

**CHALLENGES FACED BY HEADTEACHERS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION
IN GATUNDU DISTRICT,
KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Master of Education
in Educational Planning, Management and Administration of
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

NOVEMBER 2012

ABSTRACT

Since the inception of FPE, head teachers have been faced with so many challenges. Although some studies have been done explaining changes in government policy on the provision of FPE since independence, and the importance of variables that lead to effective implementation of basic education, the challenges still persist. Since its inception in January 2003 by the NARC as a fulfillment of one of its promises during campaign in December 2002, the policy was geared towards addressing the problem of declining enrolment and high wastage in public primary schools. This study was to investigate the challenges faced by head teachers of public primary schools in the implementation of FPE in Gatundu District, Kiambu County. The study will provide research based evidence on challenges facing head teachers in Gatundu District. It will also be of use to head teachers and other stakeholders as the study will provide research based evidence on challenges facing head teachers. Being a survey research, the study consisted of forty five head teachers. The researcher used simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques to identify the head teachers. A pilot study was conducted before the main study with ten head teachers who were randomly selected to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. A questionnaire for head teachers was employed in data collection for the study. Qualitative data collected from open ended items in the questionnaire was analyzed on an ongoing process as themes and substances that emerge from the data, while quantitative data collected from closed ended items in the questionnaire were in form of percentages, frequencies and means. The major findings of the study are inadequate funding, delay in disbursement of FPE funds, high pupil teacher ratio, lack of teacher commitment on FPE, and lack of financial management skills by the head teachers. The findings would provide a useful basis upon which further studies on the challenges faced by head teachers would be conducted. The study recommends that to improve the implementation of FPE, there is need to increase government funding to match on the current decline in the shillings value, disburse the funds in time, enroll more teachers, increase the amount allocated to each pupil as this has not changed since year 2003 so that the school management can tackle the high cost of living, mobilize parents and educate them on the importance of participating in and funding some of the school activities and educate them through seminars and workshops on their role in regard to improving performance.