

Implementation of Free Primary Education Policy among the Pastoralists in Kenya” Rhetoric and Reality”

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Abstract: - Despite various efforts by the government and development partners in ensuring Education for All in Kenya, the participation of pastoralist communities remains a challenge. It is estimated that 104 million children are not enrolled in school or are enrolled but do not complete their course in sub-Sahara (Global Monitoring Report, 2010). This study investigated the sustainability of free primary education policy implementation in West Pokot County. The donor community, nongovernmental organizations, and the Kenyan central government have been using a lot of resources towards this goal. Surprisingly, for many years pastoralist communities have lagged behind in education despite the efforts that have been put in place. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of head teachers, students, parents and the County Director of Education in West Pokot County. The study involved 401 respondents which comprised of 300 students, 50 head teachers, 50 parents and 1 County Director of Education. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling were used to select respondents. This study adopted the pragmatist philosophical paradigm. Data was coded and analyzed with the help of computer package for social scientists. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics particularly frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. It is hoped that the results of this study provide an insight to the Ministry of Education, county governments, school managers, teachers and parents in West Pokot County, on the measure of emphasis to engage in to ensure a sustainable education policy for all the children of pastoralist communities in Kenya. The study recommends that the County Government needs to take a holistic approach to assess and address the needs of pastoralist communities, groups and individuals. Secondly County Governments should strive to put in place quality and quantity of instructional resources, regularly in-servicing teachers to improve their pedagogical skills and economically empower parents. The County Government should formulate policies and strategies that will govern financing of FPE program. Furthermore the County policy makers need to listen to the concerns and opinions of pastoralist. Lastly the national government needs to increase the budgetary allocations to the schools in pastoralist counties to improve the quality and quantity of input such as instructional materials and physical infrastructure. Finally, a research of the same kind should be conducted in other Counties with similar pastoralist characteristic.

Key words: Free primary, policy, Implementation, rhetoric, Reality

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Worldwide literature on pastoralists is extremely uneven and is determined by politics and security issues and as such, therefore, there is need for empirical data. Bleech (2000) reports that the information about Indian pastoralists lacks or is supported by weak documented descriptions of their systems. However, screening of the anthropological literature as well as of development indeed confirms that pastoralists represent a subsector of society that has received much less attention in comparison to other social groups from both research and development angle.

Globally, a number of countries have made a commitment towards achieving Education For All, but the high cost of implementing Universal Primary Education (UPE) has made progress towards the goal very slow (Sheila, 2006). Pastoralist communities continue to adapt new coping strategies against the very numerous social and economic challenges facing them. Attempts to change them from their cherished culture and resources would likely be strongly resisted. The pastoralist groups in Africa are characterized by constant conflicts, mistrust and violence between their neighbours because of the battles for pasture and water. Pastoralists of East Africa in the past have engaged in cattle rustling and confrontation as a strategy for survival (Markakis, 1999).

According to Roy and Edwina (2005), it is estimated that nomads constitute 6 percent of the African population and can be found in no less than 20 African countries. In all the countries, the rate of primary school enrolment for children among the nomadic communities in East Africa is significantly below the national average. The rate of secondary enrolment is very low. In Nigeria, the nomads' major constraints to participate in existing basic education programs were found to result from constant movement in search of water and pasture (Roy & Edwina, 2005). There has been an attempt by government and nongovernmental organizations to analyze the role played by children in the pastoralists' production systems in a view to understand what makes parents and guardians reluctant to release them to join school (Otiye, 2006).

Education programs normally underscore the need to enhance access to education among pastoral communities but most fall short of changing the status quo of glaring statistics of poor

enrolment to formal schooling in the regions. There are apparent challenges that keep the statistics of enrolments rates so low among the pastoralists as compared to the other regions of the country. Harsh and isolated environments are likely to put pressure on competent and performing teachers to seek for transfers from such schools. The complex relationship between the pastoral communities and their social economic background casts more doubts as to how the local people are involved in policy process of improving access to primary schooling, and later to secondary schooling (Mugwe, 2006).

Most countries in Africa have their education programs centrally controlled though a few of them have decentralized where the local authorities and District Education Boards have the responsibility to supervise the programs. In the poverty reduction strategy paper (GOK 2001), the government of Kenya puts on focus the Universal Primary Education (UPE) of the hitherto overlooked arid and semi-arid lands in order to improve equity and reduce poverty. The governments' action is in agreement with the process to achieving the millennium development goals and government's commitment to international declarations, protocols and conventions as resolved in world conferences on EFA, Jomtien-Thailand, 1990 and Dakar- Senegal in 2000.

In Malawi, Free primary education was introduced in October 1994 following its announcement in June by the newly elected government brought into power through the first multi-party elections since independence. Just prior to that time, the Banda-led government had brought in tuition waivers, in phases, from Standard 1, but parents still had been expected to pay book fees and to contribute to school funds. From 1994, however, the government was supposed to be responsible for all costs, though in practice it continued to expect communities to contribute to school construction. Given the lack of an overall policy framework and an analysis of the resource implications of embarking on this route, it is not surprising that even today, critics allege that the expansion of primary education has been at the expense of quality (Kadzamira & Rose, 2014). Indeed, it is worth noting that the sudden introduction of FPE by the new administration was opposed by the development community which preferred the more gradual, phased route and only came around when FPE was declared, what was essentially a political imperative. In the first year of FPE, enrolments increased by over 50% from 1.9m in 1993/4 to about 3.2m in 1994/5. Net enrolments prior to FPE had been 58% for girls, increasing to 73% by 1996; and 58% also for boys, but only increasing to 68% by 1996. Gross enrolments increased from 67.9% in 1990/1 to 158.1% in 1999/2000. Male and female gross enrolment rates were comparable in 1999/2000, at 157.9 and 158.3%, respectively (Bernbaum et al., 1998).

Such rapid enrolment increased challenges to primary education in an already weak system that even before expansion had a pupil-teacher ratio of 70:1 with 13% of teachers being unqualified and an average of 100 pupils

crowding existing classrooms. The ministry of education in Malawi stated that the biggest challenges were, not surprisingly, pressure on classroom facilities, insufficient teachers and an inadequate supply of instructional materials, all areas to which the development community responded, attempting to cater for shortfalls of the order of 38,000 new classrooms and at least 25,000 additional teachers. Some of the measures introduced to cater for such shortfalls included the creation of the Malawi Integrated In-Service Teacher Education Project (MIITEP), designed to produce 18,000 teachers at a lower cost and in a much shorter time than conventional full-time teacher training programmes, the building of associated teachers' resource centres, engaging communities in school and teachers' housing construction, and providing instructional materials. At the same time, the administrative and management capacities of the Ministry of Education were to be developed to cope with such undertakings. Alongside these reforms, other policies were introduced such as allowing no uniforms, prohibiting corporal punishment, revitalizing parent-teacher associations, introducing curriculum changes and a new language policy and decentralizing to the district level (ibid).

The impact of the new commitment to FPE can be judged at one level by the more than doubling of government recurrent expenditure devoted to education. Between 1990/1 and 1997, this proportion rose from 11% to 24%, much of the increases going toward new teachers' salaries. Primary education's share of total educational expenditure went up from 45% to 65% in the early years of FPE, not least because of the conditions attached to external funds, which themselves constituted about 40% of the primary education budget (Kadzamira & Rose, 2001, citing Bernbaum et al., 1998). The larger external financial undertaking has been reflected in a larger donor role in the policy arena as well, though this influence had been present well before the introduction of FPE.

The circumstances surrounding the rapid quantitative expansion of the primary sector, together with this donor dependence has raised a number of issues regarding the long-term impact of the 1994 FPE policy of the Malawi Government. Some observers have pointed to a "loss of national vision" at the macro level and the "corrosion of pupil, teacher and parent relations" at the more micro level (Kendall, 2003) as well as a loss of teacher professionalism.

It is possible that Malawi's dependence on donors has resulted in more reactive than pro-active policy visions, although current curriculum development efforts have been more inclusive, seeking grassroots involvement and approval. Further, if one is optimistic, the on-going decentralization of the Ministry of Education could elicit a wider spectrum of opinion that potentially could influence the educational development path. Much weighs on a Policy Investment Framework bringing together coherent, phased plans for grappling with the variety of policies required to ensure that quality improvement goes hand in hand with continued

enrolment expansion and increased retention and that groups not traditionally afforded access are reached, but underlying any such policies there needs to be a widespread understanding of the role education can (and should) play in modern Malawi. Otherwise, the educational system will continue to be in 'catch-up' mode, rather than defining, for Malawi, what is most appropriate for its long-term education and economic development (Kendall, 2003).

In Tanzania, Free Primary Education was announced in 2001, largely as part of the PRSP process, having been incorporated into the Education Sector Development Programme, which has provided the framework for partnerships with the international development community since its appraisal in early 1999. In 2001, the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) was launched, and tuition fees and other mandatory cash contributions to schools were abolished. This was consistent with the EFA target of ensuring the enrolment of all 7-13 year-olds by 2006. A gross enrolment ratio of 98% in 1980 had declined by the early 1990s to below 70%, and in 1999/00, the year before FPE was introduced, the gross enrolment rate was even lower, 63%, the net enrolment rate reaching only 46.7%. There were severe shortages of classrooms, desks, instructional materials and teachers' housing, as well as insufficient numbers of teachers to cater for the school-aged population (Government of Tanzania, 2001).

The first year of operation of the reintroduction of FPE in Tanzania clearly illustrates its great potential for the long-term development of the sector, but it also bears foreboding, with similar lessons from the past. It is recognized that primary education is insufficient in and of itself, and that for it to fulfil its macro, poverty-alleviating purpose, it is important that it be relevant and include practical skills. It is also recognized that its reintroduction requires that simultaneous attention be given to all the inter-related policies: recruiting and upgrading teachers, monitoring and supervising their professional development, the predictable and regular disbursement and appropriate use of capitation and development grants, school and financial management training, empowerment of school committees, etc. Capacity limitations, however, as elsewhere, constrain such simultaneity. In addition, given the gradualist approach taken by the PEDP, complementary basic education must be more than a second-best solution to out-of-school youth. In the balance, as ever, will be not only quantitative expansion and the qualitative content of basic education, but also the balance between what is essentially a centralized approach and the necessary decentralized empowerment for its appropriate implementation (Kendall, 2003).

Table 1.1 Persons Whoever Attended School in Kenya's Pastoralist Counties

County	Male	Female	Total
Mandera	28.5	5	16.2
Turkana	26.6	6	16.3
Marsabit	20.5	14.6	17.6

Garissa	29.6	7.8	19.5
Wajir	35.5	7.1	21.2
Samburu	41	21.2	30.7
Isiolo	46.7	27.5	37.8
Tana River	38.5	23.4	30.8
National	82.5	71.2	76.8
West Pokot	49.7	36	43
Moyale	48.4	26	37.7

Source: KNBS (2008)

Statement of the Problem

The governments of Kenya both central and county governments have been engaged in provision of free primary education to the pastoral region inhabitants but for many years now the same counties inhabited by the pastoralists lack behind in the education subsector yet education is an equalizer to all social classification in the world. A huge sum of money is set for the education sector but it seems the sector does not yield a commensurate outcome to the resources set for it. This study therefore looks at the level of implementation of free primary education visa vis the disconnect between the implementation and the products coming out from the systems in pastoralist communities in Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to present an overview of FPE policy implementation in relation to this study. Reference to the various literatures and an analysis of divergent views serves to explore the past and current trends in FPE policy among pastoralists. The study presents a literature review of evolution of education policy in Kenya within the context of pastoralist communities and access to primary schooling. Implementation of FPE among pastoralist communities apparently has left them behind in the process of realizing Millennium Development Goals and education for all by 2015.

Over the past decade, there has been much development on FPE policy by government and donors. This study seeks to examine some of the pertinent issues concerning sustainability of FPE policy in Kenya. It is important for this study to establish the gaps in actualization of FPE among pastoralist communities in Kenya. Mbatha (2009) reiterates that the FPE has been received with mixed feelings from different sections of the society and while some have expressed feelings of discontentment, failure, betrayal among others, many low income members of the population view it as a Godsend opportunity.

The sustainability of FPE policy implementation can be judged by examining the effects on challenges and disparities in actualization of the program across various regions. It is

possible for a government to focus more on demands by donor agencies and ignore community participation.

Overview of Education Policy

Education policy has evolved over time with a focus on key issues such as the following: education and development, equity considerations, quality of education, structure, administration and management curriculum, cost and financing education, planning techniques and approaches, monitoring and evaluations. Education policy making has been to focus on regional balance and equity considerations.

Since independence, the government has addressed educational issues through commissions, committees and task forces. The Ominde report of 1964 sought to reform the education system that was colonial-oriented and make it more responsive to the needs of the country. By then, the needs of the pastoralist communities had not received attention in the national arena as it is presently.

The report of the presidential working party on education and manpower training for the next decade and beyond (Kamunge, 1988) focused on improving education financing quality and relevance. The report provided opportunity for creation of relevant education to all groups of people but may have done little in paving way for specific education system relevant to specific groups such as the pastoralists.

In the past, there has been a strong focus towards attainment of EFA by 2015 and more particularly the Universal Primary Education (UPE). However, as much as many policy initiatives have targeted access, retention equity, quality and relevance of education system, the success entirely depends on whether interventions carried out respond to challenges facing the pastoralist communities. Historically, education policies have tended to neglect pastoralist areas. Education participation and attainment in pastoralist areas has been low in relation to other areas in Kenya (Kratli & Dyer, 2009). The colonial government was not interested in pastoralist communities which led to low rates of formal education. There was also low missionary activity in this area. Even after independence, little was done to rid disparities and marginalization of pastoralist communities. The status quo is at the moment putting the government on its toes in an attempt to formulate a working policy for the marginalized groups an exercise which is not easy. A ministry for ASAL regions has since been established to address the challenges of the region.

Constant review of the education policy for the nomads have been necessitated by the fact that the existing system of formal education is designed for sedentary groups, implying that the pastoral groups would have to settle down if their children would have to go to school. According to Dall, as cited in Roy and Edwina (2005), educational programs for nomads have failed primarily because decision makers have sought to use education as a tool for transforming nomadic population into sedentary ones. This may have made parents

to see no value in education which appears to be in immediate conflict with their lifestyle and socio-economic activities.

Based on the backdrop of dynamic evolution of pastoralist lifestyles in response to constant environmental changes, there is need for review of policy from time to time in order to come up with interventions suitable at any one time. The characteristics inherent in a particular community may have a direct or indirect influence on the performance of education policy. According to Wadi (1995), policy analysts should consider a number of aspects within the context of social, political, economic, demographic and cultural issues which are likely to affect the decision making and even implementation process of education policies.

In an attempt to formulate education policy for the pastoral community, it is important to understand the environment and economic challenges the pastoralists go through. According to Mahamoud (1993), the world is changing drastically and every nomad everywhere should feel the impact. They have been at the mercy of shifting commodity prices, traffic regulation and trading patterns over which they have little or no control.

Cristian (2006) states that the decisive feature of educational policies and reform of the 1990s is the political consensus, shared by government and opposition, about education's strategic importance for economic growth, social integration and democracy, and on the necessary fundamental policies. However, within the Kenyan political context and divergent party manifestos, political conflict and misunderstanding tends to complicate the coming up of a policy. Education reform becomes complicated because it involves and affects a large number of interest groups.

According to the Institute of Development Studies (2006), policy processes include some perspective at the expense of others and it is the perspective of the poor and marginalized that are often excluded. Just as important, policy requires an understanding of more complex underlying practices of policy framing - the way boundaries are drawn around problems, how policy problems are defined, and what is included and excluded. In essence, policy processes should take into account how problems and policy solutions come to be defined, by whom and for whom.

There are elements in policy and in policy making and of which, according to this discussion, must be clearly articulated in order to improve the process. Some of these elements are: agents of change or resistance to change; social, political and institutional influences; donor and external influences; innovations and knowledge; policy drivers and communication and dissemination. Policies do face contradictory responses based on different institutions and their individual views. Recipients may be divided along conservatism and radicalism even with the same institution. Furthermore, diversity of influence affecting policy development ranges from politics to donor and external influences. Policy makers sometimes find it difficult to

reconcile the demands by donors and the educational needs of the people.

Level of Implementation of FPE Policy in Primary Schools in Pastoralist Communities

The government of Kenya has since the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 remained optimistic that it shall implement FPE by 2015 in fulfillment of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal on education. The prospect of achieving this objective is however threatened by the cultures and the living conditions of the people living in the arid and semi-arid lands of northern Kenya. Though all the data on the factors that may hinder the implementation of FPE in all the counties in this ecological zone is yet to be aggregated, there are indications that the country is far behind schedule of achieving this objective (Achoka et al., 2007).

Initially, in most districts, except those in the ASALs, enrolments almost doubled showing a radical change during the 1973-74 periods. 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. Enrolments, even in districts that had experienced large infusions of new children, reverted to the situation before 1973 (Abdi, 2002).

The high dropout rates were 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 enrolments, 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 a greater part of 1974 (Ayieke, 2005).

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 a 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 "free primary education." If anything, it was quite satisfied that school committees had successfully implemented the programme with minimal cost 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 (Gelliet al., 2009).

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 Free Primary Education (FPE) to fulfil 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 by the Area Education Officer, after a consensus among parents through the Provincial Director of Education, a fairly lengthy and tedious process (Ginsberg, 2004).

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. Enrolment in absolute terms had also up gone from 5,392,319 to 6,314,726, being a 17.1% rise over the same period. The percentage of girls' enrolment also increased in the same period to 49.3%, implying that gender parity in enrolment in primary schools at the national level had nearly been achieved. Primary school Net Enrolment 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 (Kabubo&Mwabu, 2007). 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 3 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 free primary education. However, while free primary education 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 free education programme. Many school management committees 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 (Kadzamira & Rose, 2001).

As a result of the free primary education, the situation of the teaching force in most of the districts 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 school management committees 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 (ibid).

Ironically, these problems are contributing to high school dropout rates, just as they did during the 1974 free primary education intervention. They have also seriously affected the inflow of pupils in primary education in the second year of FPE implementation. Districts that registered over 20% increase in enrolment in 2003, hardly recorded more than 5% of standard one enrolment in 2005. Most of the logistical problems bedevilling the implementation of free primary education intervention, such as lack of facilities and teachers, are well known to the educational administrators in the country. But due to the "culture of fear and silence" inculcated by the former KANU regime, coupled by an inept administration at the MoEST headquarters, the official rhetoric is that the FPE is working smoothly (Lungwangwa & Sililo, 2005).

Apart from to the logistical problems in the implementation of FPE, the key question remains: is the programme sustainable? In the 2003/04 financial year, the government increased its education budget by 17.4% to Kshs. 79.4 billion, with over Kshs. 7.6 billion specifically allocated to the FPE programme. The donor community, which received the FPE policy with high enthusiasm, was quick to assist the government. The World Bank, for example, gave a grant of Kshs. 3.7 billion, while the British government through the Department for International Development gave Kshs. 1.6 billion. Other donors included the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) who gave Kshs. 1.2 billion, the Swedish government who gave Kshs. 430 million and UNICEF who gave Kshs. 250 million. It goes without saying that such donor funding is usually temporary (UNICEF, 2005).

The current cost of FPE is way beyond the normal education budget allocation. It is also a fact that the country's economy has not been performing well in recent years and cannot support the realisation of the UPE goals without the infusion of outside funds. For the country to sustain universal access there will be a need for economic growth to generate public funds for education. Otherwise, prioritising UPE is most

likely to take away from the provision for other sectors of education as well as from the health sector (UNESCO, 2005).

While these implementation policy interventions had good intentions, they failed to address the problems of access and retention in primary schools as anticipated. The abolition of school fees coupled with the reduction in state expenditures left primary schools without the requisite resources to finance critical teaching and learning resources as well as pay auxiliary staff. Consequently, school committees instituted "building fund" fees not only to meet these costs but also future school development expenses. In all regions of the country, the fees charged were more than the abolished school fees. Effectively, the policy impact of school fees abolition on enrolment was abrogated (Theuri, 2004).

Furthermore, boarding facilities did not translate into tangible success for pastoralists' children either. Children are an integral part of nomadic lifestyle as they participate in cattle herding among other domestic chores. Therefore, expecting parents to surrender their children to boarding schools was tantamount to challenging their socio-cultural and economic lifestyle. In the end, students from non-pastoral communities constituted the majority of boarding school attendees; all they had to do to gain admission in such school was to adopt names associated with nomadic pastoralists. Resources meant for the marginalized communities were now subsidizing the well-endowed. These policy failures epitomize the limits of political expediency in the education policymaking process. The abolition of school fees was surprise announcements by two heads of state to mark important political milestones (Theuri, 2004).

There are apparent challenges that keep the statistics of enrolment rates so low among pastoralists as compared to other regions in the country. Harsh and isolated environments would put pressure on competent teachers to seek for transfers. The complex relationship between pastoral communities and their socio-economic background casts more doubts as to how the local people are involved in policy process of improving access to primary schooling. This problem is compounded by the challenges generally faced in implementing Free Primary Education (Kipkoech & Kyalo, 2010).

Educational policy has evolved over time with focus on key areas such as the following: education and development; equity considerations; quality of education; structure, administration and management of education; curriculum; cost and financing of education; planning techniques and approaches; information systems; monitoring and evaluation. Education policy making, while considering pastoralists, has always been to focus on regional balance and equity considerations (Lungwangwa & Sililo, 2005).

Historically, education policies have tended to neglect pastoralist areas. Education participation and attainment in pastoralists' areas has been low in relation to other areas, (Kratli & Dyer, 2009). The colonial government was not

interested in pastoralists’ areas which led to low rates of formal education; there were also low missionary activities in these areas. Even after independence little was done to rid disparities and marginalization of pastoralist’s communities. The status quo is at the moment putting the government on toes in its attempt to formulate a relevant policy for the marginalized groups, an exercise which is not easy even with the creation of Ministry for the ASAL regions and marginalized groups. This is because, coming up with a relevant policy, requires political good will and interactions of state and civil society. There is need to examine the history and practices that shapes and guide the problems in successful policy implementation. The process must undertake the difficult task of finding out how policy should encourage greater inclusion of otherwise excluded regions and groups (ibid).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The descriptive survey design is used when one wants to study large populations by studying samples drawn from it. A survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of the population with respect to one or more variables (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) further assert that survey research is a self-report study which requires the collection of quantifiable information from the sample. This design was considered appropriate for this study since it involved random selection of teachers and students, getting their views and generalizing to the population from which the sample was drawn. The descriptive survey design was used since it aided the researcher in reaching a large target population within a very short time while ensuring that data collected is not manipulated. The design, therefore, enhanced generalization of the findings of the research.

Area and Administrative Units by Sub-Counties of West Pokot

Sub-County	Divisions	Area (Kms ²)	No of Locations	No of Sub-Locations
West Pokot	Kapenguria	335.6	9	28
	Sook	750.5	6	23
	Kongelai	736.4	4	16
	Lelan	313.4	3	13
South Pokot	Chepararia	495	4	15
	Tapach	205.2	3	9
	Sigor	1582.8	8	30
Pokot central	Chesegon	797.3	5	17
	Kacheliba	925.4	5	18
	Alale	1571.5	5	18
North Pokot	Kasei	1035.9	3	12
	Kiwawa	230.7	4	15
	Konyao	189.7	2	8
Total	13	9169.4	61	222

Source: West Pokot County Commissioners’ Office (2013), Kapenguria

The county has a total of 503 primary schools, 69 secondary schools and 479 Early Childhood (ECD) centres. There are 11 tertiary institutions which cater for both primary and secondary graduates. These comprise 5 polytechnics and 4 middle level colleges and Kapenguria Extra Mural Centre, a centre for The University of Nairobi. The school enrolment rates in the county are generally low owing to a number of factors among them high poverty levels, insecurity and negative cultural practices (cattle rustling, FGM, and early marriages). The primary school enrolment in the County was 138,130 compared with the overall population of 177,091 based on the 2009 census data. This represents 78 percent gross enrolment rate (West Pokot County Integrated Development Plan, 2013-2017). Figure 3.1 illustrates the study location.



Figure 3.1: Map showing the Study Location

Source: KNBS (2012)

Strengthening pastoralist education would contribute to development and poverty reduction in the long run through inter-sector linkages. West Pokot is definitely significant if the country is to attain vision 2030 and UPE. Unfortunately, the illiteracy level is still very high in West Pokot County. In spite of FPE, Pokot County registers one of the lowest gross enrolment rates, retention and completion rates in Kenya with more than 50% of school age children not attending school (Comboni Missionaries, 2009). Evidence alludes that most parents deny their children their right to primary schooling and illiteracy is considerably very high especially for the females.

Target Population

Target population refers to the entire group of individuals, objects, item, cases, articles or things with common attributes or characteristics from which samples are taken for measurements. This study targeted all students, head teachers, parents and the County director of education, drawn from each of the four sub counties in Pokot County. The target population was considered because of its direct and indirect influence in realizing UPE in the region. The glaring disparities and barriers in access to primary education stresses the need to provide strong back up of research and empirical findings that would enhance development of suitable strategies and interventions for the pastoralist and the subjects under study were deemed appropriate to provide data.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Sample Size

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population (Kothari, 2004). It is the technique that the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of study subjects from a defined study population and the sampling methods should follow different techniques depending on whether the data is quantitative or qualitative. A sample frame was drawn from the target population. A sampling frame is a list of cases or individuals from which a sample can be selected to form the units of observation in a study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), for a population of less than 100, 100% of the population is taken to calculate the sample size; for a population of between 100 to 1,000, 30% of the population is taken; for a population of 1,000 – 10,000, 10% of the target population is taken to represent the target population; and finally for any target population above 10,000, 1% is taken to calculate the sample size to be employed in the study.

There are 503 primary schools in the County and a sample of 10 percent of the schools was done. 50 schools were randomly selected. Head teachers were purposively sampled from the sampled primary schools. The researcher purposively picked a parent from the selected schools. The sample size of students was arrived at by use of the formula indicated by Reid & Boore (1991).

The formula is as follows:

$$n = N / [1 + N(e)^2]$$

Where: n- Sample

N- Population size

e- Accepted level of error taking alpha as 0.05

Therefore, the sample size of students that participated in the study was done using the above formula is as follows:

$$n = 60000 / [1 + 60000 \times (0.05 \times 0.05)] \\ = 300$$

The total number of respondents was 300 students, 50 purposively sampled head teachers and 50 parents from the sampled schools. One County Director of Education was purposely selected. The table below shows the distribution of respondents as per categories.

Respondents' Categories

Category of Respondents	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Students	300	Reid & Boore (1991) formula
Head teachers	50	Purposive sampling
Parents	50	Purposive sampling
County Director of Education	1	Purposive sampling
Total	401	

Sampling Procedure

Social, cultural and economic issues surrounding the state of FPE program is illuminated strongly by use of qualitative means. This therefore called for the adoption of purposive and judgmental sampling in order to have access to informants considered to have more in-depth information than others. According to Marshall (1996), qualitative investigation requires more intellectual strategy rather than simple demographic stratification where the researcher should actively select the most productive sample to answer research questions. This study deemed it necessary to sample subjects like the teachers, education officials and local leaders for their special expertise and experience.

Traditionally, the ethnographic study focuses attention on community selecting knowledgeable informants who know well the activities of the community. These informants are asked to identify other informants who represent the community often using chain sampling. According to Merriam (1998), purposive sampling emphasizes on a criterion based selection of information-rich cases from which a researcher can discover, understand and gain more insight on issues crucial for this study. Sampling process therefore selected individuals, groups and organizations that would provide insight into the phenomena under study.

Data Collection Instruments

An instrument is the means through which the researcher collects data from the sample population and as is stated by Kothari (2004) in social science research, the most commonly used instruments are questionnaires, interview schedules, observation forms and standardized texts. The purpose of the instruments in research is to measure the variables of the study and help in yielding accurate and meaningful data for decision making (Creswell, 2003). This study utilized

questionnaire, structured interview schedule and document analysis in data collection.

A questionnaire is a set of questions for gathering important information from individuals about the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). One can administer questionnaires by mail, telephone, using face-to-face interviews, as handouts, or electronically. The questionnaire consisted of a number of both open-ended and closed-ended items. The questionnaires enabled the researcher to collect data within a shorter time since most of the information was easily described in writing. A questionnaire tool also has the ability to source information associated with the intensive inquiry nature of the research, is considered to be convenient, cost effective and highly dependable (Kothari, 2004). It also allows the respondents time to respond objectively to the required items.

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Response Rate

Questionnaires	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Head teachers	Distributed	50	100 %
	Returned	50	100%
Parents	Distributed	50	100 %
	Returned	50	100%
Pupils	Distributed	300	100%
	Returned	250	83.3%

Data Screening

Initially, the study distributed 400 questionnaires of which 50 were for head teachers, 50 for parents and 300 for pupils in West Pokot County. All the questionnaires for head teachers and parents were returned but the parents' questionnaires had a gap - 45(90%) of the questionnaires were dully filled while 5(10%) were not fully filled. For the pupils, 250 questionnaires were returned but 220(88%) were fully filled while 30(12%) had a gap. This implies that the response was an adequate representation of the entire population. This is shown in Table 4.2.

Data Screening

Questionnaires	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Head teachers	Dully filled	50	100 %
	Gaps	0	0%

Parents	Dully filled	45	90 %
	Gaps	5	10%
Pupils	Dully filled	220	88%
	Gaps	30	12%

Source: Researcher (2015)

Tests for Normality of Data

The tests (correlation, regression and ANOVA) in this study require data that has a normal distribution. In order to test for the normal distribution of data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test that compares the cumulative distribution function for the variables of interest was computed (Malhotra, 2007). This non-parametric goodness-of-fit test, tests whether the observations could reasonably have come from a normal distribution. The results for K-S tests of the study variables namely; educational indices (ED), socio-cultural practices (SCP), parental perceptions (PP) and factors that hinder the implementation (FHI) are given in Table 4.3. The tests revealed that the data used in this study is normally distributed and hence can be subjected to other statistical tests of significance used to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables that require normally distributed data.

Tests for Normality of Data

		ED	SCP	PP	FHI
N	220	220	220	220	220
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	2.677	2.452	2.484	1.548
	Std. Dev	1.301	1.480	1.313	.506
	Absolute	.297	.321	.231	.362
Most Extreme Differences	Positive	.215	.321	.226	.312
	Negative	-.297	-.304	-.231	-.362
K-S Z		1.653	1.785	1.284	2.018
Asymp.Sig(2-tailed)		0.008	0.003	.074	.001

^aTest distribution is normal

^bCalculated from data Source: Primary Data (2015)

Level of Implementation of FPE Policy in Primary Schools

The fifth objective of this study was to determine the level of implementation of FPE policy in primary schools among the pastoralist communities of West Pokot. To achieve this objective, the participants were asked to respond to items in the questionnaire on a Likert scale of 1-5. The results are presented in Table 4.5.

Level of Implementation of FPE Policy in Primary Schools

Statements		SA5	A4	U3	D2	SD	M	SDV
		%	%	%	%	%		
The implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more teachers	Head teacher	54.0	41.2	0	0.0	4.8	4.56	.718
	Parents	54.2	45.8	0	0.0	0.0	4.68	.742
	Pupils	50.2	45.8	0.0	2.0	2.0	3.47	.831
The implementation of FPE has led to the increased availability of teaching resources in primary schools	Head teacher	40.6	49.3	5.8	0.0	4.3	4.77	1.54
	Parents	41.5 %	47.8	7.2	0.0	3.1	3.55	.832
	Pupils	47.8%	33.0	8.7	0.0	10.4	4.23	.889
The implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school	Head teacher	19.9	46.4	2.9	0.0	33.3	3.86	.987
	Parents	51.6	44	0.0	0.0	4.3	4.77	.499
	Pupils	20.3	52.1	4.3	4.3	23.2	3.53	.945
Implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals	Head teacher	18.8	55.1	.849	17.4	2.9	4.40	.508
	Parents	40.9	41.9	14	.497	0.0	4.59	4.3
	Pupils	14.5	46.4	5.8	29.0	4.3	3.65	1.01

Head Teachers' Responses

As can be seen on Table, head teachers agreed at 95% (48) with a mean of 4.56 and a standard deviation of 0.718 that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more unqualified teachers. Furthermore, the head teachers also agreed at 89.9% (45) with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 1.54 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. On the issue of whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the head teachers agreed at 66.3% (33) with a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.987. Lastly, on whether implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the head teachers agreed at 79.9% (40) with a mean of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.508. This implies that the pastoralist communities of West Pokot County have benefited from the implementation of free primary education. These results are supported by Ministry of Education (2013) which stated that with such a teaching environment, high dropout rates in primary education become 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 "free primary education." If anything, it was quite satisfied that school committees had successfully implemented the programme with minimal cost 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.

Parents' Responses

As can be seen on Table 100% (45) of the parents agreed that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more

unqualified teachers. This was supported by a mean of 4.61 and a standard deviation of 0.74. The parents also agreed at 89.3% (40) with a mean of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.82 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. Concerning whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the parents agreed at 95.6% (43) with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 0.499. Lastly, on whether implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the parents agreed at 82.8% (37) with a mean of 4.59 and a standard deviation of 0.43. This implies that the pastoralist communities have benefited from the implementation of free primary education. These results are in tandem with the postulation of Ahmed and DelNinno (2012) that the abolition of school fees coupled with the reduction in state expenditures left primary schools without the requisite resources to finance critical teaching and learning resources as well as pay auxiliary staff. Consequently, school committees instituted "building fund" fees not only to meet these costs but also future school development expenses. In all regions of the country, the fees charged were more than the abolished school fees. Effectively, the policy impact of school fees abolition on enrolment was abrogated.

Pupils' Responses

As can be seen on Table pupils agreed at 96% (211) with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 1.54 that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more unqualified teachers. They also agreed at 80.8% (195) with a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 0.889 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. Further, on the issue whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the pupils also agreed at 72.4% (159) with a mean of 3.53 and a standard deviation

of 0.945. Lastly, on whether implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the pupils agreed at 60.9% (132) with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.011. This implies that the pastoralist communities have benefited from the implementation of free primary education. These results are supported by Ahmed and DelNinno (2012) who stated that the abolition of school fees coupled with the reduction in state expenditures left primary schools without the requisite resources to finance critical teaching and learning resources as well as pay auxiliary staff. Consequently, school committees instituted "building fund" fees not only to meet these costs but also future school development expenses. In all regions of the country, the fees charged were more than the abolished school fees. Effectively, the policy impact of school fees abolition on enrolment was abrogated.

V. DISCUSSION

Level of Implementation of FPE Policy in Primary Schools

The objective of this study was to determine the level of implementation of FPE policy in primary schools among the pastoralist communities of West Pokot. The findings indicated that the head teachers agreed at 95% with a mean of 4.56 and a standard deviation of 0.718 that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more unqualified teachers. The head teachers also agreed at 89.9% with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 1.54 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. Further, on the issue of whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the head teachers agreed at 66.3% with a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.987. Lastly, on whether implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the head teachers agreed at 79.9% with a mean of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.508. This implies that the pastoralist communities have benefited from the implementation of free primary education.

These results are supported by the Ministry of Education (2013) which stated that with such a 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 "free primary education." If anything, it was quite satisfied that school committees had successfully implemented the programme with minimal cost 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.

The parents agreed at 100% with a mean of 4.61 and a standard deviation of 0.74 that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more unqualified teachers, the parents agreed at 89.3% with a mean of 3.55 and a standard

deviation of 0.82 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. Further, on the issue of whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the parents agreed at 95.6% with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 0.499. Lastly, on whether Implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the parents agreed at 82.8% with a mean of 4.59 and a standard deviation of 0.43. This implies that the pastoralist communities of West Pokot County have benefited from the implementation of free primary education. These results are supported by Ahmed and DelNinno (2012), who stated that the abolition of school fees coupled with the reduction in state expenditures left primary schools without the requisite resources to finance critical teaching and learning resources as well as pay auxiliary staff. Consequently, school committees instituted "building fund" fees not only to meet these costs but also future school development expenses. In all regions of the country, the fees charged were more than the abolished school fees. Effectively, the policy impact of school fees abolition on enrolment was abrogated.

Further, the pupils agreed at 96% with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 1.54 that the implementation of FPE has led to the recruitment of more unqualified teachers. They also agreed at 80.8% with a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 0.889 that the implementation of FPE has led to the availability of teaching resources in primary schools. Further, on the issue whether the implementation of FPE has led to the reduction of gender parity in enrolment in primary school, the pupils agreed at 72.4% with a mean of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.945. Lastly on whether implementation of free primary education has increased participation of stakeholders to ensure that it achieves its goals, the head teachers agreed at 60.9% with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.011. This implies that the pastoralist communities have benefited from the implementation of free primary education. These results are supported by Ahmed and DelNinno (2012), who stated that the abolition of school fees coupled with the reduction in state expenditures left primary schools without the requisite resources to finance critical teaching and learning resources as well as pay auxiliary staff. Consequently, school committees instituted "building fund" fees not only to meet these costs but also future school development expenses. In all regions of the country, the fees charged were more than the abolished school fees. Effectively, the policy impact of school fees abolition on enrolment was abrogated.

. It was also concluded that the pastoralist community support to primary schools is limited due to poor infrastructure, insecurity and cattle rustling, limited physical facilities and limited community awareness towards education. Finally, FPE has led to easy curriculum implementation.

Acquisition of formal education has resulted in cultural alienation in most communities. It has been analyzed that the FPE impact is more profound on pastoralist communities.

Socio-cultural practices such as FGM, early marriage, cattle rustling, traditional stereotypes and teenage pregnancy affect access to FPE among the pastoralist communities. Conflicts in pastoralist regions complicate implementation of development strategies such as education policies because they believe that such will result in cultural alienation. Pastoralists are a proud people who are reluctant to give up their way of life. Part of this reluctance is a response to the harsh condition of their environment, but the reluctance is also because of misguided advice in the past from outsiders thus parents perceive free primary education as undermining their way of life.

The implementation of FPE within West Pokot County has been hindered by limited physical facilities, poor infrastructure, poor funding, and difficulty in curriculum implementation, limited community awareness and high rate of teacher turnover in the schools in West Pokot County.

The desire by the West Pokot nomadic communities to amalgamate resources to enrich themselves makes them have a high value for their girls. The girls are seen as source of cattle by way of dowry. This social cultural practice makes them proud of their girls and pushes men to participate in cattle rustling to obtain cattle for the pride price. This practice has aggravated the Female genital Mutilation FGM among the Pokot to hasten the qualification of girls to wives very fast in their greedy endeavor to receive cattle in the name of pride price for their daughters. It was concluded that the lifestyle of pastoralists in the County of West Pokot impedes government efforts to attain universal primary education for all and requires specific interventions by all stakeholders.

The nomadic characteristic of the Pokot people makes them vulnerable to drop out of school at an early time in their schooling cycle. This is because of the movement of the parents from one area to another in search of pasture and clean water in the plains. Their movement makes them join a new school in the new area moved to without information thus pushing the enrolment high in the new school and leaving the former school without learners. Furthermore, the pastoralist communities largely lack ownership of FPE program which impedes efforts to have all the children in primary school. This generally lowers the quality of education of the community.

Free primary education policy implementation faces challenges emanating from the geographical and the policy set up. The amount of money disbursed by the Kenyan government does not gather for all the needs of nomadic communities. Also the disbursement of the money by Kenyan Government is done in tranches which are far apart from one tranche to another. This renders the activities of the schools very unmanageable.

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