strategies to ensure strong linkage between formal education, their costs, labour market outcomes and international flexibility. Indeed if

secondary education is linked to the labour market, then returns would be higher justifying increased public financing of secondary education. Churi and Kiumi, (2005) posit that tuition- free schooling is the most common approach to financing the lower levels of education and has been largely introduced in the less developed world at primary level. UNESCO, (2004) on World Education Report observes that, the global pattern of student enrolments by regions and levels of education has changed considerably over the last 30 years, and continues to evolve. According to Lewin (2004, 2005), increased enrolments at the secondary school level are attributed to increase of pupils completing primary school especially with the implementation of the FPE.

Ayot and Briggs (1992) and Churi and Kiumi (2005) argue that in most countries education is largely financed by the public sector but never entirely. This is because of other costs borne by parents and students in education investment. The individual costs are categorized into direct costs such as fees, expenditure on books, uniform and school meals and indirect/opportunity cost. The Society similarly incurs both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs to the Society (social costs) comprise resources devoted to education by way of : paying teachers salary and other education personnel, purchasing textbooks and other categories of equipments, meeting the cost of electricity and water in educational institutions, training teachers and school inspectors financing curriculum research; and capital expenditure and offering scholarships and bursaries to needy students. Notably, the public financing of education has grown in importance as the concept of Human Capital has found wider acceptance as a vital factor in economic growth, and even more important, as the idea that education as a human right has been universally recognized.

The motive behind investment in education is the expected benefits (Psachapoulos & Woodhall, 1997; Lewin & Caillods, 2001; Bray's, 2003; Churi & Kiumi, 2005; World Bank, 2005). These scholars advance that investment in education has private and social benefits which are categorized into direct and indirect benefits. Thus there seems to be a powerful persuasive economic logic, a social, political and historical rationale for this. Nevertheless, equity in the distribution of public resources depends not only on the pattern of subsidization level of education but also on the socio-economic composition of the students' population at each level. Distribution of public resources among members of a given generation of school going age is inequitable. For instance, those with primary or no schooling are more likely to have fewer resources than those with higher education. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, (1997) point out the fact that when this pattern of distribution in public education is overlaid with socio economic composites of students' body, the inequity in higher education becomes even more apparent. For instance students from a nomadic background will benefit less from public education resources than ones from non-nomadic background. Thus the benefits of education are disproportionately enjoyed by higher income families, whose children are more likely to complete secondary schooling. According to a study by Ohba, (2009), the implications are, the more deserving students and needy, are left out of the benefits of education and do not reap from the subsidies which are financed by and large from general taxation.

From the foregoing discourse on the rationale for public subsidies on education and the free tuition policies, and the costs involved, most studies have shown that there is a direct relationship between public financing policy and participation in education. The Kenya government like other countries has invested heavily in education since independence and has implemented free tuition policies in both primary and

secondary level of education to ensure access, equity and retention of students irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds.

2.1.1 Public Financing of Secondary Education in Developed Countries

Internationally there is a considerable body of literature on the financing of education in both developed and developing countries. The studies depict the fact that education reforms that are aimed at increasing access and participation at any level of education carry significant financial demands. Lumumba (2005) identifies five sources of financing education: the state, local communities, families, businesses and external sources. World Bank (2005) posits that financing secondary education is a great challenge to both governments and households. According to Carr et al (2007), in most developed countries, the first and second level of education is financed mainly from tax revenue of the state. In France, the national education authorities control practically the entire use of national budget approaches. In other countries such as the United Kingdom and Russia, education administration is decentralized to local authorities who nevertheless receive the bulk of their resources from their national budget. Further, United States of America (U.S.A) is an outstanding case of successful decentralized education financial system. Both financing and administration of the elementary and secondary education are highly decentralized among more than 25,000 school districts. In this regard the country has two main programs through which the first and the second levels of education are financed. It comes in form of grants-in-aid for elementary and secondary institutions and covers recurrent and investment expenses such as school constructions, repair and maintenance of facilities, settlement of utility bills, salaries, professional improvement of the staff, transportation, vocational training and educational televisions among other

expenditures. It is observed that, there is an incentive to spend local funds, wealthy districts can respond more easily than the poor ones. If there is appreciable difference in resources or efforts among districts, the wealthy soon outstrip the poor districts in constructions and replacement of such facilities. Matching grants however, do serve well as means of getting activities started, (Ouchi, 2004; Carr et al, 2007).

In Germany the states provide some financial support to students from poor families to cater for tuition fees. Even though the program covers students enrolled in both public and private schools, the former are accorded first priority. Students from middle and higher social economic status are encouraged to pay their own fees. Similarly in Sweden, secondary school education is financed through a combination of grants and users fee. Here more than 90% of the student's financial support is through bursaries while 10% is funded through user's fee, (Carr et al, 2007). In the Kenya scenario, allocation of tuition funds to students does not necessarily differentiate students from the various economic and social set ups (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

In Russia, secondary education is mainly funded through cost sharing. This is because secondary schools were encouraged to charge users fee to rid of financial crises that were also facing the country. Advance microeconomic performance has prompted Russia to drift towards legalizing payment of tuition fees, even though secondary education is supposed to be free under the constitution. In Costa Rica, even though primary education and secondary education is free, the Secondary School system suffers from high repetition and drop-out rates and it is perceived to have declined in quality. Similarly, despite free tuition programmes towards primary and secondary schools in Kenya, low net enrolment has remained a challenge (World Bank, 2009).

Chile ranks among the top countries recovering a significant proportion of secondary school education financing through effective collection of users fee. With the policy of liberalization, private secondary schools have increased and majority of people willing to fully support their secondary education by paying for school education for both tuition and living expenses are able to do so. However, despite the enthusiasm among the population to finance secondary education, the poor students are supported through the user's fee and subsidies to guarantee retention. China on the other hand since the late 1970s, there has been a rapid expansion in the development of secondary education in terms of student's enrolment and government funding at lower secondary level from 23 million to over 43 million, (Lewin & Caillods,2001). Notwithstanding the challenges in the case of Kenya too, since independence increased financing towards schooling has led to increased student enrolments (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

The indications from these studies are that most of the cited developed countries have given a significant proportion of the government revenue towards the education of their citizens in all the levels of education which has contributed greatly towards student participation in schooling withstanding the challenges. This implies the various governments recognise the value for investing in education and it has led to positive development in education in these particular countries.

2.1.2 Public Financing of Secondary Education in Developing Countries

A review of financing of secondary education in developing countries portrays different levels of policy and financial government commitments. Oyugi (2010) observes that in most developing countries, public spending in social sciences has

been rising without achievement of desired outcomes such as quality and quantity. In most African countries, there is a wide gap between the demand and supply of education resources since the early 1980s attributed to budgetary constraints. Studies by Lewin (2007) and Ohba (2009) showed secondary school enrolments in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continue to be the lowest in the world and that most of the governments operate under severe budget constraints which affects their intent to extend free education. Thus they often allow public schools to levy fees for limited items. Of the 104 million secondary school-age children in the region, only one in four (25%) were enrolled in secondary school in 2006, (UNESCO, 2007). Lewin (2007) corroborates that less than 25 million are formally enrolled and many of those who attend irregularly fail to complete lower secondary schooling successfully.

According to Lewin (2008) the low enrolment is attributed to failure to transit to secondary school and to complete secondary school. Ohba (2009) asserts that although there are many reasons for low access to secondary education, there is little doubt that school fees are one of the greatest obstacles to children from poor households to gain access to secondary education. According to Lewin and Coillods (2001) and Lewin (2008), in Africa, countries have experienced a decline in the public allocation to social services such as education and health. In response to this decline, governments have found it necessary to pass on a proportion of the cost of education to households, thereby putting pressure on the income of the latter. However, evidence from the region indicates that an increasing number of households cannot afford to pay this users fee. The provision of education therefore particularly at Secondary level continues to experience financial constraints. Countries with the lowest gross enrolment rate at Secondary level, such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Malawi, Burundi and

Tanzania have the highest ratio of cost per student as a proportionate to Gross National Product (GNP) and are allocating substantial proportion of the total sector budget to education. Countries in West Africa have the lowest literacy levels in the world. Further observations by Lewin and Caillods (2001) indicate that, there are at least seven million people in the countries with gross enrolment rate at Secondary level of less than 40%. A further one billion live where secondary gross enrolment rates are between 40% and 70%. In both cases, it is likely that the majority of adults have experienced at best the first few grades of secondary schooling, and at the worst none at all. In the gross enrolments, it is unlikely that more than 20% of the school age children are completing a full secondary cycle and worse still, external support for investment in secondary education has been a drawback.

Despite the financial crisis, some governments in the SSA have extended free education from primary to secondary school. For instance, Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively, extended free education to ensure access to all children regardless of their individual social-economic backgrounds, (Ohba, 2009). According to Oketch and Rolleston (2007) the three East African(EA) countries have overtime been characterised by Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transition and equity (CREAT) zones of exclusion (i.e. those with no access, those who are excluded after entry, those at risk of dropout and those excluded from secondary education). Lewin and Caillods (2001) further observe that secondary school expansion in Zimbabwe has greatly improved and attributes this to the high level of policy and financial government commitment and prioritised expenditures sustained for a long time.

Lewin and Caillods (2001) add that in Malawi the Government schools are funded from the Ministry of Education budgetary and had the lowest enrolment rate at Secondary level 4% in 1985 and reached only at 6% in 1995. Grants aided schools receive income essentially on the basis of the number of students, the proportion of the boarder and other special features that they may have. In 2001, the Government of Malawi introduced the Secondary School bursary scheme to ensure that no pupil selected to go to Secondary School failed to do so. However, a study of UPE in Malawi by Rose (2002) revealed that parents were still required to incur expenses for more than the amount formerly required for fees. A study in Ghana revealed that even though there was abolition of school fees, some of the schools introduced indirect fees to compensate for the lost revenue, (MOE/GES, 2001 cited in Akyeampong, 2009). In Burkina Faso, there are no fees either in principal for those students who have passed the entrance examination, but pupils who have failed have to pay fees to the parents association. This helps the school in buying materials or in paying the salary of temporally services teachers. In Senegal, on the other hand fees have been introduced that serve to finance purchase of educational materials and non salary cost. A ministry of education decree regulates the fees; in addition students have to contribute to the parents association just like in Burkina Faso. These studies point to the fact that despite the school fees challenges the various governments have made efforts and used diverse approaches towards supporting schooling.

According to World Bank (2008) report on Governance, Management and Accountability in secondary education in SSA, international trends have been driving much of the need for reform in secondary education throughout Africa. Verspoor (2008) concurs and argues that increases in public spending will be inadequate to generate increases in education attainment and learning achievement unless

accompanied by reforms that aim at a more efficient use of available resources and find sources of additional funding. It is apparent that despite governments abolishing fees at the secondary level, inherently schools continue to levy fees. The opportunity costs for the poor households remain low hence denying their children access to secondary schooling, a paradox of the free secondary education.

2.1.3 Public Financing of Secondary Education in Kenya

Studies done in Kenya, for instance by Orodho (2004), point out that during the pre-independence era, access to education by natives was a limited phenomenon because the colonial rulers perceived adequate provision as a threat to 'status quo;' and national stability. At the dawn of independence, the new government recognized the need for an educated workforce to speed up the socio-economic and political development and to replace the departing colonial officers and expatriate staff (Tum, 1996). Olembo, Wanga and Karangu, (1992), reiterate that financing of education by the Government has hence been a critical function since independence and that the Government has continued to spend more and more on education in its attempts to implement educational policies. It was also following the 1961 All Africa States Conference held in Addis Ababa whereby African countries resolved to offer free, universal and compulsory primary and secondary education. Sifuna et al (2006) posit that Kenya like other countries, has laid a lot of emphasis on the role of education in promoting economic and social development. MoE (2003), on National Action Plan on Education for All, outlines one of the EFA goals as articulated at the Jomtein Conference and reaffirmed at the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000) as ensuring all leaning needs.

A historical analysis of patterns and trends of education financing in Kenya reveals the existence of partnership between government, communities and households (Oyugi, 2010). The Republic of Kenya (1988) in the KIPRA Paper No. 55, posits that Kenya secondary education over the years is financed through the cost sharing policy, introduced in Kenya in 1988. The costs are met through partnerships between key players in financing secondary education who include: The Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), religions organizations, development partners, communities/households/parents/individuals, external support/multilateral bodies and the private sector. With this funding policy framework, the overall government role include : professional development of teachers/in-service training, for instance in strengthening of Mathematics and Science Subjects (SMASSE), teacher remuneration in public institutions, provision of infrastructure, for example through Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and KESSP, administration and management, provision of bursaries and scholarships for needy students, professional support curriculum development and teacher education and provision of grants for specialized equipment for Science and practical subjects especially in marginalized areas.

According to Republic of Kenya (2010) the Government of Kenya designed, the Sector Wide Approach to Planning (SWAP) and the Kenya Sector Support Programme as financing mechanisms. Since 2005 it has contributed towards improved pupil enrolments at primary level and text book sharing at ratio of 2:1 hence leading to improved equality of curriculum delivery. Studies show that secondary school policies have evolved with the Government of Kenya addressing the challenges facing the education sector through several commissions, committees and taskforces. This has triggered enrolment at Secondary level, for instance, the number of students increased from 30,120 in 1963 to 652,283 in 2000, (Republic of Kenya

2002 as cited in Njeru and Orodho (2003). The implication of increase in student population was a corresponding heavier budget to cater for the emerging needs. The Kenya Government uses about 40% of the GNP on education and the budget currently stands at about 80 billion. The total number of students in Primary Schools is about 7.5 million while in secondary schools there are about 4,000 secondary schools and the enrolments is about 800,000 students. Turana (2010) further observes that lack of adequate infrastructure at all levels of education undermine effort to enhance access and equity to education hence making it difficult to address the existing disparities and gender.

Republic of Kenya (2009) Economic Survey further acknowledges that Development partners have played instrumental roles towards funding of education in Kenya. Thus Kenya has made gains in education over the last seven years in a bid to achieve the MDG's and EFA by 2010. To this end, it has disbursed Ksh. 48 billion to public secondary schools since its inception. Formal secondary education in Kenya is the second level in formal education system. It is a cycle that lasts for four years. Hence it seems increased enrolments are due to Government's financial assistance in terms of tuition fees. The Economic Survey on Education Expenditures of the MoE, 2004/05 – 2008/09 indicates an expenditure trend which reflects the Government's commitment to implementing the FPE and FTP. The gross total expenditure increased from Ksh.122.0 billion in 2007/08 to Ksh.136.8 billion in 2008/09. Of the total allocation, recurrent expenditure received the largest share of 89.2%. Overall, the Secondary education registered the highest recurrent expenditure of Ksh. 12.5 billion in the 2008/09 compared to 3.9 billion in 2007/08 to cater for the FTP. The Ministry of Education (MoE) is however faced with the challenges of reconciling scarce resources available with finances needed to achieve the sector goals and also in

ensuring high quality standards, (Republic of Kenya 2006; Oyugi, 2010). Since implementation of the programme, many problems have been reported by schools across the country. They range from delayed disbursements by the MoE throwing schools in a financial crisis that has also affected teachers serving under Parents Teachers Association (PTA), and jeopardized payments to suppliers and delay of payments of non-teaching staff or payment in part.

Studies carried out further reveal that despite the large investment in education and the increased enrolments, the current situation in Kenyan schools and especially at the primary level are quite disheartening with great concern over the quality of education. Ngware, et al (2008) assert that the notion of quality should go beyond student's results and look at the determinants of such results, including provision of teachers, buildings, equipment and curriculum. After the implementation of the FPE in 2003, the primary enrolment increased from 5.9 million in 2002 to 8.6 million in 2008, while secondary level enrolment increased from 779,000 in 2000 to over 1.4 million students in 2008. Republic of Kenya (2009) Economic Survey indicates enrolments in Secondary Schools increased from 926,149 in 2004 to 1,382,211 in 2008. Part of this increase may be attributed to the growing support for the children from poor households by the Government and other partners, (Ministry of Education, 2005). Nevertheless, the studies clearly show that despite the public financing of education and the increased student enrolments across the country, challenges continue to face the education sector and the secondary level is yet to be equitably attained.

2.2 Factors Influencing Provision of Free Tuition Policies

In a bid to meet the EFA and MDGs targets the Kenya government has shown high commitment towards providing for its citizens in order to increase schooling participation (Republic of Kenya, 2002b; MoEST, 2005). Olembo (1992) observes that the desire to have free and quality education for all Kenyan children was one of the major objectives for the struggle for independence. This was followed by implementation of FPE classes 1 to 4 in 1974 and the cycle completed in 1985 whereby all the eight grades that formed the eight year primary education cycle were enjoying free and universal education. However, later the government introduced the cost sharing policy and hence it was not until 2003 that primary education was declared free by the NARC Government. Republic Of Kenya (2009) observed that following the implementation of FPE and FTP 2003 and 2008, the total financial disbursements to the two programmes were at Kshs.47 billion and Kshs.14 billion respectively in support of learners' needs. Oketch and Rolleston (2007) argue that even though enrolments have increased, the quality of education has been compromised and greatly eroded. A study carried out in Kenya urban areas and rural areas respectively by Ohba, (2009), Oketch and Ngware, (2010) further revealed that the poorest of the poor are still excluded in education despite FPE and FTP. Children are still enrolled in low fee- paying private schools in most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, inclusive of Kenya and this is attributed to excess demand. Further, household decisions on schooling, such as type of school are influenced by household characteristics. Muthwii (2004) corroborates and asserts that schools still levied fees for development thus parents were still paying the costs of school construction despite FPE and dropout rates were high. One of the main reasons for the high dropouts seems to be the various costs associated with primary schooling (Hunt, 2008).

The development of Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (2005-2010) clearly shows the government's intention to integrate secondary education as part of basic education (MoEST, 2005). It is this policy framework that became the backbone for implementing free secondary education. The 2007 election campaigns witnessed most candidates using it as a major campaign strategy in their manifesto (Malenya, 2008). The national guidelines and their utilisation as per the various vote heads are outlined on Table 2.1 (See Appendix III). Oyaro (2008) advances that the subsidy covers tuition and administrative costs, school maintenance and improvements, and class activities and has led to reduction of the cost of Secondary education, enforced Government approved fees guidelines, enhanced the capacity of Board of Governors (BOG's) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA).

Oyaro (2008) posits that Kenya has 4,478 public high schools, many of which are in a state of disrepair and lack essential facilities, inadequate staff with a teacher pupil ratio at 1:45, high work load and the low quality of services. Parents are still responsible for uniforms and lunches and the subsidy does not cover residence costs for children at boarding schools. The subsidy is further characterized by complaints of extra levies, delays in receiving subsidies and the issue of children from poor families who cannot afford even to top-up fees. Further, observations reveal that investment in secondary education pays off in a better qualified workforce, strong economies and reduced unemployment. A substantial number of Kenyans live below the poverty line and this will compromise school attendance of many children from poor households. Further, public spending at Secondary level has disproportionately benefited the wealthier quartile groups at the expense of the poorest quartile making public spending on

secondary education skewed in favour of the rich, (Ohba, 2009). Education specialists have attributed the skewed benefit to past policy decisions on admission criteria based on the quota system and investment at this level in private schools. Thus, with many poor children locked out of secondary schools, the possibilities of breaking from the cycle of abject poverty dims. Further observations show that analysts fault the current funding criteria in that it does not differentiate schools on the basis of existing facilities and educational materials but give a blanked annual allocation of an estimated Ksh. 19,000 per term as tuition fees and learning materials for each child.

According to Ayot (1992), some of the challenges that have been affecting the financing of education in Kenya include economic growth whereby the rate of growth is quite low in developing countries compared to population increase. Also, the increased alarming population rate is a major problem basing on the fact that if the population of school going children is high and the unemployed, then the dependence burden increases. Further, ensuring equitable distribution of funds by taking into consideration the geographical and ethnic dimensions is yet to be addressed. Social-cultural factors, such as FGM, and early marriages are a loss to the Government since the learners are away from school and resources are already paid. Other factors include emerging issues like brain drain, that is, migration of intellectuals which is on the rise. The implication is that the Government losses. Educated unemployment levels are very high and specialists have gone to look for greener pastures outside their own countries while others suffer and die of HIV/AIDS related diseases worsening the recovery levels.

Republic of Kenya (2008), further observes that for Secondary School level, the same pattern as in primary level is displayed. The cost of uniforms, supplies and transport

may well be beyond the means of many households, especially those with several children of school going age. This means that choices have to be made, and the choice is often to drop out of school or worse still, to deny schooling to girls while enrolling boys, thereby contributing directly to maintaining the inferior status of women. This agrees with findings by Simatwa and Dawo (2010) that despite Kenya Government commitment towards enhancement of girl-child education, their participation rate at secondary level is still notably low. Duflo et al (2010) and Baird et al (2010) observes that, perhaps, reducing fee barriers could boost female enrolment and possibly reduce incidences of early marriage and pregnancy among girls.

UNESCO (2004) on Education Policies and strategies advances that, implementation for a long time has not been given the appropriate attention in the policy process, the reason why few plans are effectively translated into realities. Further observations indicate that failed implementation shows that several reasons are involved: unrealistic objectives, faulty technical design, lack of political support, inadequate finance, inadequate institutional arrangements, strong resistance from the opposition party, or unexpected changes in the environment. According to Sebatier and Mazmanian (1983) both financial and technical resources along with human resources are key factors that contribute to proper implementation of any policy particularly if a policy requires the creation of new structures and hiring of new personnel. It is clear too that the poor economic performance in Kenya has led to increasing poverty levels which impact negatively on education performance indicators. The population living in poverty has risen from 48.8% in 1990 to 56.8 in 2004, (MOEST, 2005). Consequently, poor economic performance has reduced school General Enrolment Rate (GER).

According to Republic of Kenya (2009) Economic Survey, most of Kenyans live below the poverty line. Socio-economic status is a critical issue in many countries where illiteracy and poverty levels are high. Oloo and Odek (2012) assert that education has historically been viewed as an effective way of reducing socio-economic disadvantages by creating more opportunities for less disadvantaged children and improving their chances for success in life. Further, UNESCO (2004) observes that the factors shaping educational experience are school-based while others relate to the child's family, community, social and cultural, aspects of the child's environment. Therefore this seems to point to the fact that educational quality needs to be examined in relation to the social, political, cultural and economic contexts in which it takes place. Moreover, the exclusion of the poor from secondary and higher education is not only a poverty issue but also a geographical one, because the poor tend to come from the Arid and Semi Arid areas (ASAL), informal settlements (slums) and generally from regions where cultural inhibitions prevail, (Republic of Kenya, 2008). Ohba (2009) observes that the exclusion of the poor especially from secondary schooling means that they do not eventually access higher education. A study by Holla and Kremer, (2008) revealed that there is substantial evidence in a wide range of literature that consumers are sensitive to the cost of education and that fees remains a major challenge to many families. These discussions point to the fact that students schooling from certain backgrounds will tend to be disadvantaged in schooling either due to poverty and other related factors denying them schooling, completion or accessing higher education.

A study by Mbelle and Kaboros (2003) revealed that differences between regions, socio-economic groups and school location are quite significant. The rich tend to be in

urban areas where schools tend to be well equipped unlike schools in the rural areas and this affects competition. In Tanzania the government has been funding both primary and secondary education through fiscal operations, donors and other sources, (Mbelle & Katoros, 2003). Socio-economic status, access to school and home environment were cited as critical determinants of performance. Cultural attitudes were identified as greatly interfering with girl enrolments as well as in other SSA countries with varying differences. Assessing the impact of socio-economic factors in Malawi it was concluded that inadequate facilities affected female persistence participation in school. A study by Onsomu, Mungai, Oulai, Sankale and Mujidi, (2004) observed that country-specific empirical analysis has not been done, especially at lower levels, giving cognizance to regional social-economic characteristics. There is a dearth of empirical evidence on implications of gender and social economic factors on education outcomes in Kenya. Studies carried out in South Africa (SA) revealed that secondary education remained a challenge in poor backgrounds demonstrated that socio-economic differentials in SA play major role in educational outcomes.

Odipo and Okwatch, (1997) identified Education policies and institutional processes, school-based and household/community based factors and social cultural factors as affecting completion rates in education hence resulting to low participation. UNESCO (2004), Lewin (2008) and Hunt (2008) consider family background the most important and most weighty factor in determining academic performance and student participation in schooling. According to Ohba (2009), lack of opportunities for formal employment, particularly in rural areas may deter parents from sending their children to school. These studies have established a positive correlation between socio-

economic status of students and the level of their learning achievement in Kenya. The study revealed that families with higher socio-economic status had ability to provide their children with necessary facilities and materials that are pertinent for learning. Therefore, these studies seem to provide a bearing to the factors under investigation in this study owing to the fact that student participation schooling in Machakos County has persistently remained low.

A study by Ayodo, Agak and Jagero (2010) observed that the home environment poses a challenge to most students. The main problems faced by day students are long distances from school, many domestic chores at home, lack of family and parental support and low socio-economic status (Scharff & Brady, 2006; Dessarollo, 2007; Malenya, 2008). According to Lewin (2007) participation in education by wealth and gender is heavily skewed towards high income families. Colclough and Lewin (2001) assert that opportunities for attending school as well as progress in school are likely to be more limited for children from poverty households. Shultz (1993) concludes that the economic well-being of the household in which a child resides is a strong determinant of educational investment. Studies by Mwinzi and Kimengi (2006) in Kenya indicated that sending of students home to collect fees interfered with their learning and consequently led to their dropping out of school. Raja and Burnet (2004) argue that low enrolments among the poor remains a problem and that the greater the inequality, the harder it is for the poor to pay fees. Implementation of the tuition programme in 2008 aimed at ensuring access, retention and completion of schooling irrespective of the socio-economic status of the student. Thus it cushioned the poor from being send home for fees and dropping out of school. Nevertheless despite the FTP, participation in schooling has remained low.

A review of the political scenario in regard to education reveals that ideas and driving forces behind the expansion at the secondary level are quite similar to those at the primary level. Stasavage (2005) argues that rapid expansion in access to primary education in recent years in Kenya as in Uganda and Tanzania are linked to (re)introduction of democratic elections. This is quite similar to what happened in Kenya in 2008 with the introduction of the FTP. Muthwii (2004) observes that FPE which was launched in Kenya in 2003 was as a result of an election pledge by the NARCK government. According to Republic of Kenya 2009, the FDSE was introduced in Kenya as a result of an election pledge by the Coalition government. Grogan (2006) asserts that political will has been key towards UPE and that it is democratic politics that resulted to FPE in Uganda. In Tanzania according to Bogonko (1992), expansion at primary level was due to pressure groups. Farmer (2008) asserts that local education and politics are inseparable and that education is the most important function of the state and local Government. This can be seen from the way governments in various countries both developed and developing are enormously investing in the education of its populations. This implies that in the development of the education sector, its management and control, politicians play a leading role in ensuring that their political goals are also fully met.

Amutabi (2003) reiterates that politics has the potential to play an important role in any country's socio-economic development by availing high level manpower, besides defining and guiding cultural, social, economic and political dynamics. This therefore implies that in any democratic government with a liberalized Education System, educationists will always work alongside the politicians. Falmer (2008) on a different note argues that, because of the importance of public education, it is impossible to avoid situations where political considerations affect education decision making. In

many cases education in general is a major component of both political party forums and discussion. It has become more politicized as we have moved from a society in which higher levels of education were considered a province of the few. This has changed because a democratic society must have an informed citizenry. According to Amutabi (2003), a critical examination at the trend and patterns of education growth indicates political interferences in the running of education. Political interferences have hampered the implementation of initiatives aimed at improving education management. For instance the Koech Commission Report was dismissed as 'unrealistic' by the ruling elite. Thus most of its recommendations were never implemented and like other such Commissions, the government had spent a lot financially and in terms of the operations yielding very little.

2. 2.1 Free Tuition Programme and Factors Influencing its Provision in Kenya.

Mukudi (2004) in his study asserts that even without improvement of quality of educational infrastructure, realisation of universal access will remain an illusion unless the Kenya economy is able to support her education system. Poverty has emerged as the concern for international agencies and the Kenyan government. Funding constraints are identified as the primary limitation to the realisation of universal access. Despite the provision of FTP and increments, the cost of secondary education still remains prohibitively high due to boarding expenses which leads to more than half of the school age population not accessing secondary education. About 2.7 million students aged between 14 and 17 years are not in school, the majority girls. The Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 notes that, factors constraining growth in secondary school enrolment is the mismatch factor. According to this Paper, despite the Government initiative to improve access and quality in secondary school

education, the sub-sector continues to face challenges, politically, low participation rates, low transition from primary to secondary and from secondary to tertiary, as well as gender and regional disparities. The declines in secondary school enrolments over the last decade has been caused by high cost and poverty, with an estimated 30% dropout rate due to this particular factor alone. Other factors include: high cost of learning and teaching materials, school transport and development levies; extra expenses for private tuition, unfriendly school environment, negative effects of HIV/AIDS pandemic and rising repetition rates. In addition, the cost of secondary education in boarding schools has been higher than day schools by more than 50% (Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005). World Bank (2009) further observes that, despite the gains in primary school enrolments, Kenya still has low net enrolments in secondary schools estimated at 50%.

Republic of Kenya (2009), observes that the cost of secondary education still remains prohibitively high due to boarding expenses which are not catered for by the grants provided. This leads to more than half of the school age population not accessing secondary education. Pratt (1994) argues that, the task of a new program implementation involves two main processes. The first is the changing of stakeholders' attitude and those also involved in the implementation. These include; policy makers, administrators, teachers, supervisors, parents and learners. The second process is the provision of appropriate resources which include human, physical and material needs. These seem to have been ignored in the implementation of both FPE and FDSE. A study carried out by Omukoba, Simatwa and Ayado, (2011) reveals that despite secondary schools initiating income generating projects to fill the existing financial gaps, they are faced with serious challenges ranging from lack of capital, lack of skills on the part of the principals and poor record management.

Kattan (2006) observes that fees continue to be collected in a third of the countries with an official policy against fees. A few countries in SSA have implemented the free education policy including Kenya with mixed cases of success, problems and challenges. According to King and Palmer (2009), the problems bedevilling the education system regarding access, equality, relevance and outcomes are rather complex and will not be solved by focusing on only one sector but rather through sustained institutional and systematic reform. While it is laudable that enrolment has increased overall, there is such generalizable gloss over continued inequalities in access with respect to region, ethnicity, socio-economic status and gender.

According to Abagi (1999), several policy documents in Kenya depict that the three post-independence governments have prioritised and developed UPE as a means of attaining the global target of EFA. The research about the relationship of Socio-Economic Status (SES) of student background and education achievement is one of the best established results of educational attainment. However there is only a little research about the success of the recent expansion policies in higher education in diminishing the inequalities of access (Lewins 2004). Equity concerns, with regards to gender, region, ethnicity and socio economic background abound. The quest for universal access to education has been a legitimate priority for many African governments in the post colonial period (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2008). Alwy and Schech (2003) have analysed national surveys in post-independence Kenya to show that ethnicity also has a role in determining access to education. This is not difficult to envision given to the nature of Kenyan politics where political proximity to the rural elite ensures a disproportionate share of the national largesse, including the availability of educational opportunities even scholarships.

According to Onsomu et al (2006), for policies and programmes to significantly improve transition to secondary school, they must target the various segments of the population. Public expenditure incidence analysis shows the high quintiles benefit more from the provision and financing of secondary education compared to low income quintiles. According to Lewin (2007), the measurement of enrolment is insufficient for indicating more than initial access.

Further studies have shown that the poor tend to have limited access to educational opportunities than the non-poor (Onsomu et al (2006), Oketch & Rolleston, (2007)). There exist major research gaps to relate specific factors to specific regions and or to secondary school within a specific context. A study by Jagero, Agak and Ayodo (2010) depicts that the main problems faced by the day students are based on the home backgrounds and that socio-economic status has greatly affected their participation in schooling. Reaching equal opportunity in access to education is an important component of the international goals. According to Raja and Burnett (2004), the greater the level of household income inequality the harder it is for the poor to pay fees. Further, major determinants of enrolment include household income, schooling costs, presence of schools, community involvement, transportation, education quality and relevance.

Issues around differences in participation in secondary schooling by students with different socio-economic backgrounds have been of long research and policy interest in most countries. Research on the role of tuition costs, student assistance and other related financial factors show that these influences explain only a small part of the gap in participation rate across socio-economic groups. Much of the existing research on

gaps in persistence and participation in secondary education has focused on the role of costs and affordability as barriers and the off-setting role of student financial aid. But the term barriers is itself often poorly defined and perhaps not the most useful one when talking about the various factors that determine who accesses secondary education and who persists through to completion. The underpinnings of this research is to take a broader perspective on the gaps that are observed taking into account provision of the FTP in the light of the factors influencing the low participation rates of students at the secondary school level.

2.3 Summary of the literature Review and the Gap Therein

This chapter has explored studies on the general perceptions and rationale for public financing of education worldwide in the light of provision of Free Tuition policies for secondary schools (Ayot & Briggs, 1992; Bray, 2003; Colclough & Lewin, 2001; Churi & Kiumi, 2005; Fuller, 1987; Falmer, 2008; King, 2002; Marcucci & Johnstone, 2007; Materu, 2008; Ohba, 2009; Psachapoulos & Woodhall, 1997; World Bank, 2005). The studies indicate a powerful persuasive social-economic logic, political and historical rationale for this. Studies in most developed countries indicate most governments have subsidised the education of their citizens though some do it partially and experience less challenges with increased student enrolments (Colclough & Lewin, 2001; Lindens, 1999).

Studies in (SSA) indicate that most countries economic growth continues to be the lowest in the world and that most of the governments operate under severe budget constraints affecting their intent to extend free education (Lewin, 2007; Ohba, 2009). For majority schools the enrolment GERs is less than 40% despite governments

abolishing fees and the countries are characterised by high population growth and dependence ratios. There is a glaring education financing gap that seems to suggest mixed factors behind the limitation (Akyeampong, 2009; Eshiwani, 1993; Hunt, 2008; King, 2002; Lindens, 1999; Lewin & Caillods, 2001; Lewin, 2008; MoE, 2003; Njeru & Orodho, 2003; Olembo et al, 1997; Orodho, 2004; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007; Ohba, 2009; Oketch & Ngware, 2010; Rose, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2009; Sifuna et al, 2006; Somerset, 2007; Thompson, 1987; Tum, 1996; Turana, 2010; UNESCO, 2004; 2007; 2008). Inherently schools continue to levy for fees, the opportunity costs for the poor households remain low denying the majority access thus posing a paradox of the free secondary education.

Specific studies in Kenya exhibit the relentless Government efforts since independence to subsidise the education of its citizens in a bid to eradicate poverty, disease and illiteracy (Ayodo, Agak & Jagero, 2010; Eshiwani, 1993; Lewin, 2004, 2005; MoEST, 2004, 2005; Ngware et al, 2008; Olembo, 1992; Oloo & Odek, 2012; Orodho, 2004; Oyugi, 2010; Omukoba et al, 2011; Pratt, 1994; Republic of Kenya, 2002; 2009; Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005; Sifuna et al, 2006; UNESCO, 2004). These efforts resulted to the introduction of FPE and FTP in 2003 and 2008 respectively leading to increased student enrolments. An analysis of the studies related to factors influencing provision of Free Tuition Policies in Kenya reveal a historical trend and pattern of an education growth at primary and secondary level that is greatly affected and yet to be equitably attained (Amutabi, 2003; Alwy and Schech, 2003; Baird et al, 2010; Duflo et al, 2010; Holla & Kremer, 2008; Kattan, 2006; King & Palmer, 2009; Lewin, 2008; Mbelle & Katoros, 2003; Mukudi, 2004; Muthwii, 2004; Onsomu et al, 2006; Ohba, 2009; Republic of Kenya, 2008; Simatwa & Dawo, 2010; UNESCO, 2004). The research on the role of tuition cost, student assistance

and other related financial factors show that these influences explain only a small part of the gap in participation rate across socio-economic groups. The studies reveal government financing efforts towards addressing schooling issues and challenges by for instance through 'blanket allocation' of funds ignoring address of specific needs in regard to the context of the factors underpinning this specific study. Thus, all the reviewed studies do not shed adequate light on how the social-economic and political factors influence provision of the FTP at the secondary school level. This is because, in light of the mentioned factors, participation in secondary schooling has persistently remained low despite the FTP. This suggests there is a gap in knowledge that requires to be filled and therefore this was the intention of the study. Statistics on student enrolment in Machakos County indicate that student participation at the secondary level has persistently remained low at 34% compared to others. Statistics on student net enrolment eastern region indicated net enrolment at 50%. Thus, continuous trends of low student participation in secondary schooling are persistent inspite of the FTP. Therefore, although several empirical studies have been done on factors influencing low student participation, few of these studies have focused on the selected (socio-economic, political) factors and their influence on provision of the FTP. This poses a threat to the successful provision of the FTP whose main objective is to ensure access, retention and completion of all students irrespective of backgrounds.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This Chapter focused on the procedures and strategies that were followed in conducting the study. It describes the research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments of data collection, pilot study, reliability and validation of instruments, data analysis plan, the methods that were used in testing the objectives, the unit of analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Area of the Study

The study was carried out in the 8 Districts in Machakos County, Eastern region of Kenya. The Districts are Machakos Central, Athi River, Kathiani, Kangundo, Matungulu, Mwala, Masinga and Yatta. Machakos Central is the County headquarters and is approximately sixty four kilometres (64) to the east of Nairobi. The climate is generally dry and characterised by unreliable rainfall. The main economic activity is agriculture and livestock production. Secondary schools in the County admit students from all over the country, of various cultural, social-economic and political backgrounds which are assumed may have influence on students' participation in schooling and hence adversely impact on provision of the FTP. According to (Republic of Kenya, 2011), Machakos population was at 416, 416 in 2008 and projected to 465,749 in 2009. The population of secondary school going age as at 2009 was at 101,497 forming 9.2% of the total population. It was projected to increase to 107,773 in 2012 (Republic of Kenya, 2013). In light of the student

population, participation in secondary schooling was observed to be persistently low despite the disbursement of free tuition and the increased national enrolments (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the “blueprint” that enables the investigator to come up with solutions to problems and guides in the various stages of the research (Nachmias 2004). It refers to a plan or proposal to conduct research and it involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry and specific methods (Creswell, 2009). The study used a qualitative paradigm. The qualitative aspect entailed collecting data that was subjected to qualitative analysis. In this context, data is usually collected from those immersed in everyday life of the setting in which the study is framed. In this study, the sampled respondents provided their everyday experiences toward the required data. According to Creswell (2002),

‘the qualitative paradigm is ‘inquiry process of understanding’ where the researcher develops a ‘complex’ holistic picture, analyses words, reports details, use of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.’

Therefore, data analysis is based on the values that these participants perceive their world. Ultimately, it ‘produces’ an understanding of the problem based on the multiple contextual factors (Miller, 2000). To this end the researcher was able to collect valuable data on the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of the FTP and subjected it to qualitative analysis. The study adopted a phenomenological strategy. The rationale for selecting this design lies in the fact that events that were investigated had already taken place and the researcher was not able to manipulate them in any way.

3.3 Philosophical Paradigm of the Study

According to Bryman (2004), a paradigm is a cluster of beliefs and dictates which, for scientists in a particular discipline, influence what should be studied, how research should be done and how results should be interpreted. The study was grounded on the constructivist philosophical world view which believes there are multiples of knowledge constructed by the researcher and the participant. It gave the researcher an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and made it possible to get a clear understanding of the respondents' perception on the studied variables.

3.4 Target Population

According to Nwrogu (1991), target population is a term that defines all members or elements of a well-defined group with some common observational characteristics. It is to the target population that the results of the study are generalised. This study targeted all public secondary schools in Machakos County in Kenya. The study sought to collect data from the Principals, class teachers and students of these schools and also the District Education Officers (DEOs) in the County. The DEOs ensure statistical returns of public schools to the MoE to make certain they receive the FTP funds. Through the interviews the DEOs complimented information on the influence of economic, political and social factors on implementation of the FTP in the County. The Principals deal with administration of the institutions. They are the managers of the disbursed funds and were useful in providing required data on enrolments, disbursements and other crucial information on political influences perhaps given their interactions with the national leaders. They were also in a position to provide data on how the socio-economic and political factors influenced provision of the FTP.

Teachers were considered important because they interact with the students on a daily basis and therefore made it easy for them to provide relevant information regarding the factors under study and how they influence the students schooling. The students are supposedly the beneficiaries of the free tuition funds and it was assumed they would provide pertinent information on how the studied factors influence their participation in schooling.

3.5 Sampling and Sample Size

This research targeted all the 109 public secondary schools in Machakos County. However due to logistics and administrative reasons, sampling had to be done so that a representative sample of the study population is chosen. According to Ross (2005), sampling in education is generally done in order to permit the detailed study of part, rather than whole, of population.

3.5.1 Sample Size Criteria

According to McMillan (2012) in selecting a sample from a population there is always some degree of sampling error, but the researcher should always try to minimise such error. Kothari (2007) recommends 30% of the accessible population. In this study, in order to get a more representative sample, 32 secondary schools which form 30% of the 109 schools in Machakos County were randomly selected. The study used a sample of 32 principals, 128 class teachers and 128 students. All the 8 DEOs were sampled. Table 3.1 is a summary of the sample size used for this study. 91.2 % response rate was achieved.

Table 3.1 Sample Size

CODE	RESPONDENTS	POPULATION	SAMPLE
A	DEOs	8	8
B	Principals	109	32
C	Class Teachers	428	128
D	Students	428	128
Total		978	296

3.5.2 Sampling Technique

To acquire data on the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of FTP in day and boarding public schools, stratified sampling, purposive and simple random sampling were employed. The researcher used stratified sampling to strata 16 public Day and 16 Boarding secondary schools respectively. Purposive sampling was utilised to select 1 principal, 4 class teachers from each of the sampled schools and 1 DEO from each district in the County. Simple random sampling was utilised to select 1 learner in each class from Form 1-4 in the categorised schools.

3.6 Research Instruments

Research instruments are useful to researchers because they help in data collection. These include questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis. The researcher in this study used questionnaires, unstructured interview guide and schools professional documents for the data collection. The researcher however ignored the use of observation method which requires contact between the interviewer and interviewee and also the immediate environment. This is because the nature and topic of the study was mainly pegged on collecting opinions and views regarding the studied variables and therefore did not need observation.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

In this research, the questionnaires were guided by the objectives and research questions of the study in-order to ascertain the relationships between the independent and dependant variables. Thus the items addressed the influence of the socio-economic and political factors on the provision of Free Tuition programme in secondary schools. Both structured and unstructured questionnaires that yielded numeric and qualitative data respectively were administered to principals, class teachers and the students. This is because all the respondents were literate and it is assumed that they could all read, interpret the questions, and answer them appropriately. It also enabled easy and cheap collection of data, saved time, ensured confidentiality, was free from bias of the interviewer and respondents not easily approachable were reached conveniently hence results were made more dependable and reliable. To overcome the possibility of low return rate, the researcher administered the questionnaires herself to ensure that they were dully filled in and returned. Closed ended questions with pre-determined responses measured on the Likert scale were used to guide the respondents. It was complimented with open ended questions to elicit respondent opinions and suggestions allowing them to give free responses in-order to provide for the qualitative aspect of data analysis. The questionnaires were divided into three parts, that is; demographic information, information in relation to the influence of socio-economic and political factors on the provision of FTP programme in secondary schools and information on measures towards addressing the factors influencing the provision of FTP programme in secondary schools.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

For in-depth information in this study, interview guide was employed particularly on the DEOs to enable collection of perceptions and opinions on factors influencing provision of FTP programme in the schools. The interview guide was considered critical because the DEOs are fully involved in the entire process of the disbursement of the funds to the various schools. It also enabled the researcher to clarify, enhance and verify the information already given in the questionnaires by other respondents. The interview comprised open-ended type of questions prompted by the researcher and used to give personal opinion on the problem under study. Thus the information obtained from the questionnaires was easily authenticated and complimented through the interviews and showed the interviewees feelings, opinions and attitudes. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) the administration of the interview guide makes it possible to obtain required data to meet specific objectives of the study, standardize the interview situation so that the interviewers can ask the same question in the same manner, and allow for clarifications and the elimination of ambiguity in answers. Kothari (2007) points out that it is easy to overcome resistance and apply observation method, record verbal answers and obtain personal information easily. Only the DEO's within the County were interviewed and therefore the number was small and manageable. This countered the issue of expense and time involved. The data collected from the interviews were manually recorded for further content analysis.

3.6.3 Document Analysis.

Content analysis consists of analysing the contents of document material (Kothari 2004). The researcher was cautious to use professional school documents from the DEO's and the principal's office. This enabled acquisition of information from

government circulars on disbursed funds to schools since inception of the FTP, the utilisation of such funds and statistical returns on student enrolments. The use of documents was advantageous because the data was readily available, accessible and it was possible for the researcher to interpret accordingly. However, the use of these documents was found to be limiting because some were unavailable, scanty and inadequate while others were only for a specific area of interest and therefore could not be manipulated to suit the researcher's interest. Nevertheless, the missing information was complemented by other instruments used in the study.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Research Instruments

Reliability of the research instrument is its level of internal consistency over time. A reliable instrument, therefore, is one that constantly produces the expected results when used more than once to collect data from two samples drawn from the same population (Mulusa, 1998). A pilot study with the use of a questionnaire and an interview guide was carried out in Makueni County in order to test the reliability of the instruments. Makueni County was selected because it is a beneficiary of FTP funds with similar socio-economic and political characteristics to Machakos County. The test-retest technique was applied to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. The researcher administered the test twice on the same respondents with a time lapse of one week between the first and second test. The results were used in revising the tools of research.

Validity of research instruments is its degree to measure what is intended by the researcher (Borg & Gally 1989). The researcher therefore consulted education experts in this particular study and the researcher's supervisors at Moi University who guided

and advised accordingly. The pilot study too made possible to identify misunderstandings, ambiguities and inadequacies of items in the instrument and this ascertained construct validity.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to conducting the research in the County, the researcher sought authorisation from the relevant authorities at the MoE. The researcher was issued with a research permit by the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) and a letter of introduction to the DEOs by the District Commissioner (DC) and to schools in the County by the DEOs office. Data for the study was collected between the months of February 2012 and October 2012. The instruments were administered personally by the researcher to all the respondents. Clarification was made where necessary and adequate time given to the respondents in order for them to respond accurately especially due to the sensitivity of the matter.

3.9 Data Analysis

Kothari (2007) asserts that analysis includes all activities concerned with the processing and protection of data in the research. Data analysis in this research was based on the objectives and research questions of the study. At the end of the data collection, data was coded and fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Data was analysed with the use descriptive statistics, that is, frequencies, percentages and means and presented using tables. Table 3.2 indicates how each of the research questions was analysed as per the set objective to ascertain how the socio-economic and political factors influence provision of the FTP. Qualitative data was derived from narratives and presented in continuous prose.

Therefore, description of participants responses in the interview was done, open-ended questions examined, compared and tallies made accordingly. These lay a well-built base for the presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussions of the data as extensively presented in chapter four.

3.10 Summary of Methods used to Test Objectives

Table 3.2 below presents a summary of methods used to test the study objectives

Table 3.2 Summary of Methods used to Test Objectives

Objective	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Instrument	Data Analysis Method
I	Socio-Economic factors: Gender, Early Marriage, Home environment, income per capita, occupation,	Provision of FTP	questionnaire Interviews	Descriptive statistics: frequencies, percentages, means; qualitatively
II	Political Factors:, Lack of will and support, Selective leadership, Mistrust, Transparency	Provision of FTP	questionnaire Interviews	Descriptive statistics: Frequencies, percentages, means; qualitatively
III	Perceptions of stakeholders on provision of FTP	Provision of the FTP	questionnaire Interviews	Descriptive statistics: Frequencies, percentages, means; qualitatively
IV	Opinions on Improving provision of FTP	Provision of the FTP	questionnaire Interviews	Descriptive statistics: Frequencies, percentages, Means; qualitatively

3.11 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues arise from the kind of problems social scientists investigate and the methods used to obtain valid and reliable data (Nachmias, 2004). This study was designed to meet the ethical standards of research in Kenya in order to ensure the researchers protection and for legal purposes of the study. All the collected data was made anonymous and the comments kept confidential. Prior to the data collection, the researcher made attempts to acquaint with the respondents, got their consent to

participate in the study, explained to them the purpose of the study and how it would be of benefit to the society in the future. The taken considerations enforced the collection of the data, enabled participation and donation of the required information.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation and discussion of the findings from the data obtained from respondents with the use of questionnaires, interviews, and official documents. The chapter presents both the descriptive and analytic results of the study. The descriptive results avail information on how the socio-economic and political factors interact in influence provision of the FTP in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. Specific objectives were: To evaluate the influence of socio-economic factors on the provision FTP in Secondary schools.; To assess the influence of political factors on the provision of FTP in Secondary schools; To assess perceptions of education stakeholders towards provision of FTP; To seek opinions on improving the provision of FTP in Secondary schools. Finally, it provides results of the research questions in respect of the stated objectives as outlined above.

4.1.0 Demographic Information

This sub-section discusses the basic information on the response rate of the sampled population, characteristics and nature of the sampled schools and respondents.

4.1.1 Respondents Response Rate

A total of 29 Principals out of 32 sampled respondents from 8 districts in Machakos County completed and returned the questionnaires. This information is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Survey Responses Rate

Respondent	Number of Questionnaires	Number Returned	Response Rate (%)
Principals	32	29	90.6
Teachers	128	121	94.5
Student	128	112	87.5
Total	288	262	90.9

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Administered questionnaires show that 90.9 % response was achieved from the various respondents which probably indicate a positive response to the study. Principals represented a 90.6 % return rate of the questionnaires, 94.5% response from Class teachers, and 87.5% response from students. Additional data was obtained through interviews done on the eight (8) District Education Officers, whose response was 100%. This response rate by the respondents was considered to be very satisfactory for the purpose of this survey and compares favourably with other researchers. The level of return rate and response was probably affected by a number of factors among them length of questions, type of questions, mood of respondents, among others. The various categories of respondents were selected due to their significant positions and their relevance towards the realisation of the study objectives. Therefore the respondents informed this study as anticipated.

4.1.2 Nature and Characteristics of Schools

Table 4.2 presents the biographical data of the sampled schools which range from national to district schools.

Table 4.2

Data on Sampled Schools

School Category	Location	School		Status		Total	
		Boarding	%	Day	%	N	%
National	Urban	2	6.9	-	-	2	6.9
Provincial	Rural	7	24.1	2	6.9	9	31.0
District	Urban	2	6.9	2	6.9	4	13.8
	Rural	3	10.3	11	37.9	14	48.3
Total		14	48.3	15	51.7	29	100

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Out of the 32 sampled schools, 29 returned the questionnaires. Responses showed that majority were provincial and district schools. Of the sampled schools, National schools constituted only 6.9%. 31.0% were provincial schools whereas 62.1% were district schools. Interviews with the DEOs revealed that majority of the district schools were located in rural areas as compared to the national and provincial schools located in urban areas. The high number of schools in the rural areas could be attributed to the high population of schooling age children and indicates a positive influence on the provision of FTP thus rating the government highly.

4.1.3 Demographic Data of the Principals, Teachers and DEOs

Table 4.3 indicates the age of the sampled principals, teachers and DEOs. The age of the principals ranged from 36 to above 50 years. Majority principals represented 48.3% ranging from 45-50 years. 24.1% represented 36-40 years. 27.6% were over 50 years. Principals between 45-50 years formed the greatest population, consist of

mature, experienced men and women at the height of their career and have a tendency to make informed decisions regarding school affairs.

Table 4.3 Characteristics of the Principals, Teachers and DEOs Population

Characteristics	Principals(N=29)		Teachers(N=121)		DEOs(N=8)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Gender						
Females	11	37.9	62	51.2	3	37.5
Males	18	62.1	59	48.8	5	62.5
Age						
36 - 40 years	7	24.1	49	40.5	2	25.0
41 - 44 years	-	-	44	36.4	3	37.5
45 - 50 years	14	48.3	20	16.5	2	25.0
> 50 years	8	27.6	8	6.6	1	12.5
Education						
Diploma	3	10.3	26	21.5	-	-
Bachelor's degree	13	44.8	76	62.8	7	87.5
Master's degree	11	37.9	11	9.1	1	12.5
Doctorate	2	6.9	3	2.5	-	-
Years of Service current station						
0 - 5 years	21	72.4	68	56.2	8	100
6 - 10 years	2	6.9	26	21.5	-	-
11 - 15 years	2	6.9	16	13.2	-	-
16 - 20 years	4	13.8	5	4.1	-	-
Experience as P/Teachers/DEO						
0 - 5 years	13	46.4	8	50.0	8	100
6 - 10 years	8	28.6	4	25.0	-	-
10 - 20 years	6	21.4	2	12.5	-	-
20 - 35 years	1	3.6	2	12.5	-	-

The old and experienced principals are expected to be conversant with implementation of government policies. Gender imbalance is observed portraying

62.1% males and 37.9% females. Out of the 121 teachers, 51.2% were females and 48.8% were males. The largest percentage of the respondents as compared to the principals was in the 36-40 year-old age bracket, making up 40.5% of the survey sample. 36.4% represent 41-44 year-old bracket whereas a quarter of the population indicated that they were 45 years and above. Only 6.6% of the teachers were 50 years and above. This implies that unlike majority principals, most teachers were below the age of 50 years and therefore likely to evaluate the success or failure of the FTP. On the other hand those above 50 years were likely to be keener on the provision of the FTP based on their working experience.

Of the sampled DEOs, 37.5% ranged between 46 to 50 years. 25% ranged from 40 to 45 years and 51 to 55 years. 12.5% ranged from 56 to 60 years. Basically all the DEOs were above 40 years old and therefore consist of mature, experienced men and women who can be relied upon to make informed decisions regarding education issues within their districts. Regarding gender, males were more than females representing 62.5% and 37.5% respectively, a similar representation to those of the principals.

The academic qualifications of the respondents revealed a body of highly qualified staff in the County. Responses showed majority had B.Ed and Master's degree with a few who are Doctorate holders. Whereas principals with B.Ed and Master's degree were 44.8% and 37.9%, teachers were 62.8% and 9.1% respectively. Doctorate degree holders were 6.9% (principals) and 2.5% (teachers). Interviews with DEOs indicated that majority had B.Ed at 87.5%, while Master's degree holders were 12.5%, a ratio of 7:1. Majority of the respondents are highly trained educationists and therefore conversant with the emerging education issues and a great understanding of education

structure and its policies, especially FTP operations in the region under investigation. This implies that the County is managed by professionals who have the desired leadership training and understand the education policies in relation to the FTP provision process. Of the principals and teachers, 10.3% and 21.5% had diploma in Education, respectively. These responses show that all the respondents have basic required academic qualification required of the teaching profession and working in the education sector.

Regarding the respondents responses on their stay in the current station, indications showed majority had served for less than 5 years. Majority of the principals represented 72.4% and teachers 56.2%. Of the principals and teachers, 13.8% and 4.1% have served between 16-20 years whereas 6.9% and 13.2% have served between 11-15 years. This latter group imply the principals have a wider range of experiences and are thus well versed with factors influencing provision of education policies within their station. 6.9% principals and 21.5% teachers have served for 6-10 years. Interviews with DEOs showed that majority DEOs have served in their current station for 2 and 3 years rating 37.5%. 12.5% have served as DEOs for 3 months and 4 years respectively. The DEOs that have between 2 to 4 years imply that to a certain extent they are well versed with factors influencing provision of education within their areas. The DEOs are therefore in a position to give a rational evaluation of the progress and success of the FTP.

Responses on years of experience in the profession showed majority had adequate experience. Of the principals and teachers, 46.4% and 50% inclusive of all the 8 DEOs have worked for less than 5 years. 28.6% (principals) and 25% (teachers) have served in the capacity ranging between 6-10 years, with 21.4% (principals) and 12.5%

(teachers) ranging from 10-20 years. 3.6% (principals) and 12.5% (teachers) have held the position for 20-35 years. This indicates the principals are conversant with logistic issues and largely on provision of education policies in Kenya. Also, although half of the teachers have less than 5 years of teaching experience, they are well complimented by their senior counterparts in the profession. Therefore the respondents are conversant with provision of education programmes and especially on how the socio-economic and political factors have influenced the provision of the FTP.

4.1.4 Demographic Data of the Student's Population

Table 4.4 indicate 50.9% of the students were females while 49.1% are males. The age of the sampled students ranged 13 years to 50 years with a mean of 32.5. Majority students ranged from 17-18 years representing 70.5%. 19.6% ranged from 13-15 years while 7.1% ranged from 19-21%. Noteworthy, 2.7% ranged from 45-50 years which can be attributed perhaps to the FTP and late entry hence taking advantage of the programme. Students between 16-18 years, who formed the greatest proportion, consist of young teenagers who crave for education. This too shows the students are within the secondary school going age bracket as stipulated and outlined by the Ministry of education. In relation to class enrolments findings indicated that the highest was form 4 scoring 31.5% and the lowest Form 1 scoring 15.3%. Form 2s scored 23.4% whereas Form 3s scored 29.7%. The form 1 and 2 scores portray low enrolment of students despite the FTP. The low score indicates the persistent low student participation in schooling which is a concern in this study. This finding is in agreement with Machakos District Plan 2008-2012 (Republic of Kenya, 2009) which

observed that student enrolment rate had persistently remained low in Machakos County despite the provision of the FTP. One of the participants voiced that:

'... circulars on the disbursed funds shows that funds allocated per students are inadequate for some of them especially those from very poor...' (DEO:: 20th July 2012)

Table 4.4
Characteristics of the Students Population (N=112)

Characteristics		
Gender	Number	%
Females	57	50.9
Males	55	49.1
Age		
13 - 15 years	22	19.6
16 - 18 years	79	70.5
19 - 21 years	8	7.1
45 - 50 years	3	2.7
Number in Class		
Form 1s	17	15.3
Form 2s	26	23.4
Form 3s	33	29.7
Form 4s	35	31.5
Number of Siblings		
One	44	41.1
Two	43	40.2
Three	20	18.7

Source; (Field data, 2012)

The findings indicate the students too have siblings ranging from one to three; a clear indication of family planning and possibly potential students in the future. The highest percentage of respondents was 41.1%. 40.2% had 2 siblings whereas 18.7% had 3

siblings. The findings show that such children are likely to benefit from the FTP in the future if the programme sustains. Nevertheless, under the persistent low student participation in schooling, the siblings are faced with a future challenge due to the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of the FTP. In this regard, Republic of Kenya (2008) observes that there are other school levies besides tuition which may well be beyond the means of households, especially when the household has several children of school going age. This implies that choices have to be made, and the choice is often to drop out of school.

4.2 Data on Socio-Economic and Political Factors Influencing Provision of FTP in Secondary Schools.

This data was gathered from questionnaires administered on principals, teachers, students and interview schedule with the DEO's. The subsequent discourse under section 4.2.1 yields the findings that were accrued from the research. It discusses on the Socio-economic factors and how they influence the provision of the FTP.

4.2.1 Respondents Opinions and Perceptions on Socio-Economic Factors.

The first objective of this study was to establish the influence of socio-economic factors on provision of the FTP in secondary schools. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to respond to questions relating to various social-economic related factors. Data was obtained from questionnaires administered using a 5-point Likert scale on principals and teachers. The findings were converted into percentages. An interview with the DEOs yielded significant results as well that were also analysed. The collected data showed the extent to which the given socio-economic aspects (gender, early marriage, home environment, Parents occupation and income) influence student participation in secondary schooling and thus impinge on the provision of the FTP. The variations on which scores of the respondents opinions were made are shown in Table 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9.

Table 4.5 Respondents Opinions on Social Factors and FTP

Social Factors statements		Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T
A parents attitude toward education has impact on gender participation in schooling	N	5	5	3	18	2	7	12	57	7	34
	%	17.24	4.13	10.34	14.88	6.90	5.79	41.38	47.11	24.14	28.10
A parents value for education has impact on a child's secondary schooling	N	3	4	2	2	-	8	8	55	16	52
	%	10.34	3.31	6.90	1.65	-	6.61	27.59	45.45	55.17	42.98
Parents level of education have significant influence on the child completion of school	N	4	6	1	21	2	7	11	43	11	44
	%	13.79	4.96	3.45	17.36	6.90	5.79	37.93	35.54	37.93	36.36
Literacy levels in a community have influence on secondary completion rates of schooling	N	4	3	2	10	1	6	9	64	13	38
	%	13.79	2.48	6.90	8.26	3.45	4.966	31.03	52.89	44.83	31.30
The family background of the student has a great influence on whether one completes school	N	4	3	2	7	2	11	8	58	13	42
	%	13.79	2.48	6.90	5.79	6.90	9.09	27.59	47.93	44.83	34.71
Societal attitude affects most students decisions to pursue secondary education	N	2	3	3	11	3	16	15	81	6	10
	%	6.90	2.48	10.34	9.09	10.34	13.22	51.72	66.94	20.69	8.26
Perceptions of individual parents on education have influence on taking their children to school despite subsidy	N	2	2	1	13	6	16	9	58	11	32
	%	6.90	1.65	3.45	10.74	20.69	13.22	31.03	47.93	37.93	26.45
Whatever individuals and society believe and value determines whether secondary schooling is important	N	3	9	4	7	1	17	16	64	5	24
	%	10.34	7.44	13.79	5.79	3.45	14.05	55.17	52.89	17.24	19.83
There is a positive relationship between the	N	2	4	-	6	1	14	14	55	12	42

society's literacy level and schooling	%	6.90	3.31	-	4.96	3.45	11.57	48.28	45.45	41.38	34.71
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Key: 1- Principals, 2- Teachers
Source: (Field data, 2012).

4.2.1.1 Gender Biasness

Responses on the gender aspect and its influence on student participation in schooling showed it was as a result of socio-economic challenges. Regarding whether a parent's attitude towards education has impact on gender participation in schools, mixed reactions were recorded and skewed towards disagree. Whereas 41.38% (principals) and 47.11% (teachers) rated disagree, 24.14% (principals) and 28.10% (teachers) strongly disagree. Though majority of the respondents disagree that a parent's attitude towards education has impact on gender participation, earlier findings and discussions indicated continued gender gaps towards education benefits. The findings showed boys benefiting more than the girls even with the implementation of the free tuition programme. Further, interviews with the DEOs revealed that though the influence of culture is minimal, there are emerging aspects that are affecting the schooling of students. Some of the respondents mentioned that some absent from school to collect scrap metal for sale, especially the day school students. For others, sand and stone harvesting due to hunger have forced them to drop out of school partially, specially the girls. It also emerged defilement of girls due to unstable marriages owed to poverty affected their schooling most as opposed to the boys. In this respect, one respondent observed that:

‘The girls are victims of circumstances and it turns out that they become sacrificial lambs when the parent cannot make ends meet as far as participation in schooling is concerned. In most cases those from single parents who are unemployed and school in day schools are the most affected even with the FTP. Some of the students are chronic absentees while others drop out’ (DEO: 2nd, July 2012).

In support of this view, teachers perceived that social aspects affect the girl child negatively leading to drop out. This is reflected in Table 4.6. These perceptions agree

with earlier findings that indicated girls are more affected than boys. In support of this position, the 7th Human Development Report observed that Kenya has an overall gender inequality index of 0.651 and especially in arid and semi arid areas and thus the report holds true for Machakos County. Girls still bear the largest and most direct costs of the inequalities, hindering development and poverty reduction (Republic of Kenya 2013). These findings are despite majority respondent opinions that perceptions of individual parents on education have influence on taking their children to school. Nevertheless the findings also seem to concur with Onsomu and Ngwale (2006) whose study revealed that gender disparities are more among the poor than the non-poor and manifest themselves through participation rates, retention and progression, in all levels of education. Republic of Kenya (2008) too observes that regarding the secondary school level, the cost of uniforms, supplies and transport may well be beyond the means of households, especially when the household has several children of school going age. This means that choices have to be made, and the choice is often to drop out of school or worse still, to deny schooling to girls while enrolling boys, thereby contributing directly to maintaining the inferior status of women. This therefore implies that the provision of free or heavily subsidised education does not necessarily ensure equity in the distribution of public resources. Therefore, there are deterrent factors toward girl participation and completion in schooling which tend to impact negatively on them more than boys that is, early marriage, cultural bias leading to drop out and high poverty incidences which impact negatively on the FTP resulting to government wastage of funds. Thus, the gender disparities in schooling can be associated to both social and economic factors.

Table 4.6: Social Aspects and FTP Provision

Social aspect factors of the community	Principal s		Teachers		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	23	15.0	99	64.7	12	79.7
Valuing cultural values more than education is a hindrance	1	0.7	10	6.5	11	7.2
Poverty levels are hindering progressive education for the child	3	2.0	7	4.6	10	6.5
Affect girl-child negatively leading to drop-out	0	0.0	4	2.6	4	2.6
Low literacy levels of parents is a great hindrance	1	0.7	1	0.7	2	1.3
FTP has positive impact because they desire to have high living standards	0	0.0	2	1.3	2	1.3
Single parents unable to meet education needs of their child	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
Poor attitude towards the FTP	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.7
Total	29	19.0	12	81.0	3	100

Key; P- Principals, T- Teachers

In light of these observations, the Constitution of Kenya 2010 in article 27 recognises that measures should be put in place to encourage affirmative action programmes and policies to address past inequalities (Republic of Kenya 2013). In-retrospect, respondents' opinions and perceptions indicated that prolonged drought and famine impacted on gender participation in schooling. Table 4.7 shows the findings.

Table 4.7: Respondents Opinions on Economic Factors and FTP

Economic statements		Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T
There is more student participation in rural locations than in urban locations in terms of enrolment.	N	7	20	7	42	5	15	8	36	2	8
	%	24.1	16.5	24.1	34.7	17.2	12.4	27.5	29.7	6.90	6.61
		4	3	4	1	4	0	9	5		
Well-endowed areas have more student participation in schooling.	N	2	2	2	13	2	15	13	60	10	31
	%	6.90	1.65	6.90	10.7	6.90	12.4	44.8	49.5	34.4	25.6
					4		0	3	9	8	2
There is a high disparity of benefits between the male and female with male students showing high participation in schooling.	N	2	7	9	29	4	12	9	55	5	18
	%	6.90	5.79	31.0	23.9	13.7	9.92	31.0	45.4	17.2	4.88
				3	7	9		3	5	4	
Usage of free tuition has a positive relationship with the literacy of the society.	N	-	2	1	4	2	17	12	66	14	32
	%	-	1.65	3.45	3.31	6.90	14.0	41.3	54.5	48.2	26.4
							5	8	5	8	5
The community has prolonged droughts and therefore student participation in schooling is affected.	N	2	4	3	14	2	12	15	68	7	23
	%	6.90	3.31	10.3	11.5	6.90	9.92	51.7	56.2	24.1	19.0
				4	7			2	0	4	1
A majority of the students would like to finish secondary school but famine is a determinant factor	N	1	5	4	22	2	20	17	56	5	18
	%	3.45	4.13	13.7	18.1	6.90	16.5	58.6	46.2	17.2	14.8
				9	8		3	2	8	4	8

Key; P- Principals, T- Teachers

Source: (Field data, 2012).

Responses on the opinion and perceptions that the community experiences prolonged droughts and therefore student participation in schooling is affected pointed towards disagree and strongly disagree according to majority principals and teachers. Table 4.7 shows that 51.72% (principals) and 56.20% (teachers) disagreed whereas 24.14% (principals) and 19.02% (teachers) strongly disagreed. However this differs with majority students who scored highly toward agree and strongly agree and is echoed by some of the principals and teachers as shown on Tables 4.8 and 4.9.

Table 4.8: Perceptions on Economic Factors and FTP

Community's economic Aspect comments	Principals		Teachers		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	9	5.8	71	45.8	80	51.6
Poverty levels are quite high leading to drop-outs, prolonged stay at home despite FTP,	1			12.0		18.0
Secondary school is a challenge	0	6.5	19	3.0	29	7.0
Not economically endowed to support education hence FTP	4	2.7	19	3.0	23	8.0
Prolonged drought hinders schooling despite FTP	6	3.9	6	3.9	12	7.7
Most parents are small scale farmers with low income thus Free Tuition funds not enough	2	1.3	4	2.6	6	3.9
School is located in a dry area with no major economic means of survival and Free Tuition funds not enough	0	0.0	3	1.9	3	1.9
Means of transport remains a challenge	0	0.0	1	0.6	1	0.6
Majority parents are unemployed with no income and therefore inspite FTP secondary school is a challenge	0	0.0	1	0.6	1	0.6
Total	31	20.0	121	80.0	152	100.0

Key; P- Principals, T- Teachers

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Table 4.9: Students Response on Social-economic Variables and FTP Provision

Social/Economic statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Free Tuition Policy has enabled me to remain in School	20	17.8	18	16.0	75	6.2	48	42.8	196	16.9
I have no problems paying other required school levies	23	20.5	29	25.0	112	9.8	41	36.6	87	7.14
I have no problems paying other required school levies	13	11.6	34	30.0	87	7.1	41	36.6	169	14.2
Prolonged drought affects my schooling despite free funds	15	13.3	21	18.0	127	10.0	36	32.1	280	25.0
My home environment has a great influence on whether I stay in school or not	14	12.5	16	14.0	162	14.0	42	37.5	243	21.4
Persistent famine greatly affects my schooling	15	13.3	21	18.0	162	14.0	36	32.1	243	21.4
Students are no longer sent home for school fees	47	41.9	29	25.0	54	4.4	11	16.9	127	10.7
My parents/Guardian value my secondary education	57	4.46	38	2.6	47	3.5	23	20.5	775	68.7

Key; S- Students

Source; (Field data, 2012)

These respondents perceived that drought continues to hinder schooling despite the free tuition funds. Similarly, this response was further affirmed by the DEOs who reported during the interviews that prolonged drought is so acute at times, that it makes some of the children to absent from school so as to go searching for water. To this effect, a respondent observed that:

‘...some of these students especially the girls in day schools have to miss classes during such times so as to accompany their mothers to look for water which is usually very long distances and they end up either staying home for a long time or dropping out of school altogether’ (DEO: 18th, June 2012)

The gender aspect brought out in the response above is confirmed by responses as shown in Table 4.5. Of the respondents, 31.03% (principals) and 23.97% (teachers) agreed that male students benefit more than their female counterparts hence their high participation in schooling. This agrees with Republic of Kenya (2012) which observed that at the secondary level, there are 86 girls for every 100 boys. Besides traditional practices which are male-dominated this trend could be attributed to the reported effects of droughts. These findings too are in line with Kinuthia's (2009) findings that cultural or economic reasons in many areas in the country are affecting full participation of learners in education, especially girls. A similar study by Ohba (2009) observed that gender gaps in access to secondary education continue to favour boys despite increased enrolments. The study findings therefore show that the benefits of free tuition for secondary education are more for the male students than females.

These findings further point towards prolonged droughts with its attendant effects on schooling inspite of the free tuition funds. As attested by some of the respondents, prolonged droughts make some of the students drop out of school while some end up staying at home for long periods hence missing classes. This undermines the spirit of the FTP which is meant to promote retention and completion rates at secondary school level and contravenes the rationale for public subsidies and the essence of the free tuition. These findings seem to agree with a study by Ohba (2009) in which it was observed that the implications of public subsidies are such that deserving and needy students are left out of the benefits of education and do not reap from the subsidies which are financed by and large from general taxation.

Opinions and perceptions that famine affects completion of secondary schooling yielded various responses across the ratings as portrayed on Table 4.7. Most of the

principals and teachers disagreed and strongly disagreed that famine affects completion with ratings of 58.62% (principals) and 46.26% (teachers) and 17.24% (principals) and 14.88% (teachers) respectively. On the contrary, this response is negated by students who agree and strongly agree that persistent famine interferes with their schooling as reflected on Table 4.9. Also, as shown on Table 4.8 some of the teachers mentioned that the schools are located in dry areas with no major means of survival and therefore the FT funds are not enough to support the students' education. Results from interviews with the DEOs confirm this view and emphasize that due to low rainfall, the area is considered to be semi arid with low food production interfering with the students' education. To this end, one DEO commented that:

'Famine in this area is so much and sometimes it terrorises the people because several seasons can pass by without any harvests and this affects some of the children in school. They want to learn, yes! But then, despite the FTP schooling has remained a challenge to some of them' (DEO: 25th, June 2012).

This implies that despite parents' value for their children education as indicated in Table 4.9 famines impinges on their completion regardless of the provision of the FTP. Eventually, the affected students are likely to drop out of school. In this regard, it denies the student a chance to finish schooling and even when they finish, the ripple effects of famine and its attendance effects is reflected in examination results and this amounts to wastage of government funds. Thus the results clearly show that the area is challenged economically, a factor that is likely to affect schooling of students. This too perhaps explains the DEOs response that half of the student population were not enjoying the benefits of the FTP. Respondents argued that, even though the FTP has enabled some of the students to remain in school, for others, high poverty levels and

low food production has hindered their schooling due to being frequently sent home for other fee levies. In this regard one DEO had this to say:

‘it would be ironical to say that all the students are fully benefiting from the free tuition programme and yet some of them keep being sent home every now and then because their parents are not able to meet other school levies owing to the fact that they need to choose whether to pay or have the family sleeping hungry. At times some of the students have to accompany their parents for sand and stone harvesting to help raise money for buying food let alone fees. As such, due to chronic absenteeism they end up performing very poorly in exams while others do not do them at all ’ (DEO: 26th, June 2012).

In support of this view, responses on the fact that students are no longer sent home from school for fees met strong opinions of strongly disagree rating 41.96% and disagree 25.879% respectively. This rate is significant and points to the fact that students are not adequately able to meet other school fee levies despite the FTP thus influencing the provision negatively. It further implies majority students are still sent home for fees thus hampering their participation in schooling, ironical of the FTP. A study by Mwinzi & Kimengi, (2006) concurs with these findings and indicates that sending of students home to collect fees interfered with their learning and consequently leads to their dropping out of school. Further, Varghese (2011) suggests that government intervention is needed more to develop policy, provide a framework for action and ensure equity.

4.2.1.2 Early Marriage

Responses on the aspect of early marriage and its effect on participation of students in schooling showed it was as a result of the socio-economic challenges that face the community and also the cultural aspect. Interviews with the DEOs and as discussed earlier, early marriages are as a result of poverty which forces some of the students to drop out of school despite FTP. One DEO observed that:

‘...turn to marriage to escape from the problems they face at their homes. Moreover some of them have nowhere to sleep because their parents live in shanties where there is no privacy and they end...’ (DEO: 16th, July 2012).

Thus, there seems to be a strong influence of the economic and social aspects on the girl participation and completion of schooling irrespective of the free tuition funds thus infringing on the success of the provision of the FTP. These perceptions seem to agree with Ohba (2009, 2011) whose study showed that school fees is one of the greatest obstacle for children from poor household and that the fee charges are still beyond the budget of some of the poor households. Ohba further notes that although the overall fees has been reduced, some schools charge higher amounts for the items they are allowed to levy from the parents. Thus unless the government monitors the charges levied by public secondary schools, ‘free secondary education’ may remain an illusion for the very school going children it was intended to reach.

Therefore, findings indicate that, inspite of a parent’s value for education retrogressive social practices persist in their influence toward student participation in schooling. In regard to this finding, responses on whether a parent’s value for education has impact on a child’s secondary schooling leaned towards strongly disagree rating 55.17% (principals) and 42.98% (teachers) respectively and disagree scoring 27.59% (principals) and 45.45% (teachers). This agrees with the students and DEOs responses whereby a high percentage showed that the parents valued education. Whereas 68.7% strongly agreed, 20.54% agreed. This is shown in Table 4.7. Therefore, the responses depict that majority parents value secondary education portraying a positive attitude towards schooling. This implies majority parents perceive education as an investment and as key to attaining the desire for high standards for their children. In light of these revelations, a DEO commented:

‘It is true that the parents in this region greatly value education and appreciate taking their children to school. But then, the challenge is that for some, despite the free tuition funds poverty necessitates that their children either keep missing school or drop out altogether especially when the situation worsens’ (DEO: 20th, June 2012).

Therefore, the findings show that, despite the parents’ value for education, there are other aspects that influence a child’s participation and completion of schooling. This response corroborates with UNESCO (2004), Lewin (2008) and Hunt (2008) whose researches revealed that family background is the most important and most weighty factor in determining academic performance and student participation in schooling. Further on education, findings as to whether a parent’s level of education has significant influence on the child completion of school, indications were towards disagree and strongly disagree. Of the responses, 37.93% (principals) and 35.54% (teachers) disagreed whereas 37.93% (principals) and 36.36% (teachers) strongly disagreed. This high response perhaps shows that majority parents’ level of education does not necessarily influence the child’s completion of schooling. This also agrees with the respondents’ opinion that whatever individuals and society believe and value determines whether secondary schooling is important. Majority either disagreed or strongly disagreed rating 55.17% (principals) and 52.89% (teachers). As to whether there is a positive relationship between the society’s literacy level and schooling, respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed rating 48.28% (principals) and 45.45%, and 41.38% (principals) and 34.71% (teachers) respectively. These responses seem to oppose the opinion that valuing education has impact on a child’s participation in schooling. Nevertheless, despite this position, some respondents reported that valuing culture more than education by some parents is a hindrance to participation of schooling despite the FTP. In this regard a respondent observed that Muslim girls are the most affected. He responded to this effect:

‘...it is not strange to find some of the parents withdrawing their children to attend madrasa classes or marrying them off before they finish school as long as they are perceived as mature. It is their practice and sometimes fighting issues of religion or culture as the education office becomes quite difficult’ (DEO: 16th, July 2012).

The responses imply that to a significant extent the lack of value and attitude toward education by some of the parents affects their participation in schooling and interferes with their schooling despite the FTP.

4.2.1.3 Home background

In relation to the students’ home background and its influence on student participation in schooling, responses are reflected on Table 4.8. The home background aspect yielded significant results. Regarding the responses that the family background of the student has a great influence on completion of school, majority respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed. Whereas 27.59% (principals) and 47.93% (teachers) disagreed, 44.83% (principal) and 34.71% (teachers) strongly disagreed. Further, opinion on the statement that literacy level in a community has influence on secondary completion rates of schooling attracted a high percentage of respondents disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. Whereas 31.03% (Principal) and 52.89% (teachers) disagreed, 44.83% (principals) and 31.30% (teachers) strongly disagreed. In relation to opinions that societal attitude affects most students decision to pursue secondary education, responses pointed towards disagree and strongly disagree. 51.72% (principals) and 66.94% (teachers) disagreed with 20.69% (principals) and 8.26% (teachers) strongly disagreeing. The high response on disagree by the principals and teachers seems to imply there is no relationship between the students family background, the community’s literate levels, societal attitude and completion of schooling. On the contrary students responses showed that their home background

determines whether they stay in school or not. Majority responses rated agree at 37.50% and strongly agree 21.43% respectively, concurring with earlier findings. Further, the student response was supported by some teachers who observed that low literacy levels of their parents and inability of single parents to meet education needs of their children interferes with their schooling. Still, interviews with the DEOs revealed that family background, societal literacy levels and attitude to education plays a pivotal role toward influencing participation in schooling. One respondent reported that:

‘In spite of the free funds, some of these students come from very challenging backgrounds whose illiteracy levels and poor attitude to education is yet to be fully eradicated making learning for them very difficult. There are those who have been raised by single parents while for others due to the poor attitude are left to cater for themselves. So, whether they attend school or not, it is not a big deal. After all, few members in their family have achieved much in terms of education. Still for others the men run away from their homes leaving the mother and the children....’ (DEO: 25th, June 2012)

Consequently, students from such environments drop out of school and this result to wastage of the free tuition funds impacting negatively on the implementation process. Thus, for some of the students, these aspects and the inability of single parents to meet education needs of their children greatly affects their completion in schooling. This agrees with earlier findings and perhaps explains partially the reason schooling participation in the area under study has persistently remained low. The findings are similar to a study by Jagero, Agak and Ayodo, (2010) which showed that the main problems faced by students are based on the home backgrounds which greatly affect their participation in schooling despite the FTP. Probably, there is need for the government to address these problems with a view of assisting these students so as to make them to realise their academic dreams.

Retrospectively, responses showed that some students come from poor backgrounds and poverty was a leading factor that has interfered with their participation as portrayed in Table 4.8 18.7% of the principals and teachers observed that poverty levels are quite high leading to prolonged stay at home or dropping out of school despite the FTP. Interviews with the DEOs yielded similar findings that poverty was an impediment toward student completion of schooling despite the FTP. According to some of the respondents, majority students come from very poor families with very little to eat at times and are unable to meet all fee requirements. Other respondents felt that it is quite a sad situation as others cannot afford boarding expenses despite the parent's effort to keep them in school. Thus the responses showed that most of the parent are poor and live below poverty line with some areas depending on relief food as observed earlier. In this regard, a respondent commented:

‘...indeed a wanting region with very needy students due to the high poverty levels. For some of them remaining in school to completion even with this tuition programme is a dream. And unless somebody out there comes to their aid, dropping out of school isn't a big deal. It has always been the case. For some, if they have to continue learning, when schools close, they go looking for work so as to help the parents in paying for other school levies besides the tuition fee whether in boarding or day secondary school. It is even worse for those in day school because they engage in this even during the weekend’ (DEO: 2nd, July, 2012).

The study findings therefore reveal that despite the disbursed funds, in this region, poverty leads to the failure by some of the parents to pay other fee levies hence resulting to student absenteeism, prolonged stay at home or dropping-out. This is confirmed by the majority students who showed that their home backgrounds had great influence on their schooling and that students were still sent home for school fees despite the FTP as observed earlier. Whereas 37.50% agreed, 21.43% strongly agreed as reflected in Table 4.9. Therefore, the study findings indicate that student home background are poor and interferes with students' attendance and progression in

schooling. This finding is in agreement with a study by Jagero, Agak and Ayodo, (2010) which showed that the main problems faced by the day students are based on the home backgrounds which has greatly affected their participation in schooling. Further, it agrees with a study by Colclough and Lewin, (2001) which revealed that opportunities for attending school as well as progress in school are likely to be more limited for children from poverty households. A study by Atieno and Simatwa, (2012) revealed similar findings and attributed these observations to poor payment of fees which is as a result of poor socio-economic background and noted that it is against the government policy of access, retention and completion. Further, a similar study in Ghana showed that despite abolition of fees and increased enrolment overall, children from poor households continue to be underrepresented in enrolment (Akyeampong, 2009; Rolleston, 2009). This implies that, poverty is a major setback to full realisation of government intent to ensure equity, retention and completion of secondary schooling and achievement of vision 2030 which is pegged on social, political and economic pillar. _

4.2.1.4 Parents Occupation/Income

In regard to the parents' occupation and its influence on student participation in schooling, the study findings are portrayed in Table 4.8. The responses showed that majority parents are unemployed, earn low or no income and depend on subsistence farming. This is further compounded by the fact that formal employment opportunities in most rural areas occupied by majority parents are almost nonexistent. This is confirmed by interviews administered to the DEO's which further revealed that there are extremes (wealthy and poor) with majority being very poor. The respondents reported that, most parents are subsistence farmers, some occupy

unsteady jobs while others are casuals in the surrounding firms, for instance, the flower farms and Kenya Meat Commission (KMC).

Thus according to the respondents, due to their unstable income, the Free Tuition is not sufficient to support students' schooling. To this effect, a DEO observed that:

'Generally only a few people in this County are employed with majority being unemployed. Some do farming but are greatly disadvantaged by the prolonged droughts which culminate to frequent famines. Others engage in small businesses while some are casuals who will usually do sand harvesting, collecting stones for building and any other menial job they can lay hands on. So it becomes very difficult for them even with the free tuition, especially those with a good number of children in school and for this reason a choice has to be made.....' (DEO: 16th, July 2016).

This response confirms earlier findings and seems to partially explain some of the reasons poverty levels are so high in the region resulting to parents' failure to meet other fee expenses despite the FTP leading to chronic absenteeism, prolonged stay at home and dropping out of school. The adverse effects contravene one of the main objectives under Kenya's economic blue print, vision 2030 which is to provide a high quality of life to all Kenyans (Republic of Kenya 2013). The findings too are in tandem with studies by Oketch and Ngwale, (2010) and Ohba, (2011) which revealed that the poorest of the poorest are still excluded from education despite the FTP in Kenya. Further, these findings are in line with responses on the economic status of the area which showed that the region under investigation is not economically endowed to fully support education despite FTP. Students are affected in their attendance and progression in schooling hence the low participation in the County. Table 4.7 and 4.8 reflects the results. Towards this view, one of the DEOs had this to say:

'This is one disadvantaged region that requires a lot of support in terms of food for the parents to be able to keep their children in school' (DEO: 20th, July 2012).

These findings are in agreement with Leu and Bryner, (2005) who did a similar study and found out that students failed to pay other fee levies besides government support in their schooling due to their poor economic status and the fact that a high number lacked proper sources of finances. Shultz, (1993) supports this idea as well and concludes that the economic well-being of the household in which a child resides is a strong determinant of educational investment. Further, Berry (2010) agrees with this point of view and concludes that these are among other fragile countries with low income, and have least chances of attaining the MDGs. In light to these observations, the Human Development approach, underlines the expansion of opportunities so that the disadvantaged can do more for themselves through economic, social and political empowerment (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

As advocated in the theoretical framework, several social factors affect or promote education and the subsequent development of human capital through educational programmes. The findings of this study have established that social factors like gender bias, early marriages and home background influence participation of students in schooling despite FTP. Consequently it is imperative that the influence of such social factors are thought of and mitigated when investing resources in educational programmes such as FTP so as to yield maximum efficiency from such programmes. This is especially important because ultimately, improved educational opportunities through programmes such as FTP will also impact positively on these social factors thus enhancing the social living standards of the people. Still, on the economic factor, it the theoretical framework stipulates that since education is an investment in human capital, it will inevitably have an impact on, and be affected by, the economic aspects of the people investing in it. As affirmed by majority of the respondents in this study, economic factors such as parents' occupation and their sources of income influence

the investments made on educational programmes, specifically, FTP. Investment in education will also imply that the investors forgo or reduce investment in other significant and viable economic aspects of their lives, regardless of the value of the foregone alternative. This is because education in itself is considered a determinant of lifelong income, and subsequently, the economic status of a person and the society. However, since investment in education is also determined by the aforementioned economic factors, it is necessary that these influences are also addressed so as to realize efficiency from such educational programmes like FTP.

The discussion under section 4.3 focuses on opinions and perceptions of the various respondents regarding how the political variable influences provision of the FTP.

4.3 Respondents Opinions and Perceptions on Political Factors.

The second objective of this study was to establish the influence of political factors on provision of the FTP in secondary schools. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to respond to questions relating to various political aspects (lack of political good will, selective leadership, transparency and mistrust). The data was gathered from questionnaires administered on principals and teachers and interviews with DEOs. The variations on which scores of the respondents opinions were made are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Respondents' Opinion on Political factors and FTP

Political factors statements		Non existent		Small extent		Uncertain		Lesser extent		Greater extent	
		P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T
Lack of adequate political support affects the use of free tuition funds towards student participation in this school	N	8	12	9	28	2	29	9	29	1	23
	%	27.5	9.92	31.0	23.1	6.90	23.9	31.0	31.0	3.45	9.01
Local politics in the school is a major setback on the provision of free tuition policy.	N	12	21	9	24	3	21	-	33	5	22
	%	41.3	17.3	31.0	19.8	10.3	17.3	-	27.2	17.2	18.18
The influence of politicians in schools has affected provision of free tuition.	N	10	23	3	15	5	21	7	42	4	20
	%	34.4	19.0	10.3	12.4	17.2	17.3	24.1	34.7	13.7	16.53
Selective leadership in schools interferes with the management of funds	N	2	12	7	11	6	29	4	29	10	40
	%	6.90	9.92	24.1	9.09	20.6	23.9	13.7	23.9	34.4	33.06
The lack of transparency by school heads interferes with free tuition programme in schools	N	4	9	4	16	5	21	6	26	10	49
	%	13.7	7.44	13.7	13.2	17.2	17.3	20.6	21.4	34.4	40.50
There is a positive relationship between politics in schools and provision of free tuition programme.	N	5	15	6	23	2	31	10	30	6	22
	%	17.2	12.4	20.6	19.0	6.90	25.6	34.4	24.7	20.6	18.18

Key; P- Principals, T- Teachers

Source: (Field data, 2012).

4.3.1 Lack of Political Good Will

The opinion that lack of political support affects the use of free tuition funds towards enhancing student participation in the schools was rated lesser extent at 31.03%. Nonetheless as mentioned in Table 4.10, respondents' perceptions showed that local politics interferes with provision of free tuition policy thus affecting student participation in schooling. Others perceived that political involvement in secondary schools interferes with provision of the FTP and affects schooling negatively. For others, political will towards provision of the FTP is lacking or misplaced. To this end, some indicated that there was need to separate education and politics in order to minimise the politics in schools if the FTP is to be successful. Another group of respondents (2.6%) felt there was need for politicians in the region to work hand in hand with school principals for the FTP to succeed. A lesser proportion of respondents (2.0%) felt that there is very little political support if any, and that politicians' interests are purely political mileage and not educational in nature. These responses were reiterated in the interviews with the DEOs who revealed that politics indeed interferes with the provision process of FTP. Whereas some respondents reported that some politicians were supportive, others mentioned that some of them influence the removal of principals from certain schools. Others cited disruptive politics as a setback in certain districts under investigation within the county.

In regard to the response that bad politics interferes with the provision process, one of the DEOs who requested anonymity commented that:

'Some of these politicians can be very disruptive! They want things done their way because they feel that they have a say in what goes on in schools and especially the disbursed funds. When you fail to comply

with their demands you simply get transferred' (DEO: 25th, June 2012).

In support of this response, opinions as to whether the influence of politicians in schools influences provision of free tuition showed this was the case to a significant extent. Of the responses, whereas 13.79% (principals) and 16.53% (teachers) perceived this influence to be of a greater extent, 24.14% (principals) and 34.71% (teachers) felt it was to a lesser extent. Thus the respondents perceive that the influence of politicians in schools has influenced provision of free tuition. In line with the same position, opinion as to whether local politics in the schools is a major setback on the provision of free tuition policy was scored at 18.18% and 17.74% by the teachers and principals respectively. Therefore, these findings affirm that local politics impinge on provision of the FTP, and further point out that politicking is a major impediment to the provision of the FTP. To this effect, one of the DEOs had this to say:

'...local politics and politicking is a major impediment to the success of this programme. Unless politicians stop rumour mongering about school management and use of the free tuition funds, these funds will not benefit the students as anticipated. Infarct, some students stop coming to school after hearing some funny things about their school and teachers from these politicians' (DEO: 20th, June 2012).

The implication here is that students' participation in schooling is affected negatively through politicians' unfounded rumours touching on the integrity of the school staff or other parameters that are closely linked with the running of the school based on hearsays. Such malicious allegations are likely to scare students away from school and hence contribute toward the low participation of students in schooling despite the free funds. These findings are in agreement with a study by Amutabi (2003) which observed that politics is a power game: but education is not a power game, it is a

much more serious sector, which greatly matters for a country's development and therefore recommends that the role of politics and politicians in Kenya's post independence education need serious re-examination in view of the new political reality and dispensation and competing political interests.

Therefore, the implication is that the lack of adequate political support is likely to influence the success of the provision of the FTP and therefore affect student participation in schooling. This is because some politicians have vested interests in some schools they helped to build and thus will tend to dictate or use their cronies to exert influence on what is to be done in such schools in order to gain political mileage. Therefore, the affected principals must comply with some of the unethical or unprofessional demands made by the politicians' in order to retain their position. These findings seem to corroborate the findings of UNESCO (2004) which observed that failed implementation may be attributed to several factors among them lack of political support. Thus, it seems that more political participation and accountability in matters of education is required for successful provision of the well intended education policies.

Further responses revealed there was contradiction of perceptions by the respondents regarding the position of politics in education. Although some of the respondents felt there was need to separate education and politics others perceived there was need for political will in the region if the FTP is to be successful. Respondents too showed there is need for the politicians in the region to be supportive rather than being insensitive towards the FTP. This is portrayed in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Respondents Perceptions on Political Involvement in the Schools

Political involvement in secondary schools and success of FTP	Principals		Teachers		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	5	3.3	53	35.1	58	38.4
Political involvement in Secondary schools hinders / interferes with provision of the FTP and therefore affects negatively	9	6.0	19	12.6	28	18.6
There is need to separate education and politics in schools in order to minimise politics if the programme is to succeed	4	2.6	15	9.9	19	12.5
There is need for political will in the region if the programme is to succeed	4	2.6	8	5.3	12	7.9
It has no effect at all	3	2.0	7	4.6	10	6.6
Environment is free from political interference and is nicer supporting the FTP programme and helping students	1	0.7	7	4.6	8	5.3
Political involvement is minimal thus to some extent there is little interference	1	0.7	3	2.0	4	2.7
There is need for politicians in the region to work hand in hand with principals for the programme to succeed	0	0.0	4	2.6	4	2.6
There is very little political support and their interests are purely political and not educational in nature	0	0.0	3	2.0	3	2.0
Politicians in the region need to be supportive rather than being destructive towards secondary education	2	1.3	1	0.7	3	2.0
Politicians tend to influence school leadership and this interferes with the provision of FTP	0	0.0	2	1.3	2	1.3
Total	29	19.2	122	80.8	151	100

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Therefore, the findings point out that political will is paramount for successful provision of the FTP. This agrees with Falmer (2008) who argues that because local education and politics are inseparable it is almost impossible to avoid situations where political considerations affect education decision making. Thus the notion that politics and education are inseparable seems to hold and it becomes critical in provision matters without which it becomes an illusion.

4.3.2 Selective Leadership

Regarding opinions on selective leadership and its interferences with school management of funds responses showed it was the case to a great extent. A larger proportion of the responses rated high towards lesser extent and greater extent. Findings revealed that 13.79% (principals) and 23.97% (teachers) perceived it was to a lesser extent whereas 34.48% (principals) and 33.06% (teachers) felt it was to a greater extent. 24.14% (principals) and 9.09% (teachers) perceived it was to a small extent. The implication is that selective leadership interferes with school management of funds. This perception that politicians interfere with school leadership is further supported by the respondents' views as portrayed in Table 4.11. Of the responses some teachers perceived that politicians in the region need to be supportive rather than being counter productive towards secondary education. Other teachers felt that politicians tend to influence school leadership and this interferes with the provision of the FTP.

Interviews with the DEOs also yielded similar data and as observed earlier revealed that the politicians sometimes determine who heads which school. To this end, one DEO reported that:

‘There is a lot of interference in the appointment of the principals of schools by some of these politicians who have hope of making gains especially with the free tuition funds. Sometimes it is so bad it interferes with the smooth management of schools. Worse still, there are some cases when they tend to dictate who heads which school and by extension who becomes the BOG chairman’ (DEO: 20th, July 2012).

This portrays a poor image of the role of politics in schools that is impacting on the provision of the free tuition policy. Further, these revelations by the respondents show that the interference impacts negatively on the day to day school management

therefore interfering with the free tuition funds. This is because such principals are likely to be manipulated to misuse the government free funds or divert monies from different vote heads meant for the development of the school. This may affect the procurement procedures of the school goods and open a window for embezzlement of school funds. The end result is that teachers and students will miss the basic materials that are a prerequisite for teaching and learning despite FTP. These findings are in agreement Baker and Elmer (2009) who attests that school programmes are frequently the target of quick-fix, politically motivated types of reforms for personal gain leading to a lot of wastage of funds. This position also concurs with Amutabi (2003) whose critical examination of the trend and patterns of education growth indicates that political interferences in the running of education hampers the provision of initiatives aimed at improving education management. This implies that there is need for more political good will and unwavering support towards provision of education policies, such as FTP, in order to ensure more student participation in schooling. According to Amutabi (2003), professionals are often ignored while the wishes of the politicians continue to dominate on technical issues that call for professional decision which is detrimental to the education sector. The implication is that the provision such programmes as the FTP are negatively affected and therefore continue to contribute toward the persistent low student participation in secondary schooling.

These findings on school leadership are however contradicted by some of the respondents' who felt that there is a positive relationship between politics in schools and provision of free tuition programme. This response rated highly. Whereas 34.48% and 24.79% felt it was to a lesser extent, 20.69% and 18.18% perceived it was to a greater extent. Nevertheless, if provision of the FTP is to succeed, then, constructive politics rather retrogressive politics is a prerequisite. This will ensure professionalism

of leadership of schools free from politics as opposed to selective leadership and therefore impact positively on the provision of the FTP.

4.2.2.3 Transparency/Mistrust

Responses on the opinion that lack of transparency and mistrust by school heads interferes with free tuition programme in schools yielded significant results. Regarding transparency, a substantial proportion perceived it was the case to a high extent. Whereas 20.69% (principals) and 21.4% (teachers) felt it was to a lesser extent, 34.48% (principals) and 40.50% (teachers) felt was to a greater extent significantly scoring the highest of all the variables. 13.79% (principals) and 13.22% (teachers) perceived it was to a small extent. The high percentage of principals who perceive it to a high extent indicates the existing mistrust of some of them toward their counterparts on use of the funds. These findings imply that the respondents perceive lack of transparency by school heads to interfere with free tuition programme in schools. This perhaps explains the respondents' assertions that school heads misappropriate funds. To this effect one respondent remarked:

‘.....some of these issues sensitive as they may be, they can be very interesting! A good number of these school heads run businesses which are questionable. Even though auditing of the school accounts and the returns are done every term in the year to ascertain proper usage of the free funds, this is one area that still requires thorough investigation. There are some school heads without proper records that enjoy impunity and moreover, others tend to collude with the auditors and somehow get away with it. Infact punitive measures are required to stop these malpractices’ (DEO: 2nd, July 2012)

This portrays a corruptive aspect by the school principals and contravenes the professional ethics of teaching and further interferes with the successful provision of FTP. In line with this corrupt aspect, another respondent reported that:

‘In some incidences, principals run schools by phone, ignore the laid down procedures indicated in the heads manual while some openly

recommend transfers for teachers who question their conduct in this respect. Such a relationship brings about discontentment and this in the long run may affect students' participation who are the main clients of the school' (DEO: 20th, June 2012).

The aspect of mistrust is clearly depicted in some of the respondents' failure to even answer questions. Interviews with the DEOs showed that some the principals become suspicious and are very sensitive to issues of politics. To this effect, one respondent commented that:

'...you never know whether someone is on your neck or is out to ensure you are out of the register. That is why some choose to just shut up when questioned over sensitive issues such as the free tuition funds' (DEO; 16th, July 2012).

In regard to these observations, some principals and teachers did not respond to the questions on the political aspect. This could have been due to the aforementioned and a number of factors among them fear of victimization. On the other hand, most school administrators; some who are political appointees opt to remain silent and invisible on political matters in order to safeguard their administrative position. This is mirrored in Table 4.11 whereby 58% of the respondents did not offer their perceptions.

Although the link between political factors and educational investment has not been directly outlined in the theoretical framework, such factors always impinge on the investment made in developing human capital through education. It has always been acknowledged that education and politics are inseparable, and there can be no investment in the human capital of a country, especially through education, without the involvement of the political systems in place. This is because education is always at the top of any country's political agenda since there are explicit political benefits attached to education. Consequently, political factors like those outlined in this study will inevitably encroach on the provision of educational programmes, such as FTP, to

either enhance or diminish the effectiveness of such programmes. Thus, the effect of such political factors as identified in this study, that is, lack of political will, selective leadership, transparency, and mistrust between political players and education stakeholders must always be taken into consideration when providing for educational programmes like FTP.

The discussion under section 4.4 yields results of the respondents' perceptions toward government policy and provision of the FTP.

4. 4 Respondents Opinions and Perceptions on Enhancing Provision of FTP

The third objective of this study was to establish measures toward successful provision of the FTP in secondary schools. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to respond to questions relating to the government policy and provision of the FTP

4.4.1 Opinions of and Responses towards Government Policy and FTP Provision

The principals and teachers opinions and responses to the government policy and the FTP provision yielded varied responses. Results are shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Government Policy and FTP Provision

Government Policy statements		Non existent		Small extent		Moderate extent		Large extent		Very large extent	
		P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T
The government's effort to make secondary school accessible has contributed to increased enrolments.	n	-	-	2	3	1	17	9	41	17	60
	%	-	-	6.90	2.48	3.45	14.05	31.03	33.88	56.62	49.59
The government's legislation on secondary schooling nationally has influence on student participation.	n	-	3	-	10	3	27	13	48	13	33
	%	-	2.48	-	8.26	10.34	22.31	44.83	39.67	44.83	27.27
The government's issuance of free funds has enhanced student participation in schooling.	n	-	-	-	3	2	25	10	55	17	38
	%	-	-	-	2.48	6.90	20.66	34.48	45.45	58.62	31.40
The government is committed to enhancing participation at the secondary school level.	n	-	2	2	21	10	39	12	41	5	18
	%	-	1.65	6.90	17.36	34.48	32.23	41.38	33.88	17.24	14.88
Political will in Kenya to support free tuition programme has enhanced secondary school participation	n	-	3	3	15	4	35	16	46	6	22
	%	-	2.48	10.34	12.40	13.79	28.93	55.17	38.02	20.69	18.18
The government is working to curb the misuse of the free tuition funds.	n	-	7	4	27	8	39	12	32	5	16
	%	-	5.79	13.79	22.31	27.59	32.23	41.38	26.45	17.24	13.22
The government's initiative to continue providing funds in schools will have a great influence on student retention	n	-	1	1	4	2	22	8	46	18	48
	%	-	0.83	3.45	3.31	6.90	18.18	27.59	38.02	62.07	39.67
The government's establishment of channels of disbursement of funds to schools will boost efficiency of the free tuition programme.	n	-	1	1	6	2	19	14	44	12	51
	%	-	0.83	3.45	4.96	6.90	15.70	48.28	36.36	41.48	42.15

Key; P- Principals, 2- Teachers

Source: (Field data, 2012).

A considerable proportion (31.03% and 33.88%) of the principals and teachers respectively were of the opinion that to a large extent and very large extent (56% principals and 49.5% teachers) that the government effort to make secondary school accessible has contributed to increased enrolments. This agrees with students whose responses indicated that free tuition has enabled them to remain in school. Whereas 42.86% agreed, 16.96% strongly agreed respectively. This response scores the FTP highly and implies that it has contributed positively towards participation of students in secondary schooling. The findings agree with a government survey carried out within the country which showed that student increment was across the country with provision of the FTP (Republic of Kenya 2009). However, a significant proportion of respondents to a small extent (6.9% principals and 2.4% teachers) and moderate extent (3.45% principals and 14.05% teachers) were of the opinion that it was not the case. Students were also in agreement as discussed earlier. This response confirms earlier findings that some students have continued to be needy despite the free tuition funds. This underscores the government's efforts towards realising the ultimate goal of increased student participation in schooling in the County. The findings agree with further observations by the Republic of Kenya (2009) that the cost of secondary education still remains prohibitively high to some students due to boarding expenses which are not catered for by the grants provided. This leads to more than half of the school age population not completing secondary education. Further, Ohba (2009, 2011) in support of this study concludes that the implications are that the more deserving students and needy, are left out of the benefits of education and do not reap from the subsidies which are financed by and large from general taxation.

Further, interviews with the DEOs revealed that probably the failure to reap full benefits of the FTP by some of the students could be attributed to parent's misconceptions of the term 'free funds' as yielded by interviews with the DEOs. Responses showed that, whereas some parents appreciated that free tuition has helped to reduce the burden of paying fees, especially for day school students, others felt that it has created lack of commitment by some of the parents resulting to students being sent home. Therefore, the respondents felt there was need to sensitise the parents regarding the FTP. Still, other respondents perceived that the FTP is not free at all because it meets learning and not boarding expenses making boarding schools unaffordable to majority students.

Regarding influence of government legislation on secondary schools on student participation, surprising, perhaps about the same percentage of large extent (39.67% principals and 44.83% teachers) were in agreement whereas other responses were of the opinion that it was the case to a very large extent (44.83% principals and 27.27% teachers) respectively. Others felt it was to a moderate extend, that is, 10.34% principals and 22.31% teachers. Teachers as opposed to the principals were of the opinion it was the contrary. This group rated at 8.26%. Yet another group of teachers felt that government legislation was non-existent rating 2.48%. The responses by the latter two groups cannot be ignored and are therefore found to be significant. This indicates the need by the government to strengthen its legislation on issues of secondary schooling in order to ensure successful provision of the FTP. Nevertheless, despite this position by the small number of teachers, majority respondents are in agreement that government legislation has positively influenced student participation in secondary schooling. The findings seem to suggest that, there are no major

differences in opinion between the principals and teachers. The differences only lie in the levels of agreement and the percentages.

Findings relating to the fact that the government issuance of free funds has enhanced student participation in schooling show significant findings revealing minimal difference in opinion among the principals and teachers. The score was quite high towards large extent (34.48% and 45.45%) and very large extent (58.62% and 31.40%). This shows the government has made mileage towards benefiting students in secondary schooling to a certain extent. Nonetheless 6.90% and 20.66% rates were to a moderate extent whereas 2.48% were to a small extent. This latter response seems to agree with earlier responses that there are students who seem not to be reaping the full benefits of the FTP hence the low student participation in schooling. This seems to suggest the need by the government to consider this greatly challenged group of students so as to improve the provision of the FTP. In regard to this response, World Bank (2005) acknowledges that financing secondary education is a great challenge to both governments and households. This implies there is need for the government to perhaps, reconsider its financial obligation and strategy by increasing the amount of money distributed in schools in order to promote more student participation in secondary schools. This would impact positively and ensure improved provision of the FTP.

Regarding the extent of government commitment toward enhancing participation at secondary school level data measured on a five range scale yielding significant responses. A consideration proportion of the principals and teachers ranged between moderate extend to large extend with minimal difference between the responses. Moderate extent and large extent scored highly. Moderate extent represented 34.48%

principals and 32.23% teachers whereas large extent rated 41.38% (principals) and 33.88% (teachers). To a very large extent, principals scored (17.24) whereas teachers rated 14.88%. The results suggest that indeed to high extents the government is committed towards enhancing participation of students in schooling. 1.65% reported that it was non-existent while 6.90% of the respondents felt it was to a small extent. Despite majority respondents agreeing to large extents, the few that score lowly seem to point towards the need for the government to show more commitment towards enhancing participation of students at the secondary level and improve provision of the FTP. This indicates there is need for the government to comply with its policies and show commitment in order to promote student participation at the secondary level. This kind of position could be attributed to the fact that schools still levy other monies and students are still sent home for school fees arbitrary despite government directive that they remain in school.

In relation to whether political will in Kenya to support FTP has enhanced secondary school participation, there was no difference in opinion with earlier findings. Responses showed there was need for politicians to be more conversant in and vibrant on matters dealing with education, in order, to play a leading role in the provision of education policies such as the FTP.

With respect to the investigation into whether the government is working to curb the misuse of FTP funds, responses cut across the various levels ranging from non-existent by the teachers 5.79% to 41.38% (large extent) by the principals. Respondents scored highest at large extent 41.38% (principals) and 26.43% (teachers). Moderate extent scored second highest at 27.59% (principals) and 32.23% (teachers). Small extent scored at 13.79% (principals) and 22.31% (teachers). 17.24%

(principals) and 13.22% (teachers) were of the opinion to a very large extent. These have a positive leaning towards government in curbing misuse of the free tuition funds. Still, it cannot be overlooked that, a significant number of teachers perceive government efforts to be non-existent representing 5.9%. This seems to suggest that there is need for the government to take stringent measures on principals who misappropriate the free tuition funds since they are the accounting officers at the school level. This will ensure improvement of the FTP.

A high level score of responses on the government initiative to continue providing funds in schools in ensuring a great influence on student retention was realised. Responses on very large extend by the principals (62.07%) and teachers (39.67%) were recorded whereas responses on large extent showed principals (2.59%) and teachers (38.02%). Moderate extent recorded principals (6.9%) and teachers (18.18%). These high responses by the respondents point to the government's need to work harder towards soliciting for more funds in-order to ensure student access and retention in the schools and therefore affect student participation positively. These results call for the government to seriously consider and address the influence of the social-economic and political factors that are seemingly impinging on student participation schooling and impacting negatively on the provision of the FTP.

Data on the government's establishment of channels of disbursement of funds to schools in order to boost efficiency of the FTP showed positive inclinations. Whereas large extent represented 48.28% (principals) and 36.36% (teachers), very large extend scored 41.48% (principals) and 42.15% (teachers). To a moderate extend represented 6.90% (principals) and 15.70% (teachers). Whereas 3.45% (principals) and 4.96% (teachers) were to a small extend. 0.8% (teachers) felt that such efforts were to a small

extend. 0.8% (teachers) felt that such efforts were non-existent. The results seem to suggest that the existing channels of disbursement at the national level cascading to County level are inefficient and to some extent unfavourable. Hence there is need to improve on the disbursement for better provision of the programme. These findings seem to corroborate with Oyugi (2010) and Kipkoech (2012) that since provision of the FTP, besides other challenges, delaying the disbursements by the MoE has thrown the country into a financial crisis jeopardising the implementation. To this end, a study by Ingub and Kyalo (2011) too observed that the disbursement of funds, management and auditing is usually a hurdle that faces usage of free tuition funds. There is therefore need by the government to strengthen the existing channels and review the situation with the aim of ensuring prompt disbursement of the funds. This will ensure that the school programmes are managed without interruption and will improve the provision of the FTP.

The given opinions on government policy and provision of the FTP point out that though there has been increased student enrolment, some parents have misconceptions regarding the 'free tuition' funds. This has led to some failing to pay other school levies contributing to failure of by some of the student to fully benefit from the FTP. Therefore, opinions indicate the need by the government to: strengthen its legislation on issues of secondary schooling, consider the more needy students when allocating the tuition funds, show more commitment toward enhancing participation of student in schools, take stringent measures on principals who misappropriate the free tuition funds, strengthen the existing channels of disbursing the tuition funds, play a leading role and especially the politicians in the provision of the education policies. Thus it points towards the need to seek for a more practical and workable solution in

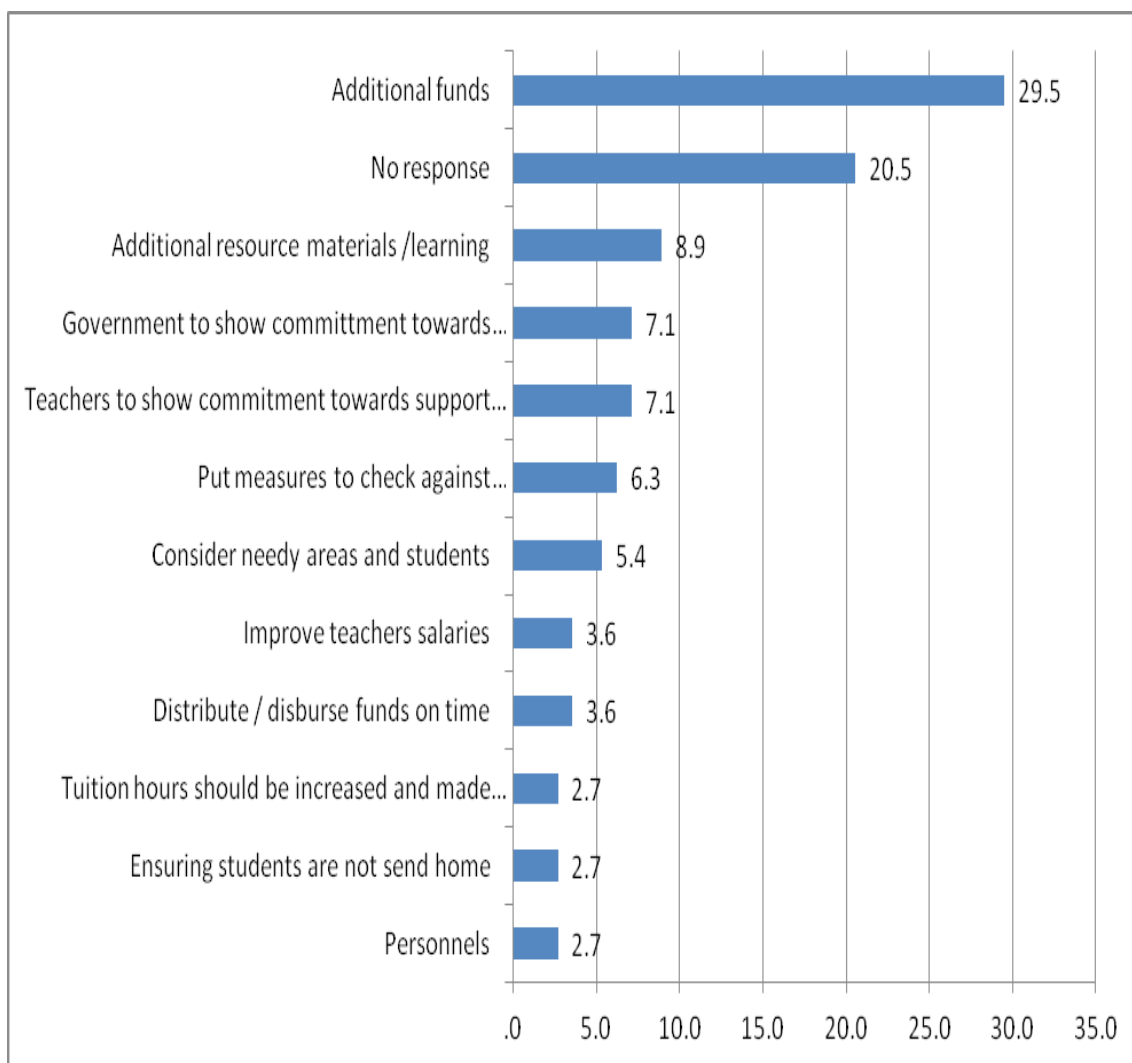
addressing the influences of the socio-economic, political and social factors that are affecting student participation in schooling and impacting negatively on the provision of the FTP.

In-retrospect, the subsequent discourse under section 4.4.2 aimed at establishing what the various respondents perceive to be the measures towards improving the provision of the FTP in-order to increase student participation in secondary schooling in Machakos County.

4.4.2 Respondents Perceptions on Measures towards Improving FTP

The fourth objective of this study was to establish measures toward improving provision of the FTP in secondary schools. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to respond to questions relating to proposals toward provision of the FTP

Respondents' perceptions on measures toward improving the provision of the FTP in secondary schools also yielded varied responses. The respondents were asked to suggest measures the government requires to put in place to ensure effectiveness of the programme. Data was realised through responses of the students, principals, teachers, and the DEOs. The findings are portrayed in Figure 4.1, Table 4.13 and the DEOs analysed responses.



Key; S- Students

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Figure 4.1: Student Perception on Measures towards Improving FTP

Table 4.13: Measures towards Improving FTP

Government needs to put in place	Principals		Teachers		Totals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	9	5.9	55	35.9	64	41.8
Source for more funds from developed countries / donors	0	0.0	2	1.3	2	1.3
Create employment for school leavers	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
Set up a watch dog to ensure disbursement	1	0.7	8	5.2	9	5.9
Add / increase funds for each students	3	2.0	11	7.2	14	9.2
Ensure accountability in all schools / regular auditing	7	4.6	11	7.2	18	11.8
Timely disbursement	3	2.0	19	12.4	22	14.4
Give more grants i.e. bursaries to needy students and CDF	5	3.3	4	2.6	9	5.9
Consultation with technocrats / professionals in the field of education	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
Ensuring the funds are used for the right purpose only	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
Government cater for all students needs not only tuition	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
Stringent measures on officers who misuse the funds to curb misappropriation / wastage	0	0.0	5	3.3	5	3.3
Government to offer effective leadership and supervisory role in the provision of the FTP	1	0.7	4	2.6	5	3.3
Cultivate a relationship of trust and goodwill between itself and donors / partners who support the programme to prevent withdrawal of their support	0	0.0	1	0.7	1	0.7
	29	19.0	124	81.0	153	100.0

Key; P- Principals, T- Teachers

Source; (Field data, 2012)

Whereas the students mentioned 11 measures, the principals and teachers cited 13 measures with minimal differences in opinion. All the respondents cited; additional funds, additional learning resources and more grants to needy students, government to show commitment and set up a watch dog to ensure disbursement, ensure

accountability in all schools and check against misuse and ensure timely disbursement.

Other measures highlighted by the principals and teachers entailed: consultation with technocrats and professionals in the field of education, catering for all students needs and not only tuition, take stringent measures on officers who misuse the funds, offering effective leadership and supervisory role and cultivation of a relationship of trust and goodwill between the government and donors/partners who support the programme to prevent withdrawal of their support. These are portrayed in Table 4.13. Additional measures mentioned by students are: the need for teachers to show commitment towards supporting the education, improving teacher salaries, increasing of tuition hours and ensuring students are not sent home for school fees. These are reflected in figure 4.1.

Out of the responses, additional funds measured highest at a rate of 29.5% by students and 9.2% by the principals and teachers. This could mean that the disbursed funds are inadequate and there is therefore need for the government to consider increasing the capitation. Timely disbursement scored second highest at a rate of 14.4% among the principals and teachers whereas it registered 3.6% among the students. This implies that the government has not been releasing the funds on time. Therefore, a review of the existing policies on disbursement and 'red-tape' on all matters of education should be streamlined to ensure promptness and efficient disbursement of the funds. Ensuring accountability in all schools/ regular auditing rated 11.8% among the principals and teachers. Additional resource materials and learning materials scored 8.9% by the students whereas commitment by the government and teachers rated 7.1%. Perhaps the budgetary allocation though clearly outlined in the vote-head, it is not sufficient

enough to cater for the resources owing to instability of the Kenyan shilling. Therefore, seems like, the students need more financial support for tuition. Other mentioned measures as reflected in Table 4.13 and Figure 4.1 rated between 6.3% and 0.7% respectively. However, importantly, it is crucial for stakeholders to realise that World Bank (2002, 2005) acknowledges that financing secondary education is a great challenge to both governments and household and more so, observed that increasing educational expenditure nevertheless is not a panacea. Increments in education spending do not translate automatically into improved outputs and outcomes. Under conditions of low system efficiency or high inequalities or poor system organisation, increased spending may well prove to be the wrong medicine for the county's educational ailments. When spending more resources in education, other factors also need to be in place for the system to respond properly so the educational goals are actually met.

Figures 4.1 and Table 4.13 shows that the teachers and students were more receptive than the principals towards providing the information on measures the government ought to take towards improving FTP. This low reception by the principals could be attributed to the precarious position they hold in schools which is likely to deter some from providing the necessary remedies contrary to the existing education policies.

Further, the responses of the principals and the teachers corroborate with those of the DEO's with minimal differences. In addition to the responses, some of the DEOs perceived that the 'blanket allocation' of funds to all students was unfair because there were areas more economically endowed than others and parents easily afford for their children's schooling. Still, others were of the opinion that the political aspect if

unchecked is a challenge to the sustainability of the programme due to 'change of hands' in politics and this could impact negatively on the provision process.

In respect to the DEOs responses, one reported that:

'It is important for the government to check against the unnecessary delays that have characterised the disbursement of the free tuition funds or else it will be a fiasco like other related government initiatives.... These delays normally cause principals to borrow from other vote heads. This brings about a lot of confusion. Moreover, it is important to consider allocating more funds towards the more needy areas and students if the provision is to be a success' out' (DEO: 2nd, July 2012).

The given measures by the various respondents towards improving FTP and ensuring its sustainability are in agreement with a considerable number of similar studies done in Kenya. Findings according to studies by Mwangi (2009), Chabari (2010), Mbaka (2010), Owino (2011) and Muchiri (2012) revealed that the government allocations are inadequate, disbursement are delayed and this has affected smooth running of the administrative issues which include delay in completion of programmes, sending students home for fees, drop-out of students from school, poor performance, among others. These studies therefore recommend increased allocation of funds, timely disbursement and consideration of more funds towards schools in the marginalised areas. The recommendations are in agreement with measures given in this study and imply the need for affirmative action to ensure equitable distribution, retention and completion in secondary schooling for all students.

In summary, the results from the accrued data, indicate that perception of students, principals, teachers and DEO's on the measures towards sustainability of the FTP were similar with only diminutive variations. Further, regarding as to whether the FTP

has a future, majority of the DEO's responded that the future of FTP was quite uncertain and bleak. The DEOs further observed that unless there is political good to sustain the programme, for now and in the near future, it remains a disturbing trend that poses a paradox of the FTP. This position therefore points towards the government and the stakeholders of education to ensure the sustainability and smooth running of the FTP through affirmative policy action.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter dealt with several aspects pertaining to the research problem. This present chapter is a comprehensive summary of the study, major findings, conclusions and pertinent recommendations as well as areas for further research, with respect to the main findings of the study regarding the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of FTP.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study premeditated to probe the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of FTP in Secondary Schools in Kenya. The study objectives investigated the influence of: socio-economic factors on the provision of the FTP in Secondary schools; political factors on the provision of FTP in Secondary schools; sought education stakeholders perception on the provision of the FTP and sought opinions on improving the provision of FTP in Secondary schools. Four research questions were formulated to guide data collection and analysis. The significance of the study showing the beneficiaries and its value, justification in Machakos County whose student participation has persistently remained low, the beacons of the study, its limitations and assumptions were discussed. The study was grounded on the Human capital theory.

Literature related to the study was reviewed identifying the strengths and weaknesses prevalent in the studies and hence provided the rationale for the study. The literature covered global perspective on public financing of education and free tuition policies,

factors influencing provision of free tuition policies from a global perspective, zeroing in on the Kenya education scene and particularly in Machakos County secondary schools. The review described and suggested that empirical studies had been done on influence of socio- economic and political factors on provision of tuition policies but few had been carried out regarding the influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of the FTP for secondary schools in Machakos County, whose student participation has persistently remained low. It indicated the gap in knowledge regarding the influence of socio- economic and political factors on provision of FTP that needed to be filled. Thus there was a justification for this study.

This study was a phenomenological study of a qualitative nature grounded on the constructivist philosophical worldview. It was conducted among DEO's, principals, teachers and students in secondary schools. Two hundred sixty two (262) participants filled in the questionnaires out of the expected two hundred and eighty eight respondents (288). The questionnaire was the major research instrument used in data collection. It was supplemented by interviews and document analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and themes were derived from narratives.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The analysed data revealed the following:

- i) Findings on the influence of social-economic factors on FTP revealed that, although free tuition funds have enabled students to remain in school, rating at 59.82%, on the contrary, it was found out that students are normally sent home for school fees due to either social or economic related aspects that affect their participation in schooling despite FTP, rating 67.85%. The study established that to significant extent parent's attitude on gender issues toward education,

poor home backgrounds, high levels of unemployment and low levels of income have influence on access, retention and completion rates in schooling among different sexes across the social domain. It was also established that emerging social aspects such as sand and stone harvesting and, single parenthood seem to adversely affect participation in secondary schooling despite the FTP and are driven by poverty levels in the community which are seemingly high. Therefore, the findings show that, both male and female students had not benefited fully from the FTP and that, some of the emerging social problems and retrogressive cultural practices persist in student's life; especially the girl-child. These aspects lead to students being sent home for fees resulting to prolonged stay at home at times culminating to drop-out, chronic absenteeism, and early marriage among others. Thus, the levels of deprivation in schooling for some students remain extremely high. Consequently, these encroach on the free flow of knowledge meant to benefit the entire society and are an impediment to the expected social-economic returns of education. This has led to failure by some of the students to complete schooling and by extension continued wastage of government funds. These social-economic related constraints were found to be persistent, unique in their nature and evolved around the disadvantaged within the society suggesting a vicious circle of poverty and infringing on the expected social and economic returns of education upon government capitation, hence impacting negatively on the provision of the FTP. These findings are congruent with studies by Kinuthia (2009), Ohba (2009, 2011), Oketch & Ngwale (2010), Atieno & Simatwa (2012) and Republic of Kenya (2012) whose findings indicated that gender issues and poverty continues to affect

student schooling leading to dropping out of school for some, implying that, deserving and needy students are still left out of the benefits of education and do not reap from the subsidies which are financed by and large from general taxation.

ii) Findings on influence of political factors revealed that opinions and perceptions by the principals and teachers to greater extents showed high percentages towards political involvement and interferences with the FTP which contradict with responses of the DEO's that politicians support the provision of the FTP. Whereas principals and teachers scored 18.6% on political interference, the DEOs rated 37.50% towards minimal political interferences. Lack of political support, local politics and politicking was highlighted as a major impediment on the provision of the FTP owing to the political egoism and manipulation that impacted negatively on the provision of the FTP. Selective leadership in most schools was identified as a causative factor that interferes with management of funds. In addition, lack of transparency and mistrust among principals was cited as a barrier to provision of FTP. Thus, despite the government free funds, to quite significant extent, politicians' interests and practices were found to disregard professionalism in education, implying an apparent lack of policy that protects schools and administrators. This has interfered with successful provision of the FTP and contravenes the political pillar of vision 2030. The findings are supported by UNESCO (2004) and Amutabi (2003) whose studies observed that failed implementation may be attributed to several factors among them political interferences and lack of political support.

iii) In regard to respondents perceptions toward government efforts on provision of the FTP in secondary schooling, findings showed that, to some extent the government has made secondary schooling accessible which has contributed to increased enrolment. It was found that legislation has enabled student participation to certain levels while political good will has enhanced secondary schooling to some extent. It was established that to very large extent (principals 62.07% and teachers 39.67%) that the government is working to curb the misappropriation of the free tuition funds. This is inspite of the local politicians and other stakeholders who have a stake in the schools they claim to have founded and wish to have their interests given a priority. Nevertheless, despite these efforts the study established that there was need by the government to strengthen the existing mechanisms toward improved implementation of the FTP.

iv) Regarding opinions towards measures on improvement and the sustainability of the FTP, it was highlighted that increased funds and learning resources, ensuring accountability and regular auditing, timely disbursement, setting up a watchdog to ensure efficient disbursement, stringent measures on officers who misappropriate the funds, offering effective leadership and supervision, redefining the role of stakeholder toward provision of the FTP, and cultivating a relationship of trust and good will between the government and the donors were pertinent toward successful provision of the FTP. The suggestions indicate there is the need for consolidated approach and efforts by the policy makers and implementers to ensure the role of each stakeholder of education is well defined and upheld for successful provision of the FTP. This is likely to lead to achieving the universal goal of education for all children and the

realisation of vision 2030. The findings are in agreement with a considerable number of studies done recently in Kenya which have made similar proposals towards improving the provision of the FTP (Mwangi, 2009; Oyugi, 2010; Owino, 2011; Ingubu & Kyalo 2011; Kipkoech, 2012)

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

- i) Despite government efforts to ensure student access, retention and completion of secondary schooling through the provision of free tuition funds, student participation in secondary schooling has not been fully realised. In relation to social- economic factors, though the issues affecting participation in schooling cut across all students irrespective of location, status, or category of schools, girls appeared most affected. This is because, the social-economic related aspects such as gender, early marriage, poor family background, emerging social aspects, high levels of unemployment and low-levels of income, are strongly associated with schooling participation and continue to affect students. The lack of school fees leads to chronic absenteeism, prolonged stay at home, dropping out of school and even early marriages in some cases. Thus, the levels of deprivation in schooling for some students remain extremely high and have led to wastage of free tuition funds. This contravenes the expected social and economic returns of education upon government capitation. Therefore, if the FTP is to be fruitful, the results point to need by the government and concerted efforts by the MoE and other agencies to provide appropriate guidance to parents and students, address the social related issues and the resilient general community trends, set its priorities right in order to

alleviate the vicious cycle of poverty for it to realise increased student enrolments in such needy areas, that is, from the social and economic perspective.

ii) In regard to the political related factors, lack of political will and support, local politics and politicking is a major road block to provision of the FTP. This is manifested by late disbursements of the funds leading to borrowing, placing of political interests first at the expense of the school interests, interference with school leadership whereby some school principals are appointed with approval by politicians among others. Subsequently, such interferences have compromised professional ethics leading to patronage, continued misappropriation of funds, lack of transparency and accountability by principals. The implication is that, there is lack of policy that protects schools from political interferences and retrogressive politics which interfere with school management and use of the free tuition funds. Therefore, if provision of the free tuition programme is to succeed, then, constructive politics rather than retrogressive, are imperative as well designing a policy that protects the schools from such politics.

iii) Regarding perceptions of education stakeholders towards provision of FTP in secondary schooling, findings showed that the government has enabled legislation on issues of secondary schooling to a large extent, political will to a limited extent and efforts towards curbing misappropriation only to a small extent.

iv) In regard to measures towards improving the provision of the FTP, there is need by the government to increase the FTP funds, strengthen the existing channels of disbursing the tuition funds, ensure accountability and regular auditing, take stringent measures against principals who misappropriate the free tuition funds, clearly define the role of each stakeholder in the provision of the FTP, strengthen its legislation on issues of secondary schooling, consider the more needy students when allocating the tuition funds, show more commitment toward enhancing participation of student in schools, play a leading role and especially the politicians in the provision of the education policies and address the influences of the social-economic and political and factors that are affecting student schooling and impacting negatively on the provision of the FTP. This calls for a consolidated approach and efforts by the policy makers and implementers to ensure the role of each stakeholder of education is well defined and upheld for successful provision of the FTP.

On the whole, the study points out that to significant extents and in various ways social-economic and political related factors affect student participation in schooling and hence have an influence on provision of the FTP. Despite the overall increased enrolments in the country, there is a category of students who are underrepresented in the increment hence the low participation. Thus it poses a really paradox of the government policy of free tuition which is meant to promote equity, access, retention and completion in secondary schooling. Therefore, owing to the discussed factors, completion of secondary schooling to some of the students remains an illusion despite the free tuition funds thus hampering the provision of the FTP.

5.4 Recommendations

From the findings and review of related literature, it is apparent that the influence of the socio-economic and political factors on provision of the FTP for secondary schools is a new emerging education issue that requires address by the government and other stakeholders in education. Conclusions in Section 5.2 seem to point to the need for further studies from a wider perspective. The rationale is ideally to minimise influence of the studied underlying factors on provision of the FTP so as to increase access, retention, completion rates and enhance student participation at the secondary school level. To this end, a number of practical and policy intervention measures based on the issues emerging from the study are recommended.

5.4.1 Recommendations for practical action

The researcher therefore strongly recommends that:

- i) In regard to the social-economic related factors and their influence on the provision of the FTP, there is need for the government to develop an action plan towards strengthening adult education programmes so as to improve the education level of the parents, sensitisation and empowering of the community to promote positive attitude towards gender education and eradicate retrogressive social and cultural practices that persist in students life impacting negatively on their education. This in essence will ensure effective participation of all students, free flow of knowledge to all regardless of gender in secondary schooling. There is also need to develop sustainable poverty reduction programmes to address the economic constraints that have a cyclic nature that is affecting students' life and depriving others participation in schooling. In this respect, the government could consider empowering the people in this region by appropriate utilisation of enhanced

irrigation systems and other related income generating projects to increase their income and, by extension, improve their living standards. This in essence, will ensure there is less disruption of the student participation in schooling and by extension school programmes therefore realising full provision of the FTP.

- ii)** In light of the political related factors and their influence on the provision of the FTP, there is need for the government to review the existing structures and rules as far as political involvement in education and school administration is concerned. This will lead to; designing of a policy to protect schools and administrators, professionalism of politicians' in contributing toward management of schools, minimising interferences as well as principals' misappropriation of funds. To this end, the MoE could consider taking stringent measures towards ensuring that schools are free of retrogressive politics that undermine the success of the programmes, as well as, re-thinking measures of ensuring accountability and transparency by the school principals' in order to avoid misappropriation of the disbursed funds in the schools.
- iii)** Regarding government efforts toward provision of the FTP, there is need by the government to strengthen the existing mechanisms towards provision of the FTP in secondary schooling.
- iv)** Toward improving the provision of the FTP, there is need by the government to consider a consolidated approach that will ensure the role of each stakeholder of education is well defined and upheld in provision some of the given proposals perceived to be pertinent to the success of the FTP. These

include and not limited to: increasing the free tuition funds, strengthening the existing channels of disbursing the tuition funds, ensuring accountability and regular auditing, taking of stringent measures on officers who misappropriate the disbursed free education funds, the politicians to play a leading role in the provision of the education policies, offering effective leadership and supervision and cultivation of a relationship of trust and good will between the government and the donors. This will improve provision of the FTP and enable achieving the universal goal of education for all children by 2015, and the realisation of the three pillars of vision 2030, namely social, economic and political.

5.4.2 Suggestion for Further study

The study findings point to a need for further research and investigation on:

- i) The role of education stakeholders in strengthening gender participation in schooling in light of emerging social trends that are affecting provision of the FTP.
- ii) Evaluation of effective strategies toward poverty reduction for effective provision of education policies in order to achieve more participation of students in secondary schooling.
- iii) Assessment of existing political structures and regulations for adequate positive political will and support by the politicians toward effective provision of the FTP.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION

OFFICER'S

The Interview will deal with demographic, personal data and information on the influence of socio- economic Factors on provision of Free Tuition Programme in Kenya.

SECTION A: Demographic and Personal Data.

1. What is your age bracket?
2. State your gender?
3. What is your highest level of formal education completed?
4. Please state the number of Years of Service in this current station?
5. How many boarding schools are there in the County?
6. What is the number of Day schools in the County?
7. What is the number of Mixed Boarding/Day schools in the County?
8. Please state the total number of schools in the County?
9. What is the total number of enrolled students in the County?
10. What is your understanding of the free tuition program towards secondary schools?
11. Please give a general comment on the home backgrounds of secondary school students in this region.
12. Kindly state your views on the provision of the Free Tuition Programme in regard to the Social-cultural practices in this region?
13. Please give a general comment of the economic status of the people in this region.

14. Are students in this region fully enjoying the benefits of free tuition policy? If yes/no, kindly comment
15. What is your opinion on the participation of political leaders in schools in this region? If positive, kindly elaborate
16. Is this an economically well endowed region? If the answer is no, kindly comment further.
17. What considerations do you think the government should make when allocating the free tuition funds in the future? Kindly comment
18. What is the future of free tuition for secondary schools? Kindly comment

APPENDIX II - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

Instructions

Kindly respond to all Questions to the best of your knowledge. Please note that you will have greatly contributed to the success of this study. The information obtained will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the research.

The Questionnaire will deal with information on influence of socio-economic and political factors on provision of Free Tuition Programme in Kenya.

SECTION A: Demographic and Personal Data.

Date _____
Questionnaire Number: _____
School Category: Provincial [] District []
School Location: Urban [] Rural []
School Type: Single Sex [] Mixed []
Facility Offered: Boarding [] Day [] Boarding & Day []
Number of students enrolled []

1. What is your age bracket?

1 = 30-35 years

2 = 36-40 years

3 = 41-45years

4 = 46-50 years

5 = >50 years

2. What is your gender?

1= Female

2=Male

3. Highest level of formal education completed

1 = Diploma

2 = Bachelors degree

3 = Masters Degree

4 = Doctorate

5 = Other, Specify-----

4. Years of Service in this current station

1=0 – 5 years

2=6 – 10 years

3=11 – 15 years

4=16 – 20 years

5=Over 20 years

5. How many years of experience as a Head teacher?

1=1-5 years

2=6-10 years

3=10 –20

4=20 –35

6. What is your understanding of Free Tuition for Secondary Education?

1. No payment at all

2. Little payment

3. Undecided

7. How important is the Free Tuition programme to the students in this school?

1. Crucial

- 2. Important
- 3. Average
- 4. Not much important
- 5. Not important at all

8. How would you describe the Free Tuition Policy towards ensuring retention of students in school?

- 1. Quite helpful to most students
- 2. Helpful to some students
- 3. Undecided
- 4. Other.....

9. Are the parents able to meet other fee requirements without difficulties?

- 1. Yes, to a large extent
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

10. Do parents clearly differentiate between free tuition funds and other school levies?

- 1. Yes, definitely
- 2. No, probably not
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Not definitely

11. Do you think social-cultural aspects influence provision of the Free Tuition policy?

- 1. Yes, definitely
- 2. No, probably not
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Not definitely

If yes explain how

.....

.....

.....

12. Indicate the degree to which you believe that each of the mentioned aspects influence the provision of Free Tuition Programme.

(a) Social factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

**Use the following scale: 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided
4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree**

State your view on how the following variables influence provision of free tuition policy for secondary schools.		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	A parents attitude toward education has impact on gender participation in schooling					
2	A parents value for education has impact on a child's secondary schooling					
3	Parents level of education have significant influence on the child completion of school					
4	Literacy levels in a community have influence on secondary completion rates of schooling					
5	The family background of the student has a great influence on whether one completes school					
6	Societal attitude affects most students decisions to pursue secondary education					
7	Perceptions of individual parents on education have influence on taking their children to school despite subsidy					
8	Whatever individuals and society believe and value determines whether secondary schooling is important.					
9	There is a positive relationship between the society's literacy level and schooling.					
Other						

Briefly comment on the social aspect of the community and how its aspects are either enhancing or hindering provision of Free Tuition policy.....

(b) Economic Factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

Use the following scale: 1= Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided
4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree

The following views on economic variables influence provision of free tuition policy for secondary schools		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is more student participation in rural locations than in urban locations in terms of enrolment.					
2	Well endowed areas have more student participation in schooling.					
3	There is a high disparity of benefits between the male and female with male students showing high participation in schooling.					
4	Usage of free tuition has a positive relationship with the literacy of the society.					
5	The community has prolonged droughts and therefore student participation in schooling is affected.					
6	A majority of the students would like to finish secondary school but famine is a determinant factor.					
Other						

Please comment on the community’s economic aspects and the ability of free tuition funds to adequately support secondary schooling in the region?

.....
.....

(c) Political Factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

Use the following scale: 1=Non existent; 2=Small extent 3=Uncertain; 4=Lesser extent; 5=Greater extent

Influence of political factors on the provision of FTP		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Lack of adequate political support affects the use of free tuition funds towards student participation in this school					
2	Local politics in the school is a major setback on the provision of free tuition policy.					
3	The influence of politicians in schools has affected provision of free tuition.					
4	Selective leadership in schools interferes with the management of funds					
5	The lack of transparency by school heads interferes with free tuition programme in schools					
6	There is a positive relationship between politics in schools and provision of free tuition programme.					
Other						

What is your opinion on political involvement in secondary schools and the success of the free tuition programme?

.....

.....

(d) Government Policy

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

Use the following scale: 1=Non existent; 2=Small extent; 3=Moderate extent; 4=Large extent; 5=Very large extent

Government attributes influencing participation of secondary schooling		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The government's effort to make secondary school accessible has contributed to increased enrolments.					
2	The government's legislation on secondary schooling nationally has influence on student participation.					
3	The government's issuance of free funds has enhanced student participation in schooling.					
4	The government is committed to enhancing participation at the secondary school level.					
5	Political will in Kenya to support free tuition programme has enhanced secondary school participation					
6	The government is working to curb the misuse of the free tuition funds.					
7	The government's initiative to continue providing funds in schools will have a great influence on student retention.					
8	The government's establishment of channels of disbursement of funds to schools will boost efficiency of the free tuition programme.					
Other						

Suggest measures which the government needs to put in place to ensure the programme is sustainable and beneficial to all students irrespective of their diverse backgrounds.....

APPENDIX III - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Instructions

Kindly respond to all Questions to the best of your knowledge. Please note that you will have greatly contributed to the success of this study. The information obtained will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the research.

The Questionnaire will deal with information on Factors that influence **provision** of Free Tuition Programme in Kenya.

SECTION A: Demographic and Personal Data.

Date _____

Questionnaire Number: _____

1. What is your age bracket?

1 = 30-35 years

2 = 36-40 years

3 = 41-45years

4 = 46-50 years

5 = >50 years

2. What is your gender?

1= Female

2=Male

3. Highest level of formal education completed

1 = Diploma

2 = Bachelors degree

3 = Masters Degree

4 = Doctorate

5 = Other, Specify-----

4. Years of Service in this current station

- 1=0 – 5 years
- 2=6 – 10 years
- 3=11 – 15 years
- 4=16 – 20 years
- 5=Over 20 years

5. What is your understanding of Free Tuition for Secondary Education?

- 1. No payment at all
- 2. Little payment
- 3. Undecided

6. How important is the Free Tuition programme to the students in this school?

- 1. Crucial
- 2. Important
- 3. Average
- 4. .Not much important
- 5. Not important at all

7. How would you describe the Free Tuition Policy towards ensuring retention of students in school?

- 1. Quite helpful to most students
- 2. Helpful to some students
- 3. Undecided
- 4. Other.....

8. Are the parents able to meet other fee requirements without difficulties?

- 1. Yes, to a large extent
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

9. Do parents clearly differentiate between free tuition funds and other school levies?

- 1. Yes, definitely
- 2. No, probably not
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Not definitely

10. Do you think social-cultural aspects influence provision of the Free Tuition policy?

- 1. Yes, definitely
- 2. No, probably not
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Not definitely

If yes explain how

.....

.....

.....

11. Indicate the degree to which you believe that each of the mentioned aspects influence the provision of Free Tuition Programme.

(a) Social factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

**Use the following scale: 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided
4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree**

State your view on how the following variables influence provision of free tuition policy for secondary schools.		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	A parents attitude toward education has impact on gender participation in schooling					
2	A parents value for education has impact on a child's secondary schooling					
3	Parents level of education have significant influence on the child completion of school					
4	Literacy levels in a community have influence on secondary completion rates of schooling					
5	The family background of the student has a great influence on whether one completes school					
6	Societal attitude affects most students decisions to pursue secondary education					
7	Perceptions of individual parents on education have influence on taking their children to school despite subsidy					
8	Whatever individuals and society believe and value determines whether secondary schooling is important.					
9	There is a positive relationship between the society's literacy level and schooling.					
Other						

Briefly comment on the social aspect of the community and how its aspects are either enhancing or hindering provision of Free Tuition policy.....

.....

(b) Economic Factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

**Use the following scale: 1= Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided
4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree**

The following views on economic variables influence provision of free tuition policy for secondary schools		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is more student participation in rural locations than in urban locations in terms of enrolment.					
2	Well endowed areas have more student participation in schooling.					
3	There is a high disparity of benefits between the male and female with male students showing high participation in schooling.					
4	Usage of free tuition has a positive relationship with the literacy of the society.					
5	The community has prolonged droughts and therefore student participation in schooling is affected.					
6	A majority of the students would like to finish secondary school but famine is a determinant factor.					
Other						

Please comment on the community's economic aspects and the ability of free tuition funds to adequately support secondary schooling in the region?

.....
.....

(c) Political Factors

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

Use the following scale: 1=Non existent; 2=Small extent 3=Uncertain; 4=Lesser extent; 5=Greater extent

Influence of political factors on the provision of FTP		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Lack of adequate political support affects the use of free tuition funds towards student participation in this school					
2	Local politics in the school is a major setback on the implementation of free tuition policy.					
3	The influence of politicians in schools has affected provision of free tuition.					
4	Selective leadership in schools interferes with the management of funds					
5	The lack of transparency by school heads interferes with free tuition programme in schools					
6	There is a positive relationship between politics in schools and provision of free tuition programme.					
Other						

What is your opinion on political involvement in secondary schools and the success of the free tuition programme?

.....

(d) Government Policy

Kindly fill where it best applies to you.

Use the following scale: 1=Non existent; 2=Small extent; 3=Moderate extent; 4=Large extent; 5=Very large extent

Government attributes influencing participation of secondary schooling		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The government's effort to make secondary school accessible has contributed to increased enrolments.					
2	The government's legislation on secondary schooling nationally has influence on student participation.					
3	The government's issuance of free funds has enhanced student participation in schooling.					
4	The government is committed to enhancing participation at the secondary school level.					
5	Political will in Kenya to support free tuition programme has enhanced secondary school participation					
6	The government is working to curb the misuse of the free tuition funds.					
7	The government's initiative to continue providing funds in schools will have a great influence on student retention.					
8	The government's establishment of channels of disbursement of funds to schools will boost efficiency of the free tuition programme.					
Other						

Suggest measures which the government needs to put in place to ensure the programme is sustainable and beneficial to all students irrespective of their diverse backgrounds.....

APPENDIX IV - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Instructions

Kindly respond to all Questions to the best of your knowledge. Please note that you will have greatly contributed to the success of this study. The information obtained will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the research.

The Questionnaire will deal with information on Factors that influence provision of Free Tuition Programme in Kenya.

SECTION A: Demographic and Personal Data.

Date _____
Questionnaire Number: _____
School Category: Provincial [] District []
School Location: Urban [] Rural []
School Type: Single Sex [] Mixed []
Facility Offered: Boarding [] Day [] Boarding & Day []
Number of students enrolled in your class []

1. What is your age bracket?

1=13-15 years

2=16-18 years

3=19 –21years

4 = >22 years

2. What is your gender?

1= Female

2= Male

3. Please indicate your class

1= Form 1

2= Form 2

3= Form 3

4=Form 4

4. How many of you in the family attend Secondary School?

1= 1

2=2

3=3

Other, specify.....

5. Kindly indicate the degree to which you agree with the social variables shown on the table:

Use the following scale: 1= Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided
4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

Social-economic variables influencing the provision FTP for secondary schools.		Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Free Tuition Policy has enabled me to remain in School					
2	I have no problems paying other required school levies					
3	My parents/ Guardian effectively meets all other required school needs					
4	Prolonged drought affects my schooling despite free funds					
5	My home environment has a great influence on whether I stay in school or not					
6	Persistent famine greatly affects my schooling					
7	Students are no longer sent home for school fees					
8	My parents/Guardian value my secondary education					
Other						

Please comment on the measures you think should be taken towards improving the Free Tuition programme?.....
.....

Thank you for your participation in this study

APPENDIX V - GOVERNMENT BREAKDOWN OF COST IN FDSE

Vote head	Amount Kshs.
Tuition	3,600.00
Repairs/Maintenance and Improvement	400.00
Local travel and transport	400.00
Administration costs	500.00
Electricity, Water and Conservancy	500.00
Activity fees	600.00
Personal emoluments	3,965.00
Medical	300.00
Total individual Students School Fees	10,265.00

Source: MoE Circular, 9 Jan 2008