

AN EXAMINATION OF FACTORS DETERMINING ACCESS TO FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION IN MITABONI ZONE KATHIANI DIVISION, MACHAKOS DISTRICT, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

With the re-introduction of the Free Primary Education (FPE) by the Kenyan Government in January 2003, it was expected that all children of Primary school going age would be enrolled in school. But, after the re-introduction of FPE there are still an estimated 2 million children and youth who remain out of school. This raises concern. The purpose of the study was to examine the factors determining access to FPE in Mitaboni zone, Kathiani division, Machakos district, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to: find out the factors determining access to FPE; investigate on the effect of factors on FPE and to establish the cause of action to be taken. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The Production Function Theory was used in the study. The units of analysis were the Primary schools. Data was analyzed using descriptive techniques and zero order correlation analysis. The findings of the study showed that the factors determining access in FPE in Mitaboni zone were: school financial obligations, poverty and malnutrition, cultural factors overcrowded classes, pregnancies, early marriages and child labour demands. It was discovered that the multiple correlation, between the independent variables and the FPE was 0.999 and the coefficient of multiple determination, R^2 , was 0.997. Conclusions drawn from the study showed that FPE in Mitaboni zone is yet to be realized. It was recommended that the Government should provide relevant curriculum, physical facilities and bear all the costs of Primary education, double streaming of schools and punishing of Parents who do not take their children to school. There is a corresponding need for more research in this area in other zones and similar comparative study between urban and rural zones.

Key Words:-Access, Completion, Dropout, Enrolment, Free Primary Education, and Retention.

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The Government of Kenya re-introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) in January 2003 with the commitment of realizing UPE by 2005, ahead of the stipulated time frame for achieving the EFA goals and MDGs (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Under the policy of FPE, all fees and other levies for Primary education, that have for decades kept a large number of children and youth out of school, were abolished. Although primary school enrolment has grown through the years; 891,533 by 1963; 4,728,201 by 1983; 7.2 million by 2003, and the number of Public Primary Schools increased from 6,058 in 1963 to 17,600 in 2003, there has also been an increasing number of school-going age children who have been out of school in the last decade. However, this situation has changed with the re-introduction of FPE. Despite the upsurge in Primary level enrolment, an estimated 2 million children and youth still remain out of the school system (ibid.). This raises concern because it is

assumed that FPE will be virtually UPE, having a net enrolment ratio (NER) of 95% and above, where NER excludes children who are younger or older than a country's official school-age group (6-13 years for primary school in Kenya), since lack of fees is the principal reason for the shortfall in school enrolments (Republic of Kenya, 1964). In 2004, the Minister for Education explained that the government had made major strides in the provision of FPE and it expected more children to join Primary schools. He further noted that unfortunately, the FPE had not taken root in some areas and he singled out parents from ASALS as notorious in failing to send their children to attend school. This negates the aim of the FPE programme; to provide more school opportunities, especially to the poor communities. The argument was that the payment of school fees tended to prevent a large portion of school children from attending school.

It was estimated that more than 35% of the school-age population were not getting any Primary education. In 1974, enrolment in standard 1 to 4 rose by 1 million- from 1.8 million in 1973 to nearly 2.8 million in 1974. Despite this rise, it was estimated that another 1 to 2 million children of primary school going age were still not attending school in 1974, especially in ASAL districts where enrolments still remained low (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985; Sifuna, 1990). In Africa, enrolment at the primary school level stood at 72% by 2002 (UNESCO, 2002). This implies that despite the efforts being made for realization of UPE by various nations, there still exist various hindrances to access at this level of education.

A study by Levin and Lockheed (1989) noted that schools in developing countries faced problems of relatively low school participation, in terms of enrolment of eligible age groups; low levels of school completion; low levels of achievement. Kenya is also faced with several problems in education primarily related to decline in enrolment, completion rates, financial levies which are of critical concern (Republic of Kenya, 1998). The UNESCO (2002) noted that, while significant progress has been made in providing EFA, gender disparities continue to persist in enrolment, literacy, access and quality of education.

A study by Kerre and Obura (1992) concurred with this view by indicating that, despite laudable efforts by the government in striving to provide EFA in Kenya, there are still pockets of non-schooled children- who become non-schooled and illiterate adults. Children who are in this category who are out of school are mostly from the disadvantaged groups; street children; child labourers; abandoned, neglected and battered children, juvenile drug users and traffickers; children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS; adolescent mothers; children living in remote and hard to reach areas; children subjected to harmful cultural practices; children of refugees and children in commercial sex exploitation (Republic of Kenya, 2003). This places a heavy constraint on development efforts when sizeable proportions of the population are not able to benefit from modern progress and when development itself is held back through the inevitably less than full participation of illiterate citizens in the nation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The fact that there are children, of primary school going age, who are not enrolled in school even after the re-introduction of FPE in Kenya, draws a lot of concern. This is because of the importance attached to Primary education; it is the one that is generally relied upon to prepare the youth for literacy and acts as a basis for future training to enable the recipients participate in nation building. It is with this background that a need arose to examine the factors determining access to FPE in Mitaboni zone of Kathiani division, Machakos district, Kenya. The study therefore intends to find out whether FPE has led to UPE, and, if not, establish the factors that could be hindering the universalisation of primary education.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The Study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- (i) Determine the factors influencing access in primary education
- (ii) Establish the effect of factors determining access in Primary education on FPE
- (iii) Find out the action being taken to attain full participation of pupils of School going age in FPE

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- (i) What are the factors determining access to FPE in Mitaboni zone?
- (ii) What is the effect of factors determining access in primary education on FPE?
- (iii) What action is being taken to attain full participation of pupils of school going age?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study was significant in the following respects:

- (i) Primary education policy makers and planners may identify the constraints facing access to FPE, factors hindering provision of primary education and those leading to non-enrolment in and dropping out of Primary education for corrective action
- (ii) Primary education planners may maximize enrolment at this level through the suggestions that will be gathered on the steps that could be taken to ensure full enrolment
- (iii) May stimulate similar studies in other parts of the country and on other aspects of primary education such as relevance, equity and quality.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.5.1 Scope of the Study

The study covered only primary Schools in Mitaboni zone, Kathiani division, Machakos district, Kenya.

1.5.2 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in the following ways:

- (i) It covered only a single zone, hence its findings may be generalized only to the zone
- (ii) The study only looked at the access of FPE while leaving out other aspects such as quality, relevance and equity;
- (iii) The study was limited to only seven independent variables of the study

1.6 Theoretical Framework of the study

The Theoretical Framework of the study was the Production Function Theory. It looks at how one can combine a given set of inputs to produce outputs. In the case of this study, the factors determining access to FPE are inputs while FPE is output. Psacharopoulos (1985) points out that the relationship between inputs and outputs of education is highly complex since many factors determine educational outcomes. He derives a simple production function for education as:

$$A=f(T, B, E)..... (i)$$

Where A is Achievement, T is teacher-pupils ratio, B is Books and other materials, E is Equipment. Experience shows, however, that the production function is far more complex than this and includes many more variables.

In determining the optimal level of utilization of educational resources in Primary education, it is vital to first establish the long run cost curve. Suppose the total input in any school unit i.e. the number of pupils in school in a given year is given by;

$$Q=f(m_1, m_2)\dots\dots\dots(ii)$$

Where,

Q_1 =total output

M_1 =total number of pupils in school in a specific year

M_2 =the accessibility factors, which are the quality index of the Primary schools

The study, however, examined the factors determining access to FPE and rewriting equation (ii) in regression model, the following equation is formed:

$$F= a+b_1x_1+b_2x_2+ b_3x_3 +b_4x_4+b_5x_5+b_6x_6+b_7x_7\dots\dots\dots bnx_n\dots\dots\dots(iii)$$

Where;

F, is the dependent variable, FPE

a is the constant, y- intercept

b_1 to b_n are the partial regression co-efficients.

X_1 to x_n are the independent factors, factors determining access in FPE namely:

X_1 -School financial obligation

X_2 - Poverty and malnutrition

X_3 -Cultural factors affecting girls more than boys

X_4 -Overcrowded classes

X_5 - Pregnancies

X_6 -Early marriages

X_7 . Child labour demands

X_n -Undefined factors which determine FPE.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried out on the basis of the following assumptions:

- (i) The official age of primary school going children is between 6 and 13 years
- (ii) All children of school going age are enrolled in school
- (iii) The government has put everything in place to ensure that all children of primary school going age are enrolled in school
- (iv) Male and female children have equal access to Primary education

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Access refers to the ability of primary school going age pupils fully participating in the learning process

Completion refers to the successful passage through a level of education in which one is enrolled

Dropout refers to leaving school before the completion of a given stage of education.

Enrolment refers to the number of pupils registered in school for the purpose of learning

Free Primary Education refers to the first level of formal education ranging from classes one to eight believed to be fully financially sponsored by the Government

Retention refers to the ability of a given level of education to have all students enrolled at the beginning of the education cycle to stay in school until completion of the cycle.

2.0 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The design was chosen because it enabled a research to gather evidence relating to the current status of access FPE.

2.1 Area of Study

The study covered Mitaboni zone of Kathiani Division, Machakos District, Kenya. It is located to the East of Machakos town 27 kilometers from Machakos and is located north east of Nairobi, 65 kilometers away. The zone has a total area of 15.8 km² and is surrounded by Kathiani, Kaewa and Iveti zones. It has a total population of 9129 people per km² with 4331 males and 4798 females (Kathiani Division office.). The zone has got 30 secondary schools with a total population of 2150 students, 2 youth polytechnics. There are 1560 boys and 2285 girls and 18 Primary schools in the zone. The total number of K.C.P.E candidates in the year 2011 was 654 in these Primary schools and a total of 168 teachers. The topography of the zone is mostly dissected by ridges, hills and a rolling topography and lies between 800-1100m above sea level.

2.2 Study Population

According to Kathiani Division office, the zone had a total of 18 primary schools with a total of 654 pupils in class eight and 192 class teachers. Therefore, the study population constituted 18 head teachers 654 pupils in class eight and 4 sub-chiefs in the zone.

Table 1:

List Of Primary Schools In Mitaboni Zone And Enrolment Of Class Eight Pupils.

Schs.	Zonal enrolment	Class eight Enrl.	Sample
1. Mitaboni	213	42	14
2. King'ong'oi	167	33	11
3. Kwamunda	181	46	6
4. Ngiini	305	39	13
5. Muonyweni	177	48	16
6. Mwang'a	190	24	8
7. Kalambya	166	36	12
8. Kalikya	201	30	10
9. Kitulu	199	38	13
10. Komarock	237	28	10
11. Manzoni	149	44	14
12. Muumbuni	287	20	7
13. Kasovya	194	25	9
14. Thinu	171	50	17
15. Kavete	286	32	11
16. Mathunya	241	39	13
17. Kwale	254	33	11
18. Kisekini	227	47	16
Grand total	3845	654	211

Source: Mitaboni Education Zone 2011.

2.3 Sample and sampling techniques

Saturated, stratified random and purposeful samplings were used to pick out a sample of the study. Since there were 18 primary schools, 18 head teachers were by extension chosen into the sample of study hence saturated sampling was used. Stratified random sampling was used to select 211 pupils of class eight and purposeful sampling was used to select 2 sub-chiefs into the sample.

2.4 Methods of data collection

Different questionnaires were used to elicit information from the respondents of the Study: Questionnaire for Head Teachers (QHS), Questionnaire for Sub-chiefs (QSC) and Questionnaire For Pupils (QP). The items which appeared in the questionnaires were: Government policy, Gender factors, Geographical factors, socio-cultural factors and costs of education which sought to examine the factors determining access on FPE on in Mitaboni zone, Kathiani division, Machakos district, Kenya. The questionnaires also sought for the way forward in case of inaccessibility on FPE .

2.5 Development of research instruments

The questionnaires for the study were prepared and evaluated on their suitability in collecting data. Piloting was also done in 3 schools outside the zone to identify any shortcomings or ambiguous items in the questionnaires. They were then revised and were ready for use.

2.6 Validity and Reliability of the instruments

Having developed the Questionnaires and having done the pilot study ensured that the validity and reliability of the research instruments were addressed.

3.0 Methods of data analysis

The data collected using the filled in questionnaires was thoroughly inspected and coded manually to allow the use of descriptive statistics. The data obtained by the use of the head teachers questionnaire was employed for most of the analysis while that of the sub-chiefs and pupils was used to confirm the data given by head teachers. The data was initially organized into percentages and averages obtained for interpretation purposes.

The methods of data analysis employed in the study were:

- a) Pearson's product moment method
- b) Stepwise linear multiple regression method

The above methods were found worth using because the study involved cause-effect relationships between the dependent and independent variables of the study. Since the study involved many variables and sought to analyze the data quantitatively, the Statistical Packages For Social Sciences (SPSS 12.0 version) was used to calculate the sample statistics.

4.0 Results and discussion

4.1.1 Data from head teachers' responses on the questionnaire.

Questionnaires were administered to all head teachers of the sampled schools and collected by the researcher on the same day of the visit or on dates agreed upon between the head teacher and the researcher. All 18 questionnaires were collected and analyzed. It was revealed that 55.56% of the head teachers had been head teachers of the schools under study between 1-5 years; 27.77% between 6-10 years while 16.60% over a period of 10 years as shown in the table below.

**Table 2: Period Head Teacher Had Served Schools
N=18**

School under study			other schools	
Period	No. of responses	%	No. of responses	%
1-5 years	10	55.56	3	16.66
6-10 years	5	27.77	8	44.44
Over 10 years	3	16.66	7	38.88

Source: Responses From Sample.

The researcher sought this information to establish whether head teachers had experience to make them competent enough to handle the questions. Since many teachers had served in the current stations at least 5 years. It was probably evident enough of acquiring the necessary experience to interpret the school data base needed by the researcher.

Asked about commenting on the general enrollment in the school, the head teachers revealed the following:

**Table 3: Head Teachers Comments on the General Enrolment in School
N=18**

Comment	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Enrolment is increasing in Every class	4	22.22
Enrolment is decreasing in every Class	0	0
Enrolment is increasing in some Classes	14	77.77
Enrolment is decreasing in some Classes	0	0
Enrolment is static	0	0

Source: Responses From Sample

It was clear that the enrolment was increasing in some classes as evidenced by 77.77%. An indication that despite the FPE, many students were still at home and therefore in some schools the enrolment had an upward trend. About the questions of gender parity in enrolment, many head teachers reported that the girls enrolment was more than the boys enrolment (68%) while 32% indicated that the boys were more than girls. The issue of gender parity has to be addressed to meet the MDG. The head teachers were asked to give the costs incurred by parents/guardians in meeting the incurred by parents /guardians in meeting the costs of educating their children. Their responses are recorded in table four below:

Table 4: Primary Education Financial Costs Incurred By Parents/Guardians In Meeting The Costs Of Educating Their Children In 2009

N-18		
Financial costs	No. of response	% of responses
Development fund	18	100.00
Stationery	18	100.00
Purchase of tables	9	50.00
Purchase of school uniforms	18	100.00
Enrolments for non-TSC teachers	13	72.22
Internal examinations costs	18	100.00
Costs for extra curricular activities	18	100.00

Source : Responses From Sample

It was evident that Primary education was still characterized by a variety of costs, Development Fund, stationery, school uniforms, internal examinations, costs for extra-curricular activities as shown by 100% response from head teachers, emoluments of non-TSC teachers and purchase of textbooks as evidenced by 72% and 50% responses. When asked to provide reasons why students drop out of school despite the FPE, the head teachers gave the following responses.

Table 5: Reasons for Dropping Out Of School despite FPE

N-18		
Reasons for Drop-out of schools	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Unable to meet school financial Obligations	9	50.00
Poverty and malnutrition	16	88.88
Cultural factors which affect girls Than boys	10	55.55
Overcrowded classes	5	27.77
Pregnancies	13	72.22
Early marriages	4	22.22
Child labour demands	6	33.33

Source: Responses from Sample

The head teachers indicated that 50% of the students dropped out because of being unable to meet school financial obligations, 88.88% due to poverty and malnutrition, 55.55% due to cultural factors which affect girls more than boys, 27.77% due to overcrowded classes, 72.22% due to pregnancy, 22.22% drop-out as a result of early marriages and 33.33% due to child labour demands. The above factors were displayed in a form of histogram as shown below:

Histogram Showing Magnitude of % On Access In FPE In Mitaboni Zone

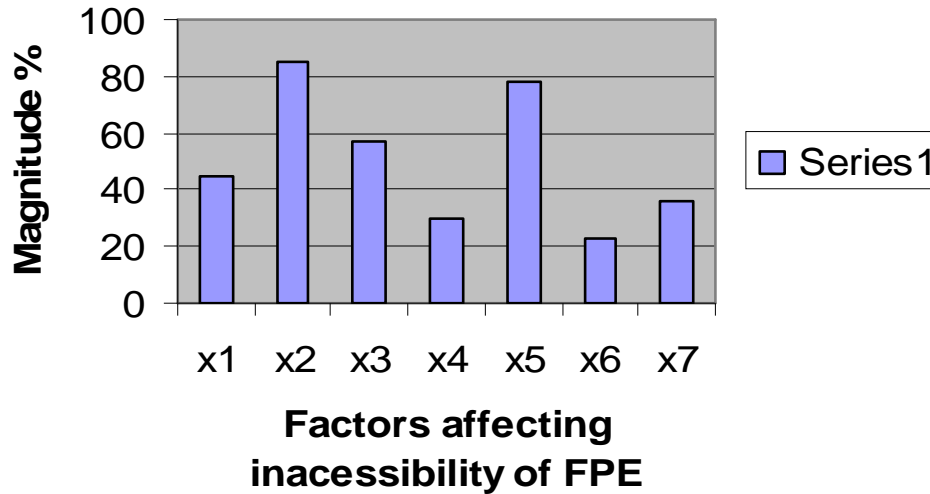


Fig.1 Histogram showing magnitude of factors affecting inaccessibility of FPE in Mitaboni zone.

Source: Constructed From Head Teacher Responses.

Legend:

- X₁-School Financial Obligations
- X₂-Poverty and Malnutrition
- X₃-Cultural Factors Affecting Girls More Than Boys
- X₄-Overcrowded Classes
- X₅-Pregnancies
- X₆-Early Marriages
- X₇-Child Labour Demands

It can be realized at this level that primary education was never “Free” in Mitaboni zone due to these varying factors. To find out the contribution of each of these factors (reasons) to inaccessibility of FPE in Mitaboni zone, correlation analysis was done on these variables as shown below:

Table 6: Stepwise linear multiple regression analysis of factors determining accessibility of FPE in Mitaboni zone.

N-18					
Multiple	0.999				
R.square (R ₂)	0.997				
Standard error					
Of the estimates	0.0055				
Analysis of variance					
	DF	Sum of squares		mean squares	
Regression	7	1.1680		0.1950	
Residual	14	0.0035		3.031E-05	
F	6425.513				
Sig F	0.000				
Variables in equation					
	Coefficients				
				
	B	Std error	BETA	T	Sig T
Constant	1.568E-03	0.001		1.673	0.097
SCH .Financial obligation(X ₁)	0.992	0.012	0.471	83.115	0.000
Poverty and Malnutrition (X ₂)	1.017	0.076	0.076	13.371	0.000
Cultural Factors(X ₃)	0.987	0.015	0.342	63.895	0.000
Overcrowded class(X ₄)	0.990	0.032	0.0197	31.148	0.000
Pregnancies(x ₅)	1.007	0.029	0.190	34.655	0.000
Early Marriages (X ₆)	0.980	0.019	0.318	51.698	0.000
Child labour demands (x ₇)	0.771	0.042	0.036	47.08	0.000

Source: worked out from head teachers data

The table shows that the multiple R was 0.999, implying that the correlation between FPE and the seven factors determining FPE was very high. The co-efficient of multiple determination, the multiple R² was 0.997.

Therefore, the independent variables in the study accounted for 99.7% of the variability in FPE amongst pupils in Mitaboni zone. The unexplained variations, 0.3% could be due to other causal factors not included in the analysis and /or errors incurred in data collection. The Beta column indicated the values of the unstandardized regression co-efficients. The Beta value of school financial obligations (x₁) was 0.992. This meant that a difference of one standard deviation in school financial obligations was predicted to cause a difference of 0.992 standard deviation on FPE. Since the regression co-efficient was positive, it was concluded that primary schools with high demands for school financial obligations led to more inaccessibility in FPE. It could be concluded that 1% decrease in school financial obligations would increase accessibility in FPE in the zone by 0.992%. The same is true for the independent variables x₂, x₃, x₄, x₅, x₆. From the stepwise linear regression analysis results, the study equation would be written mathematically as: $F = 0.002 + 0.992x_1 + 0.017x_2 + 0.987x_3 + 0.990x_4 + 1.007x_5 + 0.980x_6 + 0.771x_7 + \dots \dots \dots (i)$

Asked about the action they recommended to arrest the cases of pupils' non-attendance of schools, the head teachers gave the following responses:

**Table 7: Action Recommended Arresting The Cases Of Pupils Non-Attendance Of School
N=18**

Action	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Provide relevant curriculum	15	83.33
Government to provide physical facilities	18	100.00
Government to beat the costs of primary education	18	100.00
Parents/guardian who do not take their children to school	12	66.66
Deal with sex pests more harshly	5	27.77
Address issue of girl female role model	9	50.00
Double streaming of schools and consolidation of schools	8	44.44

Source: Responses from Sample

It is evident that to do away with non-attendance of pupils in Mitaboni zone, the Government should provide physical facilities & bear costs of Primary education as shown by 100% response for head teachers, provide curriculum which is relevant (83.33%), punish parents/ guardians who do not take their children to school (66.66%), deal with sex pests more harshly 27.77%; address girl female role model issue and double streaming and consolidation of schools as shown by 50% 44.44% respectively.

4.1.2 Data From The Sub-Chiefs Responses On Questionnaires

Asked about how long they have been sub-chiefs in their various sub-locations, the two sub-chiefs indicated that they had served over 7 years an indication that they were better places to provide reliable responses. When the sub-chiefs were asked to provide reasons for the non-attendance of pupils at school, they gave the responses tabled below:

**Table 8; Reasons of Non-attendance at School As Given By Sub-Chiefs
n=2**

Responses	no.of respondents	% of respondents
Lack of adequate school places	2	100.00
Lack of demand for education	2	100.00
Irrelevant curriculum	2	100.00
Inavailability of schools	2	100.00
Ignorance of parents on importance of educating their children	1	50.00
Suspensions and expulsions from school	1	50.00
child labour	2	100.00

Source: Response From Sample.

Lack of adequate school places and demand for education, irrelevant curriculum and unavailability of schools, child labour demands were reasons for non-attendance of pupils at schools as given by the sub-chiefs with 100% response.

Ignorance of parents on importance of educating their children, and suspension and expulsion from school as evidenced by 50% of the responses respectively.

Probed about the measures the sub-chiefs had put in place to contain the problem of non-attendance of pupils in their areas of jurisdiction, the sub-chiefs revealed that they force parents/guardians through their “Barazas”(60%) even force some parents or guardians to do hard labour/public labour (90%).

4.1.3 Data From The Pupils Response On Questionnaires.

The pupils were asked to provide the number of students who had joined their respective classes since they joined class one. The table below shows their responses:

Table 9. Pupils Responses On Number Of Students Who Had Joined Them Since Class One.
n=211

Statement	No. of respondents	% of responses
More than 5	211	100.00
Less than 5	125	59.24
Not applicable	67	31.75

Source: Responses From Sample

The pupils showed that more than 5 pupils had joined them since class one as evidenced by 100% responses, some pupils indicated less than 5 pupils had joined them as evidenced by 59.24% while 31.75% Of the pupils did not respond to the statement.

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Asked about reasons behind drop-out of their colleagues from school, the pupils gave the following responses:

Table 10. Pupils Reasons for Dropping Out Of Their Colleagues from School.
n=211

Reasons	no. of respondents	% of responses
Early marriages	211	100.00
Canning	50	23.70
Pregnancies	183	86.73
Child labour demands	107	50.71
Difficult concepts taught	148	70.14
Transfer to other schools	78	36.97
Costs of primary education	100	47.39

Source: Responses from Sample

All students in the sampled schools (100%) indicated that early marriages is the major reasons determining access to FPE, 23.70% indicated canning as the least reason for the inaccessibility of pupils in FPE. Other reasons advanced by pupils were pregnancies. 86.73%, child labour demands 50.71%, difficult concepts taught 70.14%, transfer to other schools, 36.97% and costs associated with primary education 47.39%.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The purpose of the study was to examine the factors determining access on FPE in Mitaboni zone, Kathiani division of Machakos district, Kenya. Yet three questions needed to be explained as the core of the study: what were the factors determining access to FPE in Mitaboni zone? What was the effect of these factors on access to Free Primary Education? What actions need to be taken to attain full participation of pupils of school-going age in primary education?

The research found out the following factors as being the main determinants in access to FPE in Mitaboni zone:

- (i) Financial levies
- (ii) Poverty and malnutrition
- (iii) Cultural factors which affect girls more than boys
- (iv) Overcrowded classes
- (v) Pregnancies
- (vi) Early marriages
- (vii) Child labour demands
- (viii) Irrelevant curriculum
- (ix) Lack of demand for education
- (x) Ignorance of parents on importance of educating their children
- (xi) Suspension and expulsions from school
- (xii) Canning
- (xiii) Difficult concepts taught

From the stepwise multiple regression analysis it was discovered that the correlation, R , between the independent Variables of the study and access to FPE to be 0.999. The co-efficient of multiple determination R^2 , was 0.997.

This meant that the factors in the study accounted for 99.7% variability in accessibility in FPE in Mitaboni zone. The unexplained variations, 0.3% could have been due to other causal factors not included in the analysis and/or errors incurred in data collection.

The Beta for school financial obligations was 0.992%. This meant that 1% increase in financial demands of a school could lead to 0.992% inaccessibility in FPE. The Beta value for poverty and malnutrition, cultural factors affecting girls more than boys; overcrowded classes, pregnancies, early marriages, Child labour demands were 0.17%, 0.987%, 0.990%, 1.007% and 0.771% respectively.

The multiple regression equation for the research could be written as:

$$F=0.002 +0.992X_1 +0.017X_2 +0.987X_3+0.990X_4+1.007X_5+0.980X_6+0.771X_7.$$

5.2 Recommendations

It was recommended that the action needed to deal with the inaccessibility of FPE were:

- (i) Provide relevant curriculum
- (ii) Government to provide physical facilities
- (iii) Government to bear all the costs of primary education
- (iv) Punish parents who do not take their children to school
- (v) Deal with sex pests more harshly
- (vi) Address issue of girl female role model
- (vii) Double streaming and consolidation of schools.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research study, it was concluded that FPE in Mitaboni zone is yet to be realized. There are quite a number of pupils of school going age who have dropped out of school. Educational stake holders should do their part with a bid of promoting the realization of full participation in FPE. On one hand, the government ought to make primary education really “Free” in the strict sense of the word, on the other hand, parents/guardians should not sit on the fence but play their positive roles in enhancing the government’s efforts of moving toward providing of a really FPE.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings of the study, the following issues were deemed necessary for further research:

- (a) There is a corresponding need for more research in this area in other zones where no such studies have been done.
- (b) There is need to do a similar comparative study between urban and rural zones.

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