

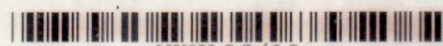
**THE INFLUENCE OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON
PUPIL'S PERFORMANCE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE
OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN NYAHURURU DISTRICT
LAikipia COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT ✓

The government of Kenya implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) in January 2003. The main objectives of this program were to provide education to all primary school children irrespective of their social- economic background. Pupil's performance in KCPE in Nyahururu district has been wanting since the introduction of FPE. This study investigated the influence of FPE on pupils' performance in KCPE in public primary schools in Nyahururu district. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The target population was all 67 public primary schools who had class eight pupils. The respondents were; head-teachers, standard eight teachers of the sampled schools and educational officer in charge of quality and standards in the district. The sample size of 59 head teachers and one quality assurance and standards officer (DQASO) was obtained using purposive sampling technique, while simple random sampling technique was used to select the 59 standard eight teachers. Data for the study was collected by use of questionnaires for head teachers and teachers. Interview schedule and checklist was used to collect data from quality assurance and standards officer and physical facilities respectively. The data collected was then presented through descriptive statistics specifically frequencies and percentages with the aid of the SPSS version 17 of computer software. The study was guided by human capital theory postulated by Adam Smith in 1776. He focused on an attempt to understand the government commitment and investment to education. It's the most influential theory of western education. The theorist argues that an educated population is a productive population. FPE was found to have faced challenges in Nyahururu District with the most notable being under staffing and lack of physical facilities. FPE funds are not adequate in financing infrastructure in schools in the District. High enrollment had led to over crowding in classes a situation that led to reduced effectiveness in classrooms delivery by teachers. The school management committees in some schools were not well informed on the rationale of FPE and had failed to mobilize resources to improve on infrastructure as well as employing PTA teachers. The researcher concludes that there is a high teacher -pupil ratio in Nyahururu District which is negatively affecting the quality of teaching and consequently KCPE performance in the district. The physical facilities had limitation in terms of quantity and quality. Addressing teachers' shortage is critical in enhancing KCPE performance in the District. However, the approaches being used to address this problem were inadequate. Therefore there is an urgent need to address teachers' shortage and inadequate infrastructure in public primary schools in the District. The findings of the study will assist the Ministry of Education to fill in the gaps that exists in the influence of FPE on pupils performance in KCPE specifically teacher-pupil ratio and physical facilities. The Ministry of Education will be able to formulate policies defining specific roles of stakeholders in public primary schools.