

## **Selected Institutional Factors and its Influence on Implementation of Tuition Free Secondary Education in Public Secondary Schools in Wareng Sub-County, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

The Government of Kenya declared Tuition Free Secondary Education (TFSE) in all public secondary schools in the country in order to cope with the high number of pupils completing standard eight. This led to a large number of students enrolling for secondary education. Despite the government input, reports from many parts of the country revealed that shortage of teacher staffing and head teachers with good administrative skills among other challenges made it difficult to achieve the objectives of TFSE that is increased level of student enrolment, progression from one class to next and completion. The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions on the influence of teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE in public secondary schools in Wareng Sub-County, Kenya. The study used descriptive survey research design. The target population was 34 head teachers and 452 teachers. A sample of 195 respondents was drawn consisting of 14 head teachers and 181 teachers. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select head teachers while random sampling was used to select teachers from the schools whose head teachers were selected. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process the data collected. Results of data analysis were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts. The study established inadequate staff thus hiring of Board of Management (BOM) teachers. The study therefore recommends that the government should employ more teachers to cater for increasing student population and provide opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers and head teachers to enhance the quality of school management.

**Key words:** *Institutional Factors, Tuition Free Secondary Education, School Administration, Student Enrollment, Student Progression*

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## 1.0 Background of the study

Education forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. Investment in education can help foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development, and reduce social inequality (World Bank, 1998). UNESCO (2005) argues that the level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development. Globally, education is recognized as a basic human right. The Human Rights Charter treats education as one of the human rights. Bishop (1989) notes that in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights laid down Article 26, that everyone had the right to education and that education would be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.

Education for all has been discussed in international fora, for example United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in World Conferences at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and its follow-up in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Consequently, governments around the world have invested huge amounts of their expenditure on education. In 1963, when Kenya attained independence, the government committed itself to the provision of Universal Free Primary Education in tandem with the Addis Ababa Conference of African Ministers held in 1960 (Sifuna,1990). The conference promised to offer Universal Primary Education within twenty years. In 1963, the government declared a fight against three enemies of development; ignorance, disease and poverty. In light of this, the government adopted a policy of universal primary education (Republic of Kenya, 1964). Since then, the government's effort to expand educational opportunities have been informed by various educational commissions, the key ones being the: Ominde 1964, Gachathi 1976, Mackay 1981, Kamunge 1988 and Koech 1999 Commissions, all appropriately named after their respective chairpersons.

The Commission proposed an education system that would foster national unity and the creation of sufficient human capital for national development. Sessional Paper No: 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya formally adopted the Ominde Report as a basis for post-independence educational development (Republic of Kenya, 1964). The Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Republic of Kenya, 1976), focused on redefining Kenya's educational policies and objectives, considering national unity, and economic, social and cultural aspirations of the people of Kenya. It resulted in Government support for '*Harambee*' schools and also led to establishment of the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) at the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) (Republic of Kenya, 1976). The Report of the Presidential Working Party on the Second University in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 1981) led to the removal of the advanced (A) level of secondary education, and the expansion of other post-secondary training institutions. In addition to the establishment of Moi University, it also recommended the establishment of the 8:4:4 systems of education and the Commission for University Education (CUE).

The Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and beyond focused on improving education financing, quality and relevance (Republic of Kenya, 1988). This was at a time when the Government scheme for the provision of instructional materials through the National Textbook Scheme was inefficient and therefore adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning (Rotech, 2004). From the recommendations of the Working Party in 1988, the Government produced Sessional Paper No 6 on Education and Training for the Next Decade and beyond. This led to the policy of cost sharing between government, parents and communities (Republic of Kenya, 1988). The Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya was mandated to recommend ways and means of enabling the education system to facilitate national unity, mutual social responsibility, accelerated industrial and technological development, life-long learning, and adaptation in response to changing circumstances (Republic of Kenya, 1999). The subsequent report, popularly known as The Koech Report recommended Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET).

Recent policy initiatives have focused on the attainment of Education for All (EFA) and, in particular, Universal Primary Education (UPE). The key concerns for the government were access, retention, equity, quality and relevance, and internal and external efficiencies within the education system (Achoka, *et al*, 2007). The effectiveness of the 8-4-4 structure and system of education had also come under increasing scrutiny in light of the decline in enrolment and retention particularly at the primary and secondary school levels. The Government had shown its commitment to the provision of quality education and training as a human right through the introduction of Free Primary education (FPE) in 2003 and Tuition Free Secondary Education (TFSE) in 2008. Despite this positive move towards attainment of increased enrolment, progressive retention and completion rates in secondary schools, it is not clear how institutional factors such as facilities, learning resource materials, teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills have influenced implementation of this program.

The launch of TFSE in 2008 was meant to address illiteracy, low quality education and low completion rates at the secondary level, high cost of education and poor community participation (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Unlike the FPE initiative, which had reference to enormous conventions, resolutions and literature, TFSE initiative could have been triggered by the politically charged climate that engulfed the country during the 2007 general election which implied that the country may not have been very prepared for its implementation. However, there was government commitment to increase transition from primary to secondary by seventy percent in all districts (Ohba, 2009). Despite the government's desire to have 100% transition from primary to secondary education, it remains unclear how institutional factors such as school facilities, learning resources, teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills were put in place in order to cater for the projected rise in enrolment in public secondary schools.

In line with the assessment of FPE, this study selected teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills. Just like FPE, has experienced increased student enrolment and pressure on school facilities, instructional materials, teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills. It

is however not clear how institutional factors such as school facilities, learning resources, teacher staffing and head teachers' administrative skills influence the implementation of TFSE. This was the concern this study sought to investigate.

### ***1.1 Statement of the problem***

Education is key to national development. This however can only be achieved when quality education is offered to all citizens. In an effort to enhance enrolment, progressive retention and completion after the FPE initiative of 2003, the Government of Kenya introduced TFSE in 2008. The Government and other development partners have endeavored to provide facilities for the realization of TFSE. Implementation of TFSE has been a challenge in the whole country. These included shortage of school facilities, instructional materials, teacher staffing and head teachers with good administrative skills. Due to these challenges, it is difficult to achieve the objectives of TFSE that is increased level of student enrolment, progression. In regard to Wareng Sub-County, these concerns are not founded on any systematic studies or supported by data. The study therefore sought to determine teachers' perceptions on the influence of the named institutional factors on implementation of TFSE in public secondary schools in Wareng Sub-County, Kenya.

### ***1.3 Purpose of the study***

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions on the influence of staffing and head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE in Wareng Sub-County.

### ***1.3 Research questions***

The study was further guided by the following research questions;

- i. What are teachers' perceptions on the influence of staffing levels on implementation of TFSE in public secondary schools?
- ii. What are teachers' perceptions on the influence of head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE in public secondary schools?

### ***1.5 Theoretical framework***

The study was anchored on the theory of Force Fields Analysis of Change that was developed by Kurt, (1947). Force field analysis can be used at any level such as personal, project, organizational and network to visualize the forces that may be in favour and against change initiative. The force field analysis is a method to; investigate the balance of power involved in an issue, identify the

most important player (stakeholder) and forge the groups for a campaign on the issue, identify the opponents and to identify how to influence each target group.

According to this study, TFSE is a policy change that needs to be implemented to justify its purpose. It is important that institutional factors be put in place in order to effectively implement this program in Wareng Sub-County. The study therefore analyzed the force influencing the implementation of TFSE especially in facilities, teaching and learning resources, staffing and head teachers' administrative skills. Force Field's analysis of change enhanced the analysis of the above institutional factors since they directly influence enrolment, progressive retention and completion rate in public secondary schools

## **2.0 Literature Review**

According to UNESCO (2010), the teacher resource is an important input in achieving the objectives of the Education Sector. Equitable distribution of teachers has remained one of the challenges in teacher management. The number of teachers has been inadequate over the years despite growth in enrolments and the number of educational institutions resulting to inequality in distribution of teachers and impacting negatively on quality and access of education. Recruitment of teachers has in the recent past mainly been done only to replace those who exit through natural attrition.

Currently, in the secondary school education in Kenya, the role of the school administrators including head teachers and teachers in their respective posts is to propel the institutional goals to success and satisfy the stakeholders. Republic of Kenya, (1998), notes that this role is heavily laden considering the fact that it should be achieved within available resources. For school head teachers, besides initial administrative functions of supervision, human resource management and planning, other emerging roles necessitated by contemporary situations include; management of businesses for the school and implementation of government policies (Achoka, 2007).

In supportive supervision the primary problem is worker morale and job satisfaction (Kadushin, 1992). Workers are seen as facing a variety of job-related stresses which, unless they have help to deal with them, could seriously affect their work and lead to a less than satisfactory service to clients. For the worker there is ultimately the problem of burnout. He further notes that the other two forms of supervision focus on instrumental needs, whereas supportive supervision is concerned with expressive needs. In this way head teachers who are school administrators are expected to develop relationships and environments that enable teachers to work together and respond to change brought about by TFSE. According to (Ducker, 1988), such 'joint performance' involves having common goals, common values, the right structures, and continuing training and development.

Performance management is the systematic process by which an agency involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and goals. Employee performance management includes: planning work and setting expectations, continually monitoring performance, developing the capacity to perform, periodically rating performance in a summary fashion, and rewarding good performance (Armstrong, & Baron, (2000).

Appraisal is a thorough yet supportive and developmental process designed to ensure all teachers have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It helps to ensure teachers are able to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers. All schools will need to review their current arrangement and make necessary changes to ensure they meet the new regulations. Appraisal applies to all teachers where they are employed for one term or more unless they are undergoing induction or the subject of capability procedures. Capability only applies to teachers about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process has been unable to address (Armstrong & Baron, 2000).

The governing body has a duty to ensure the performance of teachers at its school is managed and reviewed in accordance with the school policy and the regulations. The governing body should also review the policy annually. The head teacher is responsible for the appraisal of other teachers but may delegate this duty to other appropriate teachers, usually those with management responsibilities. They are also responsible for producing an annual report to governors about the operation of the appraisal policy, the effectiveness of the procedures and the teachers' training and development needs. Schools will need to ensure that their current protocol meets the requirements of the new appraisal Regulations and where appropriate any references and the new teacher standards (Armstrong & Baron, 2000).

Okumbe (2001), found a transformational, managerial and behaviour management skills to be essential ingredients principals need for the achievement of effective schools. In a related study on effective schools in developing countries, Kochamba & Murray (2008), reaffirmed that the principal who had interpersonal skill viewed his primary role as that of providing support for his teachers so they could put in their best to teaching, achieved school effectiveness.

The responses from teachers indicate that head teachers fair well on their administrative skills, this indicates that the principals have the requisite management skills in the study area since the management capacity of the principals is very important in the implementation of free secondary education. Chepkonga (2006) said that to manage secondary schools, the head teachers (principals) require strong management knowledge and support services for their success in the running of the schools.

The study attributed to the fact that only a small percentage of school managers and other personnel had attended courses in financial management. They are also contrary with the findings by (Chepkonga, 2006) found out that the principals needed training in key management areas such as accountancy (80.9%), preparing budgets (93%) and general management(57%). The difference

can be attributed to the management training organized by KESI for principals and deputies in the study area. Pearson' Correlation Analysis established the relationship between teachers perceived institutional factors and implementation of TFSE. The results indicated a significant positive relationship on school facilities and instructional materials at ( $p=0.01$ ).The results indicated that the school facilities and instructional materials and staffing are significant

The Ministry of Education together with the school management should devise ways of improving the physical infrastructure and instructional materials. Osei (2006) noted that overcrowding, together with other challenges such as lack of school facilities (lack of basic teaching materials and an absence of sufficient equipment for laboratories) and inadequate infrastructure (such as little lighting, drab walls) negatively affect the quality of education.

## 2.0 Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design using a target population of 486 respondents comprising 34 head teachers and 452 teachers from the 34 Sub-County secondary schools in the two divisions of Wareng Sub-County. Gay (2003) recommends that when the target population is small (less than 1000 members), a minimum sample of 30% is adequate for educational research and 10% for a population of over 1000. Using proportionate sampling, the study involved a sample of 14(41%) head teachers and 181(40%) of teachers.

Data was collected by use of two five-point Likert scale questionnaires. The first questionnaire contained items to obtain data from the head teacher on teacher staffing and head teacher's administrative skills while the second questionnaire was used to generate data from teachers on their perception on head teachers' administrative skills. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics. The data were converted into frequencies and percentages. The analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The resulting data analysis from questionnaires was summarized and depicted in the form of frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

## 4.0 Results and Discussions

### 4.1 Influence of staffing on implementation of TFSE

The first objective of the study was to establish Teachers' perceptions on the influence of staffing on implementation of TFSE. To determine this, the head teachers were asked to respond to statements relating to staffing in their schools

On whether the teachers are sufficient for increased enrolment due to TFSE, 2(14.3%) agreed, and 12 (85.7%) disagreed, on the question that distribution of teachers per subject is enough, 2(14.3%)agreed and 10(71.4%) disagreed, on teachers complain of overload due to increasing number of students, 7(50.0%) agreed, and 2(14.3%) disagreed, on the opinion that schools

majority depend on B.O.M teachers to handle students, 6(42.9%) agreed and 7(50.0%) disagreed, on the question that it takes long for teachers to be posted to school, 10(71.4%) agreed and 3(21.4%) disagreed. Lastly, on the statement that teachers hardly pay individualized attention to students, 10 (71.4%) agreed while 4(28.6%) disagreed.

Findings established that staffing is inadequate in the area under the study, essentially, the personnel within the institutions and their capabilities in contributing to productivity and achievement of institutional objectives are vital in any educational system. Teachers in secondary schools are engaged in the processing of all educational inputs, students inclusive, so that the educational institutions will be able to achieve their objectives. They disseminate knowledge and skills through teaching, contribute to advancement in knowledge and engage in community services. Their availability and utilization would determine the success or failure of the educational system. These findings are true according to Abimbade (1997) who noted that staffing as a resource in teaching and learning make students to learn more and retain better what they have been taught and that it also promotes and sustains student's interest. It also allows the learners to discover themselves and their abilities and consequently provides them with an opportunity to realize their full potential. Schramm (1977) reinforces this view and adds that enough teachers enrich learner's knowledge and reinforce instruction.

#### 4.2 Influence of head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE

The second objective of the study was to establish Teachers' perceptions on the influence of head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE. To determine this, the head teachers and teachers were asked to rate the adequacy or inadequacy of head teachers' administrative skills, to which both head teachers and teachers responded as shown in table 11 and 12 respectively. The responses were measured on five-point Likert scale, the questions were rated; very adequate, adequate, not sure, inadequate, and very inadequate.

**Table 1: Head teachers' responses on influence of head teachers' administrative skills on implementation of TFSE**

Statement	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
School administration motivates teachers	14	100	0	0
Workers are trained to handle ever increasing number of students	6	42.8	6	42.8
Head teacher closely supervises teachers	14	100	0	0
Head teacher has established standards for teachers' performance appraisal	7	50	0	0
Teachers are held accountable as individuals for work assignments	10	71.4	2	14.3
There is a detailed recruitment policy of teachers in my school	7	50	3	21.4
BOM meets to assess school's financial ability before recruiting new teachers	9	64.3	1	7.1

All the head teachers agreed that school administration motivates teachers morally, concerning training teachers regularly to handle increasing number of students, 5(35.7%) agreed while 6(42.9%) disagreed, they all agreed that head teachers closely supervised teachers, 10(71.4%) agreed that school programs are planned in advance, on the question that head teacher has established standards for teachers' performance appraisal, 7(50.0%) agreed and 7(50.0%) disagreed, on teachers are held accountable as individuals for work assignments, 10(71.4%) agreed and 2(14.3%) disagreed. On detailed recruitment policy of teachers in my school, 7(50.0%) agreed and 3(21.4%) disagreed, finally on B.O.M meets to assess school's financial ability before recruiting new teachers, 9(64.3%) agreed while 1(7.1%) disagreed.

**Table 2: Teachers' Responses on the influence of head teachers' administrative skills on Implementation of TFSE**

Statement	Adequate		Inadequate	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Head teacher motivates teachers	106	58.9	56	31.1
Head teacher promotes continued training of teachers	122	67.8	34	18.8
Head teacher closely supervises teachers	43	24	114	63
School programs are planned	117	65	41	23
I am involved in making rules and regulations in my school	118	65	41	23
Head teacher helps teachers deal with job related stresses	114	63	37	20
Head teacher and teachers have common goals and aspirations	124	68.5	36	19.9
Head teacher sets achievable performance expectations	143	79	27	14.9

To corroborate head teachers' responses, the researcher sought some information on teachers concerning head teachers' administrative skills. On the opinion that head teacher motivates teachers 106(59.9%) agreed while 56(31.1%) disagreed, on head teacher promotes continued training of teachers, 122(67.8%) agreed while 34(18.9%) disagreed, on the opinion that head teacher closely supervises teachers, 43(23.9%) agreed while 114(63.3%) disagreed, on school programs are planned, 118(65.6%) agreed while 41(22.8%) disagreed. On the opinion that teachers are involved in making rules and regulations in school, 118(65.6%) agreed and 41(22.8%) disagreed, concerning Head teachers helps teachers to deal with job related stresses caused by TFSE, 114(63.3%) agreed and 37(20.6%) disagreed, on Head teachers and teachers have common goals and aspirations, 124(68.5%) agreed and 36(19.9%) disagreed, finally on Head teacher sets achievable performance expectations, 143(79%) agreed and 27(14.9%) disagreed.

From the findings, it can be noted that head-teacher administrative skills largely influence the implementation of TFSE as supported by the majority of the respondents. Implementation of Tuition Free secondary education requires adequate skills especially for the management. Head-teachers, school administrators and teachers need various skills in order to cope with the demands of their management and teaching tasks.

These interpretations are in line with UNESCO (2001), whose observations are that the principals should constantly update through training on their financial management skills and expertise. The principal has a role to play in coordinating parents associations to raise funds for school developments and he is to assist them in estimating the cost of putting up schools' facilities. He adds that if principals lack proper training in financial management, they may experience problems when making school budget and accounting for expenditure in financing the school programmes by parents. Also, Chepkonga (2006) found out that head teachers needed training in key management areas such as accountancy, preparing budgets and general management while Kilonzo (2007) found out that head teachers needed training in management in order to achieve their educational objectives. In South Carolina, Kochamba and Murray (2008), in their study on critical leadership skills needed by principals for the achievement of school effectiveness found technical, human relations, conceptual and transformative leadership skills critical for the achievement of school effectiveness. In Hong Kong, Pang and Pisapia (2012), found a link between strategic thinking skills (a component of conceptual skill) and effectiveness of schools.

According to Okumbe (2001), education management has no choice as to whether to train employees or not. He observed that all employees regardless of their previous training, education and experience must be given further training and development. It was also clear that the school management tries to offer better working condition for the teachers. Professional reward systems for teachers, who manage to teach with least materials, are available that mentoring and support mechanism of teachers have been initiated by school administration. However, it was found that weak management system and decision making is causing the school education wastage; teachers' performance plans are not flexible.

The responses from teachers indicated that head teachers fair well on their administrative skills, this indicates that they have the requisite management skills in the study area since the management capacity is very important in the implementation of TFSE. Warner and Palfreyman (1996) said that to manage secondary schools, head teachers require strong professional management knowledge and support services for their success in the running of schools manage affairs of institutions. The study attributed that it to the fact that only a small percentage of the school managers and other personnel have attended courses in financial management. They are also in contrast with the findings by Chepkonga, 2006) who found that head teachers needed training in key management areas. The difference can be attributed to the management trainings organized by KESI for principals and deputies in the study area.

## 5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, TFSE is a worthy initiative as it led to increased enrolment, progression from one class to another and completion of secondary education despite the many challenges. The study established that more students were able to attend school as a result of free secondary education and this contributed to equity in secondary education.

The first objective was on teachers' perception on the influence of staffing on implementation of TFSE, it was concluded that the issue of staffing was a great problem noticed in most of the schools under the study as the teachers were not sufficient to handle the subjects at hand. The second objective on administrative skills for the head-teachers may compromise the quality of management and learning of schools. From the findings the study concluded that head-teachers play a vital role in the management of the school in general, however supervision and motivation of teachers has been highlighted by the teachers as inadequate, though the head-teachers disagree on this. Most head-teachers agreed that their administrative skills are sufficient enough to manage the schools adequately while teachers' opinions differ on this. These differences bring a gap in the management of schools and therefore greatly hinder the implementation of TFSE in secondary schools in Kenya.

The study made the following recommendations

- i) The government should organize more capacity building programmes for both head teachers and teachers to equip them with adequate skills and abilities to handle the emerging issues with the implementation of Tuition Free Secondary education.
- ii) Ways of motivating schools' managers and teachers should be devised to compensate them for the extra workloads they are undertaking to manage their schools.

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