

The Effect of Teachers' Motivation on Quality Teaching and Learning in Primary School in Kenya - A Case of Eldoret Municipality

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ABSTRACT

The declaration of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 saw an increase in the enrolment in primary school going children. However, experts suggest that the Free Primary Education has reduced the quality of education in public schools and increased the number of students who transfer from public to private schools in search of better performance. The objective of this study was to determine the effects of resource materials and facilities in primary schools in Kenya. A case of Eldoret Municipality. The study targeted all public primary schools in Eldoret Municipality and the study adopted the theory by Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder, (2002) that alternative schools are inspired to implement innovative approaches to teaching and learning given the background and various characteristics of students. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. Quality assurance officers, headteachers and teachers served as the informants of the study. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used as research tools. Out of 28 primary schools in the Municipality 50% of them were selected through stratified simple random sampling technique using wards as the stratum. The quality assurance officers and headteachers were selected purposively while teachers were selected through both stratified and simple random sampling technique. The study sample population was 132 respondents comprising of 14 headteachers, 70 teachers, 35 pupils and 3 quality assurances officers. Descriptive research methods were employed in data analysis which was then presented in the form of frequency distribution tables, graphs and pie charts. The study concluded that majority of the challenges facing the FPE programme are associated with lack of preparation, planning and consultation with the key stakeholders. The implementation of the policy was rushed through without carrying out situation analysis. There was neither clear strategy nor clear communication and the result is that a majority of the stakeholders were confused due to lack of clarity about the entire policy. For instance, after the political declaration of the policy, school heads were expected to implement it without prior preparations therefore school heads and education officers were caught unaware. The government itself was unprepared for the policy because it was started on a short notice. The study recommended that the fund allocated to each child/pupil per year has been criticized as being insufficient. Each child was allocated 1020 per year and therefore there is need to be increased substantially in order to improve the teaching- learning resources in schools. This calls for a review of the current disbursement of funds policy. The research findings will enable the stakeholders and policy makers in improving the methods as to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Keywords : Free Primary Education, Motivation, Performance Appraisal

I. INTRODUCTION

Kenya and many other developing countries are making rapid progress toward the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015, in part due to the elimination of school fees. Between 1999 and 2004 the number of new entrants to primary school in sub-Saharan Africa increased by more than 30 percent

(UNESCO, 2007). In Kenya alone, enrollment in primary schools rose from 5.9 million to 7.6 million between 2002 and 2005, an increase of nearly 30 percent, (UNESCO, 2006). This meant a consequent increment in number of pupils in Secondary schools and the recent free secondary education also facilitate an increment in students enrollment in secondary schools.

In the 1963 elections, when Kenya African National Union (KANU) became the ruling party, it published a manifesto entitled, what KANU Government offers you. This manifesto committed the party to offering a minimum of seven years of FPE. In the 1969 election manifesto the party again re-echoed its commitment to providing seven years of FPE. It was emphasized that it was the KANU Government's guiding principle to give priority in education programme to areas which were neglected during the colonial rule so that every Kenyan could share fully both in the process of nation building and enjoy the fruits of government labor. In the more sparsely populated areas, the government pledged to continue its programme of building primary schools so that every child in those districts which had a low-average enrollment would get an opportunity to attend school. The government fees remission programme was to be continued in favor of these areas in 1971, a presidential decree abolished tuition fees for the districts with unfavorable geographical conditions since these were said to make the populations in these areas poor.

A second presidential decree on December 1973 during the so-called "Ten Great Years of independence" claimed to have brought the country close to achieving UFPE. The declarative provided free education for children in standards 1-4 in all districts of the country. It went further and provided a uniform fee structure for those in standards 5-7 in the whole country. This fee was Kshs. 60/- per child per annum. Subsequent directives went further and abolished fees in primary education.

The aim of FPE programme was to provide more school opportunities, especially for the poor communities. The argument was that the payment of fees tended to prevent a large proportion of the children from attending school. The presidential decree providing free education in the early classes was one of the dramatic political pronouncements of the Kenyatta era since it took planners and the public unaware. The financial implications as well as the various methods for its introduction were not subjected to close scrutiny. In January 1974, the Ministry of Education had to rethink its priorities in order to cope with the staggering rise of pupil enrollment. Enrollment in standard one rose by a million above the estimated figure of about 400,000. The total enrollment figure for standard one to six increased from 1.8 million in 1973 to nearly 2.8 million in January 1974.

At the time of the abolition of school fees no counter measures were announced about how to replace the lost revenue. Initially, primary schools were at a loss as to what they could do about the lost revenue, and after failing to get clear directives, schools management committees resorted to raising school revenue under the guise of a "building levy." Ostensibly this was aimed at putting up new facilities. With the enlarged enrollment, a country-wide building programme had to be launched to cope with extra classes. Many schools were not aware of the new places needed. In some schools as many as five extra streams came into being. The building levy varied from one district to another, but in most cases, it turned out to be higher than the school fees charged prior to the decree. This frustrated many parents who had little alternative but to withdraw their children.

Initially, in most districts, except those in the ASAL (Arid and Semi-Arid Lands), enrollment almost doubled showing a radical change during the 1973-1974 period. After that the situation reverted to what it had been before. It was estimated that around one to two million school age children did not continue attending school after the decree. The explanation was that many of the children who had enrolled dropped out, following the introduction of the building levy. Enrollments, even in districts that had experienced large infusions of new children, reverted to the situation before 1973.

The high dropout rates was a response, not only to the very high levies, but also to the quality of education that was being offered following the government intervention. As a result of high enrollments, there was overcrowding in classes and the supply of teaching and learning materials underwent a severe strain. Since the early 1970s their distribution had been centralized through the Kenya Equipment Scheme; it now became difficult to dispatch the necessary materials and equipment to most of the primary schools. Distribution problems were compounded by the variety of the topography and the long distances. Consequently, many of the schools went without basic teaching and learning materials for greater part of 1974.

With regard to the teaching force, at the time of the pronouncement, the country was already short of properly trained teachers. In 1973, the teaching force stood at 56,000 teachers, out of whom 12,600 were professionally unqualified. In 1974, an additional

25,000 teachers were needed for the new classes. By 1975, the number of unqualified teachers stood at 40,000, out of a teaching force of 90,000 teachers.

With such teaching environment, high dropout rates in primary education became inevitable. The newly instituted building fund, which was meant to be a purely spontaneous reaction to an emergency, became a permanent feature. Beyond the recruitment of more unqualified teachers, the government played a very minor role in the implementation of FPE. If anything, it was satisfied that school committees had successfully implemented the programme with minimal costs on its part. Overall, the effect of government intervention in primary education and the implications arising out of it made primary education much more expensive than before.

During the 2002 general elections, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) made the provision of free primary education part of its election manifesto. Following its victory, on January 6, 2003 the Minister for Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) launched the FPE to fulfill NARC's election pledge. Fees and levies for tuition in primary education were abolished as the government and development partners were to meet the cost of basic teaching and learning materials as well as wages for critical non-teaching staff and co-curricular activities. The government and development partners were to pay Kshs 1,020 for each primary child in that year. The FPE did not require parents and communities to build new schools, but they were to refurbish and use existing facilities such as community and religious buildings. If they wished to charge additional levies, school heads and committees had to obtain approval from the MoEST. This request had to be sent to the District Education Board (DEB) by the Area Education Officer, after a consensus among parents through the Provincial Director of Education, a fairly lengthy and tedious process.

Before the NARC pronouncement the number of primary schools in the country had increased steadily from 14,864 in 1990 to 18,901 in 2001/2 representing a 27.2% increase. Enrollment in absolute terms had also gone up from 5,392,319 to 6,314,726, being a 17.1% rise over the same period. The percentage of girls' enrollment also increased in the same period to 49.3%, implying that gender parity in enrollment in primary schools at the national level had nearly been achieved. Primary School Net Enrollment Ratios (NERs),

however, showed a very disturbing picture in the North Eastern Province (mainly inhabited by Pastoralist communities) where boys constituted 16.5% and girls 9.8%, with an average of 13.4% for the province.

Following the NARC intervention in January 2003, it was estimated that the NER rose from around 6,314,726 to 7,614,326 by the end of the year, representing a 22.3% increase nationally. It was also estimated that another three million children were not enrolled in school. Despite the various logistical problems that seem to be hampering a successful implementation of the FPE, the policy sounds commendable as it has meant cushioning children from poor socio-economic backgrounds, especially girls from failing to participate in primary education or dropping out of school due to lack of fees and other school levies. Overall, the policy intervention could prove determinative in the efforts to achieve UPE and EFA.

However, while FPE has increased participation, it has at the same time created considerable problems. It has exacerbated the problem of teaching and learning facilities. As a result of the high influx of new pupils, classrooms are congested. Many of the preliminary surveys seem to show that the existing facilities make a mockery of the FSEP. Many School Management Committees (SMC) feel that they are seriously constrained to improve the state of learning facilities due to the government's ban on school levies. At the same time, conditions laid down to request for concessions to institute levies are so cumbersome that they hesitate to embark on the process.

As a result of FPE, the situation of the teaching force in most of the district is generally bad. Teachers complain of increased pupil teacher ratios. Many primary schools are understaffed as a result of the free primary education programme. This does not augur well for the quality of education being delivered. Many SMCs are of the opinion that as a result on the ban of levies, they are unable to recruit extra teachers through the PTAs and this has also seriously affected the pre-school units.

During the employees' appraisal their performance is determined; this is one of the most decisive components of personnel appraisal and the compensation system. Performance appraisal enables to determine whether the employees' performance is in correspondence with established objectives and it is primarily based on the appraisal of employees work results and activity

(behavior), also potential (skills, abilities and characteristics). To determine the performance, diverse appraisal methods and their combinations are used. During the appraisal process primarily work results are valued that create preconditions for their improvement in the future and enable to differentiate the compensation by on one hand diminishing equalization and on the other hand increasing fair compensation. With the determination of work results, several problems occur that are due to the change towards more dynamic and universal tasks and as a result of which it is not always possible to determine the work results and compare them. The emphasis on individual work results also reduces the sense of teamwork and undermines the interests of a group as a whole, (Yager, 2000)

Payment by results is an effective form of labor compensation by which employees are paid according to their performance. Objective performance appraisal should not concentrate on evaluating employee's personal traits, but their job performance towards goals and it should be the basis for determining compensation (Nelson, 2000). In case of payment by results, concrete work criteria are established which requires precise measuring and evaluation of accomplishment. Payment by results presumes objective appraisal of work performance (Cole, 1997). Only the use of fair and measurable criteria enables to determine fair compensation, strengthen the connection between the results and payment and thus increase the motivation of the employees (Baron, 1999). The method's efficiency of application depends on the choice of criteria for performance appraisal and their connection with work, which is usually first of all the amount and quality of the concrete work in different segments of activities and various financially measurable indicators. A highly motivated person puts in the maximum effort in his or her job. Several factors produce motivation and job satisfaction. Young (1988) examined the job satisfaction of Californian public school teachers in the USA and found that one of the overall job predictors was the salary one earned from it. Studies by Lockheed et al. (1991) indicated that lack of motivation and professional commitment produce poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affect the performance of students academically. This study will seek to establish how teachers motivation affects the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in the area of study.

II. METHODS AND MATERIAL

The study adopted the theory by Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder, (2002) that alternative schools are inspired to implement innovative approaches to teaching and learning given the background and various characteristics of students. The study employed descriptive research survey design where variables were investigated without any manipulation or alteration and descriptive methodologies were used. Inferences about relations among variables are made, without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables (Patton, 2002).

The study targeted public primary schools in Eldoret Municipality. Head teachers and teachers served as the main informants of the study. In addition, interviews were held with District Education Officers (DEO's). The target population included all the public primary schools in Eldoret Municipality. There are a total of 28 public primary schools. The study targeted 14 schools which is 50% of the schools. All the 3 Municipality quality assurance officers and all the 14 headteachers were selected purposively. Four teachers; 2 male and 2 female were selected per school to yield 56 teachers. A mixture of both stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling were employed.

The main research instrument that was used in this study were questionnaires and interview schedules. In developing the questionnaire items, the fixed choice and open-ended formats of the item were used. Interview schedules were also used to solicit more information on deployment of teachers from education officers in the district. The interviews were administered to the head teachers while the questionnaires were administered to the teachers and pupils. The content validity of the research instruments was also determined. The test-retest method was used to test reliability. To determine the coefficient of reliability, Pearson product moment formula was used. A correlation coefficient of 0.5 was considered reliable for the study. Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Descriptive methods were employed and data presented in the form of frequency distribution tables, graphs and pie charts that facilitated description and explanation of the study findings. SPSS program was used to generate frequency distribution tables. Data from interviews was analyzed descriptively based on emerging themes.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings and Discussions

1. Trend in performance.

The study sought to find what has been the trend in performance of one teaching a subject after implementation of FPE and the majority 68(51.5%) indicated it is deteriorating 45(34.1%) indicated it is constant, 10(7.6%) indicated it is improving and 9(6.8%) said they can't tell.

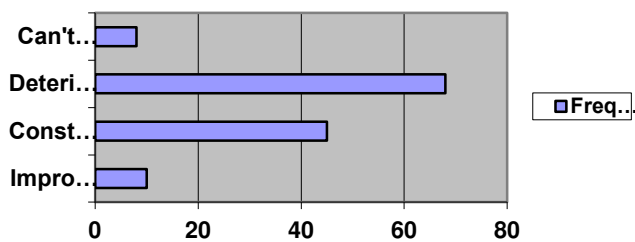


Figure 1. Trend in performance

Source: Author 2012

This implies that performance is deteriorating in the subjects that the teachers are involved in. This may be due to the numbers of the learners that one is handling in a class.

2. Motivational Strategies

The study sought to find out which motivational strategies drives them to accomplish the tasks and the majority 66(50.0%) indicated need for achievement, 24(18.2%) indicated pay/salaries increase with 23(17.4%) said promotion opportunities and 19(14.4%) stated training opportunities.

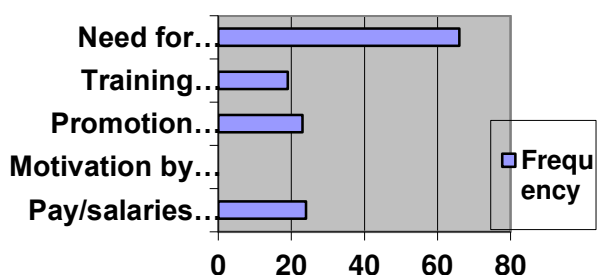


Figure 2 : Motivational Strategies.

Source: Author 2012

This implies that the teachers need for achievement drives them most therefore motivation towards achievement should be positively reinforced.

3. School location.

The study sought to find out if the location of the school has any influence on the quality of teaching and learning and the majority 84(63.6%) stated yes, 34(25.7%) stated no and 14(10.6%) had no idea.

Table 1: School location.

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	84	63.6
No	34	25.7
Have no idea	14	10.6
Total	132	100.0

Source: Author 2012

From Table: 1 It's evident that 63.6% agree that the schools location has influence on the quality of teaching and 25.7% did not agree. This implies that where the schools is located has a great influence on the quality of teaching.

4. Motivated teachers

The study sought to know if the respondents are motivated by teaching in a certain areas or not and most 62(46.9%) indicated high income area, 43(32.5%) indicated urban areas, 16(12.1%) stated middle income areas and 11(8.3%) stated rural areas

Table 2: Motivated Teachers

	Frequency	Percent
Low income areas	0	0.0
Middle income areas	16	12.1
High income areas	62	46.9
Urban areas	43	32.5
Rural areas	11	8.3
Total	132	100.0

Source: Author 2012

This implies that most teachers are motivated more while working in high income areas this could be due to the fact that most schools in such areas have adequate learning and teaching facilities.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concludes that teachers motivation is low due to the large number of the pupils enrolled thus they tend to work long and hard hours. This in the long run affects the pupil's performance and the teacher's preference to work in urban schools. The government should provide an appropriate working environment to increase teacher's motivation. This is through the release of FPE funds early to schools and appropriately rewarding teachers who work in hardship situations.

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