

Influence of Parents' Understanding on Their Roles in FPE Implementation Process in Nyeri County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study examined influence of parents' understanding on their role in provision of teaching and learning resources and their expectations on FPE policy implementation in Nyeri County, Kenya. The study shows how parents had been over-burdened by payment of school levies and how FPE policy raised hopes of their children going to schools without financial distractions. Parents' value of their children's education made them provide teaching and learning resources as government funds were not adequate to cater for all school requirements. Mixed methods research design of the qualitative model of phenomenological and cross-sectional survey designs were adopted. Probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used on selected samples of parents, teachers, head teachers, Parents Association and Board of Management chairperson and County Education officers. Interviews, questionnaires, and observation methods were used to collect data. Qualitative data from interviews were organized into thematic matrices to develop narratives related to study questions. Qualitative data from survey questionnaires were quantified for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22. Data were presented in frequency distribution tables. Findings were that parents did not expect to pay any levies or provide teaching and learning resources. The study also concluded parents provided learning resources as those provided by the government were inadequate.

Key Words: Education Stakeholders; Influence in education; Free Primary Education (FPE), Implementation in Education; Parents' Involvement in Education

Introduction

Initial thoughts as explained by Adrej (2012) that ran through the mind during a new encounter with a person, object or event influence people's behavior. The declaration that education was free in Kenya triggered different interpretations among recipients who in this case were parents and other stakeholders in education. Brehm et al (1999) argued that formed notions or ideas are very powerful and resistant to non-collaborating information. Thus, people have the tendency to seek and interpret information that verifies existing beliefs. As Gregory's (1970) in his top-down processing theory explained, perceivers' expectations, previous knowledge as well as information in the stimulus determines what is understood. Gregory referred to this processing of information as hypothesis testing as it leads to different interpretations.

Gregory's theory forms a basis for different interpretations of FPE among education stakeholders. It could be argued that, if a situation arose different from FPE expectations among parents and other stakeholders, there would be a likelihood of misunderstanding the 'free' aspect in FPE. As literature indicated, free education to some parents meant that they would have nothing to do with any financial responsibility in school. Other parents were still not sure what to expect after FPE declaration though they hoped that their only role would be to send children to school (Orodho et al, 2013, Read, 2014 & Ndichu et al, 2013).

Re-introduction of FPE in 2003 gave parents hope of having their children in school since according to them, the government was financing education and children would no longer be

sent home for school levies. However, provision of quality education to increasing numbers of children using available resources remained a challenge that required support from all stakeholders in education and the private sector as well. As Epstein (2011) in her theory of overlapping spheres emphasized, families, schools and community have a stake and influence on education of a child. Therefore it is important for parents to be fully involved in school programs to enable them understand what happens in schools.

After independence, parents' and community participation in education provision was evident as they offered both financial and material support to establish schools within their localities (Republic of Kenya, 1964). Efforts to work together for a common goal brought collaborations between schools and their communities which led to effective partnerships and enhanced parental participation in school activities. Even with such efforts, education provision is still costly for many households which make some of them not to send children to school. The Kenyan government has made two significant attempts to ensure that children of school-going age access formal education.

First was the decree made to abolish tuition fees for districts with unfavorable geographical locations in 1971 and later extended in 1976 to all public primary schools (Republic of Kenya, 1968). However, not all schools achieved full benefits from the policy change though there was dramatic rise in primary school enrollment making the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) to rise from 47 % in 1963 to 115 % in 1980 (Nishimura & Yamano, 2009; Ojiambo, 2010). This had implications on schools learning resources, human resources as well as schools infrastructure development which meant extra spending in the Kenyan education sector.

Education costs trickled down to parents who had to balance provision of basic necessities to their children and payment of levies among other responsibilities. Introduction of Structural Adjustment Policy (SAPs) in 1980 for example, did not favor parents' economic status either as this led to cost-sharing in 1989 forcing many children to drop out of school. Most parents could not afford as they had other family obligations which made them to sacrifice their children's education (APHRC, 2010).

The second one was re-introduction of FPE policy in 2003 which was aimed at ensuring that children who had dropped out due to financial constraints accessed school. This was an initiative that the government hoped would be overwhelmingly supported by parents especially because it was addressing the challenge of paying school fees. However, despite FPE initiative, high enrolments of children in public primary schools continued to be a daunting challenge to education provision as existing school resources were overstretched. As Wamukuru, Kamau & Ogolla (2014) observed, prior planning had not been made to cater for the rising enrolments in public primary schools. FPE on the other hand was seen to mainly address accessibility to schools; with some studies pointing out that this did not reduce the equity problem in the overall education system (Nishimura et al, 2009; UNICEF, 2015). The aspect of availing adequate teaching and learning resources in schools had been ignored at the inception of FPE policy (2003) which seemed to play a major role in parents' level of participation in school programs and their understanding of FPE policy.

Sustainability of free education in Developing Countries was turning out to be a challenge to governments. Only a few countries in Africa were closer to FPE targets creating major concerns globally. Poverty had been identified by UNDP (2014) as one of the barriers to education accessibility by many children and therefore, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4

specifically at addressing FPE challenges. The strategy according to UN (2016) was to build on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) successes to end poverty among other barriers which denied many children a chance to education. This was in recognition that giving access to schools alone would not sustain children in those institutions, especially those from poor backgrounds as they would eventually drop out if their basic needs were unfulfilled. Therefore, parents' input in overall provision of education, become important as they have a role to ensure that children go to school and that their needs are met.

However, KNBS, (2016) indicated a 6.4 % rise in the total number of public primary schools (from 29,460 in 2014 to 31,333 in 2015) while enrolments went up from 5,874,776 million to 6,906,355 million between 2002 and 2003. Over the same period, education for private primary schools also increased by 34.7 % from 187,966 to 253,169 (Ogolla, 2010) a figure that was reportedly increasing at a higher rate compared to that of public primary schools (KNBS, 2016). The implication was that, more than ever, parents were enrolling children to private institutions. The increment of private schools ought to have been a concern of the government and other education stakeholders as parents were expected to enroll more children in public primary schools since education was free.

A study by Ngwacho (2011) on the hidden costs of FPE accounted for parents' participation in Kenya through their roles as Parents Associations (PAs), School Instruction Material Selection Committees (SIMSCs), and as Boards of Management (BOM) members. The study further singled out poverty as negatively impacting on parents' participation as they kept away from schools due to financial implications. Though school visits often depend on whether schools were welcoming or not, it would be a chance for parents to better understand what was happening in schools. Dewey (1902) had earlier emphasized that parents are the first and continuing educators of children and that their participation played a significant role in their learning, the more reason why they ought to have been sensitized on what FPE policy implied.

Epstein (2010) in her theory of overlapping spheres of influence had explained that parents' involvement depend on several factors which include the school environment and the socio-economic background. The Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP), had acknowledged the need to engage stakeholders though it was not specific as to how parents were expected to actively partner with schools (Republic of Kenya, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2012b).

According to KIPPRA (2014), challenges such as financial affordability, inequalities in access to schooling, low education attainment and unsatisfactory quality of education were common challenges in the education sector that had to be overcome (KIPPRA, 2014). These challenges resulted to rising and falling of global trends of out of-school-aged children which implied that FPE policy was yet to adequately address hindrances to school access by deserving children (UN, 2010). This necessitates a holistic look into education systems as well as stakeholders roles in order to counter such barriers in FPE progress. As Moles (2008) observed, partnerships between parents, schools and communities ought to be an on-going exchange of information, agreement on goals and strategies and a sharing of rights and responsibilities.

Most developing countries have made notable strides towards education provision, in recognition of international commitments to education and other development initiatives which include ways of enhancing partnerships among key stakeholders in education (Republic of Kenya, 2013b; UN, 2015; UNESCO, 2012b). To be on track, Kenya had earlier enforced the rights of the child by domesticating the International Conventions through legislative and policy

pronouncements such as Education Act (1968), the Children's Act (2001) and Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) which aimed at ensuring that all children were in school. In addition the constitution of Kenya (2010) and the Basic Education Act (2013) provided the legal mechanisms on roles and responsibilities of the government and education stakeholders.

In an assessment study on FPE implementation by UNESCO (2005), it was found that school levies and other several factors put pressure on parents that distracted them from voluntarily supporting FPE implementation. The government was also relying on donor agencies and international partners as the primary funders of the education sector which posed a danger of over-reliance. Andrews (2012) for example associated donors to delay of funds disbursement to schools which made PAs to impose levies on parents for schools to keep running.

It is possible that though the government was funding education, parents and communities were being actively involved in buying learning materials for their children even when education was free (Ministry of Education, 2012a). This study therefore sought to examine parents' involvement in provision of teaching and learning resources.

Research questions

What were parent's expectations of Free Primary Education policy implementation in Kenya?

What role did parents play towards provision of teaching and learning resources in schools since FPE implementation in Kenya?

Research Methodology

The study was carried out in Nyeri County, Kenya in 97 public primary schools as FPE was meant for public schools. Participants who were selected from sampled schools included: parents, headteachers, PA and BOM chairpersons, Sub County education officers and the Director of education as they were FPE implementers. The study used mixed research designs (Creswell & Plano, 2006). Qualitative based phenomenological design and cross-sectional survey of quantitative model of phenomenology, which was embedded within the qualitative design. The sample consisted of 8 FGDs (parents), 485 teachers, 25 headteachers, 25 PA chairpersons and 25 BOM chairpersons, 7 Sub County education officers and the Director of education. Data collection instruments were questionnaires, interview guides and observation checklists.

Research Findings

Parents Expectations of FPE Policy Implementation

This study sought to know what parents expectations were after FPE policy was implemented. The areas investigated were financing of school projects, learning resources, infrastructure development, local examinations, and the feeding/lunch programme.

Financing School Projects

From findings on financing school projects, most of the respondents, (34.2 % of the teachers, 32.0 % of head teachers, 28 % PAs and 32 % BOMs) strongly agreed that parents expected the government to take full control of financing school projects (See table 1).

Table 1
Parents Expectations on Financing School Projects

	SA	A	D	SD
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Responses from Teachers	141(34.2)	172(41.7)	65(15.8)	21(5.1)
Responses from Head teachers	8(32.0)	11(44.0)	2(8.0)	1(4.0)
Responses from PAs	7(28.0)	8(32.0)	6(24.0)	2(8.0)
Responses from BOMS	4(32.0)	15(48.0)	3(4.0)	1(8.0)

Quite a high number of respondents (teachers, 41.7 %, headteachers 44 %, PAs 32 % and BOMs 48 %) were also in agreement that the government should finance school projects. These findings possibly imply that parents expected the government to fully finance school projects. This concurs with findings of Gichura (2012), Tooley, Dixon and Stanfield (2010) and Njeru (2012) which indicated that parents had hoped that children living in poverty and learning in poor conditions would join formal public schools as education was free. They had further observed that parents in informal settlements rejected FPE provisions and kept children away from school as they did not find it attractive due to the continued payment of school levies.

Parents Expectations on Provision of Learning Resources

The study sought to establish parents' expectations on provision of learning resources by the government. Findings from the teachers showed that 34.2 % strongly agreed that the government should provide learning resources, 41.7 % agreed, while 15.8 % disagreed and 5.1 % strongly disagreed. For the head teachers, 36 % strongly agreed, 48 % agreed while 4 % disagreed. As of PAs 44 % strongly agreed, 24 % agreed, while 20 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed. Findings from BOMs show that 32 % strongly agreed, 48 % agreed, while 4 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed (See table 2).

Table 2: Expectations on Learning Resources

	SA	A	D	SD
Responses from Teachers	133 (34.2%)	162 (41.7%)	84 (15.8%)	22 (5.1%)
Responses from Head teachers	9 (36.0%)	12 (48.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-
Responses from Pas	11 (44.0%)	6 (24.0%)	5 (20.0%)	2 (8.0%)
Responses from BOM	8 (32.0%)	12 (48.0%)	1 (4.0%)	2 (8.0%)

According to the findings, parents had high expectations that the government would provide learning resources. From discussions with parents on provision of learning resources they specifically stated that the government was providing some of the resources like text books, exercise books and other writing materials. However some said that text books for example were few and that children were sharing. Similar findings had earlier been reported in Embu by Wachira et al (2011) and Ngeno et al (2014) in Uasin Gichu who found out that shortage of text books in primary schools was still being experienced.

Findings in this study also found out that some parents had taken it upon themselves to buy text books for their children to avoid sharing especially when children had home work to do. This could possibly mean that parents expected the government to provide learning resources and the phrase that kept coming up from parents such as ‘what is free’ or ‘how free’ in regard to education point to the fact that the government was offering far way below parents expectations.

Expectations on Infrastructure Development

The Basic Education Act (2013) stipulated that the government would provide infrastructure to schools. Earlier studies had pointed out school infrastructure development as an area that had been sorely left in the hands of parents (Ministry of Education, 2012a; Abuya et.al, 2013; ANCEFA, 2012). Findings on whether parents expected the government to cater for development of school infrastructure from teachers show that 28.2 % strongly agreed that parents expected the government to cater for school infrastructure development, 46.1 % agreed while 17.2 % disagreed and 4.0 % strongly disagreed. For the head teachers, findings were that 20 % strongly agreed, 60 % agreed while 8 % disagreed and none strongly disagreed. For the PAs, 28 % strongly agreed, 32 % agreed while 24 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed. Findings from BOMs showed that 32 % strongly agreed, 44 % agreed while 12 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed (See table 3).

Table 3: Expectations on School Infrastructure Development

	SA	A	D	SD
Responses from Teachers	116 (28.2%)	190 (46.1%)	71 (17.2%)	18 (4.4%)
Responses from Head teachers	5 (20.0%)	15 (60.0%)	2 (8.0%)	-
Responses from PAs	7 (28.0%)	8 (32.0%)	6 (24.0%)	2 (8.0%)
Responses from BOM	8 (32.0%)	11 (44.0%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (4.0%)

A high percentage of respondents were of the opinion that parents expected the government to cater for school infrastructure development. This could have been prompted by the fact that teachers, head teachers, PAs and BOMs were aware of the Basic Education Act that infrastructure was supposed to be taken care of by the government.

From FGDs, most of the parents were also of the view that since education was free, infrastructure development ought to have been in the hands of the government. Parents were of the opinion that since the government was sending funds to schools; it was upon the head teachers to utilize such funds for development. This implies that parents were not convinced that funds disbursed to schools were not enough and in any case they did not know how much it was. Parents expected head teachers and the BOMs not to demand for funds since they did not reveal to them how they spent FPE funds.

From the observation checklist most of the schools visited had newly painted classrooms while some schools had newly constructed classrooms courtesy of political alignments from the region as well as donations from Constituency Development Fund (CDF). Kenya Government's largest investment in infrastructure is largely administered through the CDF, Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) and infrastructure grants disbursed to schools by the Department of Education (Republic of Kenya, 2013c). The CDF as observed had assisted various schools with the construction of toilets.

Findings from observation checklists also showed that most of the schools had at least two or three newly constructed toilets for boys and girls and some for the teachers. In all the schools visited, there was a concrete open water tank accessible to all pupils from where they draw clean water for drinking as well as for general cleaning. The water tank was a programme that was initiated by an NGO with the aim of boosting hygienic status of schools.

Parents Expectations on Payment for Local/Lateral Examinations

In 2016 the government made an announcement to the effect that parents were no longer to pay for the National Examination (KCPE) which is undertaken each year to enable progression of children from primary to high schools. Other than the national examination, schools have been on record for conducting local assessments either zonal or county examinations. Schools were reported to continue subjecting pupils to local examinations as a way of assessing their progress.

On the issue of local examinations, teachers who strongly agreed were 28.2 % and 51.9 % for those who agreed; while those who disagreed were 13.6 % and 2.9 % strongly disagreed that the government should cater for local examinations. For the head teachers 28 % strongly agreed and 44 % agreed, while 12 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed. Findings from PAs show that 24 % strongly agreed that parents expected the government to fund local examinations and 56 % agreed, while 8 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed. From the BOMs, findings were that 28 % strongly agreed, 40 % agreed, while 20 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed (See table 4).

Table 4: Payment for Local/Lateral Examinations

	SA	A	D	SD
Responses from Teachers	116 (28.2%)	214 (51.9%)	56 (13.6%)	12 (2.9%)
Responses from Headteachers	7 (28.0%)	11 (44.0%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (4.0%)
Responses from PAs	6 (24.0%)	14 (56.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1 (4.0%)

From the findings, it appeared that parents expected the government to cater for local examinations. The view concurred with those of parents who in FGDs explained that it was only through continuous assessments that they would know how their children were progressing in their education and therefore the government ought to have put into consideration provision of funds for local examinations. Parents said that they paid for every examination that was done in the school. One parent had this to say:

We are charged K. sh. 190 per term and parents who are mainly affected are those who have more children in the school. In addition there are three major examinations per term which are referred to as the opener, mid-term and end term. If a parent has three children then this would translate to K. sh. 1710 per term and K. sh. 5130 per year. To note also is the fact that we pay different amounts for tuition which we are told is meant to help 'complete syllabuses' (FGD 4, March 21, 2017).

It was also revealed that schools charged differently and quite often, parents transferred children to the public primary school that reportedly charged lesser fees. From discussions with parents, it was apparent that schools were operating differently based on how each interpreted FPE policy. Sub County education officers supported schools in their bid to continually test pupils progress since according to them, these were schools local arrangement in consultation with BOMs and PAs. On this, the CDE supported other education officers but added that schools should devise ways of procuring local examinations, such as requesting teachers to locally set examinations without necessarily charging parents.

Expectations on Feeding Programme

In ASAL areas not only children but their parents also were reported as going to schools so that they too could access food (UN, 2015). Poor families at times are known to send children to schools without lunch. Some parents for example send children to work in dump sites so that they can have food on the table (Abuya et al (2013). Some schools therefore, had initiated lunch programmes especially meant for upper classes to ensure that all pupils were fed.

Findings on whether the government should provide lunch to children showed that 27.7 % of teachers strongly agreed, and 44.9 % agreed, while 19.7 % disagreed while 4.4 % strongly disagreed that parents expected the government to support schools with lunch. For the head teachers findings were that 16 % of them strongly agreed, 48 % agreed while 20 % disagreed. For the PAs, 16 % strongly agreed and 40 % agreed while 24 % disagreed and 12 % strongly disagreed. The BOMs findings showed that 20 % strongly agreed and 28 % agreed, while 32 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed (See table 5).

Table 5: Expectations on Feeding Programme

	SA	A	D	SD
Responses from Teachers	114 (27.7%)	185 (44.9%)	81 (19.7%)	18 (4.4%)
Responses from Headteachers	4 (16.0%)	12 (48.0%)	5 (20.0%)	-
Responses from PAs	4 (16.0%)	10 (40.0%)	6 (24.0%)	3 (12.0%)
Responses from BOM	5 (20.0%)	7 (28.0%)	8 (32.0%)	2 (8.0%)

According to Sub-County education officers, two Sub Counties had been identified as experiencing draught most of the year while another Sub-County had received IDPs who required special attention. These Counties had a special programme where children were provided with lunch. The programme was meant for the very needy who were identified from the affected schools and not meant for all children in the school. Even so, parents were required to pay cooks and buy or provide firewood. As cited earlier in this study, poverty had been singled out as a key factor that hindered children from attending school regularly. Some parents were even reported to have encouraged their children to go out and trade in search of money to buy food (Abuya et al, 2013).

As for parents in FGDs, schools were not providing children with lunch instead a lunch programme was organized and parents paid to have their children take lunch. From the discussions, it was revealed that, lunch charges were different based on the type of meals that schools offered and the amount that the parent was able to pay. Some parents though declined to pay for lunch and instead had their children carry packed lunch as they felt that schools were exploiting them by charging high fees which they could not afford.

Parents Views on Provision of Learning Resources

Studies show that the commitment by the government to provide public primary schools with adequate learning resources was yet to be realized (Ndichu et al, 2013; Abuya, 2015; Republic of Kenya, 2015b). The next section therefore sought information on parent's preparedness to provide learning resources even as the government insisted that resources had been sent to schools.

Parents were ready to Provide Learning Materials

Provision of learning resources to schools was one of the FPE goals that the government had hoped to achieve by the year 2015 in order to relieve parents from the school fees burden (APHRC, 2010). Resources like text books, exercise books, chalk, geometrical sets among others were provided for by parents either in form of materials or levies charged by schools.

On the issue of whether parents were ready to provide learning resources, teachers' findings showed that 8 % strongly agreed, 39.6 % agreed while 39.6 % disagreed and 10.7 % strongly disagreed that parents are ready to provide learning materials. As of head teachers 4.0 %

strongly agreed, 48 % agreed while 24 % disagreed and 12 % strongly disagreed (See table 6).

Table 6: Parents were ready to Provide Learning Materials

	SA	A	D	SD
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Responses from Teachers	39(8.0)	192(39.6)	192(39.6)	52(10.7)
Responses from Head teachers	1(4.0)	12(48.0)	6(24.0)	3(12.0)
Responses from PAs	2(16.0)	8(32.0)	9(36.0)	5(20.0)
Responses from BOMS	9(32.0)	11(44.0)	2(8.0)	1(4.0)

Findings of PAs showed that 16 % strongly agreed, 38 % agreed, while 36 % disagreed and 20 % strongly disagreed. For the BOMs findings indicate that 32 % strongly agreed, 44 % agreed, while 8 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed. Except for the BOMs, other respondents showed mixed responses. For example, almost half of the teachers, head teachers and PAs agreed while half of them disagreed that parents should buy learning resources. Discussions with parents indicated that mixed views existed because schools asked parents to buy books when funds were delayed which left them with no choice but to comply. Parents expected schools to provide learning materials yet what children received was inadequate. One parent explained:

Mainly towards the end of the term teachers ask children to buy books as those provided for the schools were over. Also at times the head teacher report to us that funds have been delayed and so we have no choice but to buy the books required. It is good for the schools to provide since we also provide uniform, lunch, school bags.... After all, they (school) started it and so they should continue (FGD 1, March 20, 2017).

This may explain why teachers, head teachers and PAs agreed that parents were ready to provide learning resources. Again from an interview with one of the Sub-County education officers in regard to provision of learning resources, head teachers were doing this against the rules since they were expected to explore other options of getting learning materials from the suppliers on credit. From this one could possibly conclude that though parents were ready to provide learning materials, it was against their wish.

Learning Materials were Adequate

Further the study sought to know about the adequacy of learning resources in schools. The findings were that 26.2 % of teachers strongly agreed, 54.0 % agreed, while 13.6 % disagreed and 4.1 % strongly disagreed. For the head teachers, 28.0 % strongly agreed, 48 % agreed, while 4 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed. As for the PAs 32.0 % strongly agreed, 60.0 % agreed, while only 4 % strongly disagreed. As for BOMs 24 % strongly agreed, 32 % agreed, while 32 % disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed (See table 7).

Table 7: Adequacy of Learning Materials

	SA	A	D	SD
Responses from Teachers	127 (26.2%)	262 (54.0%)	66 (13.6%)	20 (4.1%)
Responses from Head teachers	7 (28.0%)	12 (48.0%)	1 (4.0%)	2 (8.0%)
Responses from PAs	8 (32.0%)	15 (60.0%)	-	1 (4.0%)
Responses from BOM	6 (24.0%)	8 (32.0%)	8 (32.0%)	1 (4.0%)

Most of the respondents agreed that learning resources were inadequate. Interviews with Sub-County education officers as well as the County Director of education indicated that schools were receiving enough funds to purchase learning resources which were under the SIMBA (School Instructional Materials) account.

However in FGDs, parents were in agreement that at least text books for Mathematics, English and Kiswahili were at a ratio of 1:2 and some schools at a ratio of 1:3 while for the rest of the subjects like CRE, Science and social studies, text books were very few. Those available were shared among the pupils and some children could not have access to them. Some of the parents had taken it upon themselves to buy some of the books while others opted to buy encyclopedias which covered all subjects rather than buying a single text for one subject. One parent had this to say:

We pay a fee of K. sh. 850 per term for security, electricity, water and for text books. Sometimes children are given tattered books and teachers do not accept them back when they are in that condition. I ask my child to take the books back to the teacher and I buy new ones instead..... (FGD 7, March 3, 2017).

In addition, a parent from another school had explained:

At least nowadays we only pay K. sh. 80 to cater for water and electricity since the school was assisted with funds from the CDF which was used to purchase text books for each class. Some old boys and girls also visit the school and assist the children with text books (FGD 6, May 5, 2017).

One can therefore conclude that text books that were provided did not adequately address all subjects and that some subjects were more valued than others. Though the government had taken the initiative to develop learning materials for schools through KCDC, schools were not able to access them as they did not have enough funds (Gacicio & Gachoka, 2010). Recent developments by the government to directly supply schools with textbooks (Wanyama, 2018) may partly address the situation though parents will still be expected to participate in various provisions.

Conclusion

Having analyzed the findings, the following conclusions were drawn from the study in line with the research questions: The study concluded that parents had high expectations that the government would cater for all education expenses. The only role they expected to play was to ensure that children's basic needs were met. The study also concluded that text books provided by the government to schools were inadequate and that it was upon parents to cater for the deficit. The issue of school fees payment in Kenya seemed to be unending especially because education provision had become so expensive thereby straining both parents and government resources. It was for the same reason that the Ministry of Education set out guidelines even at higher levels of education on school fees. The study therefore concluded that parents had very high expectations especially on fee abolition and provision of teaching and learning resources.

Recommendations

Unless proper mechanisms are put in place to ensure open and collaborative relationships between schools and families, it will be difficult for parents to actively participate in school programs and make school administrators accountable and improve quality of education that their children received. Therefore, based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher came up with the following recommendations: That the government should as a matter of priority clarify to parents what fees should be paid and how much each child was entitled to remove the misconception among parents that education was free. Schools take up the role of engaging parents in education matters through programmes in which they could voluntarily be involved to ease the pressure inadequate learning resources. There is need for the Ministry of Education to clearly define stakeholders' roles through properly constituted school management committees and sensitize various stakeholders on the same.

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