

**ADMINISTRATIVE FACTORS INFLUENCING UTILISATION OF FREE
PRIMARY EDUCATION FUNDS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF
NAKURU MUNICIPALITY, KENYA**

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MEDS/1005/10

**A Research Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of
The Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Planning
Management and Administration of Mount Kenya University.**

Mount Kenya University

November, 2011

ABSTRACT

The aim of Free Primary Education programme in Kenya was to provide opportunities, especially for the individuals from poor background. However, this goal is achievable if the funds sourced and disbursed to public primary schools are effectively utilized. Effective utilization means that the funds are used wisely and the associated objectives are attained through their utilization. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the utilization of Free Primary Education funds in public primary schools within Nakuru Municipality. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and used a study population comprised of head teachers, Chairmen of the School Management Committee of public primary schools and teachers. A sample size of 52 public primary schools in which 52 Chairmen of the School Management Committee, 52 Head teachers and 104 teachers were interviewed was used. The Chairmen of the School Management Committee and Head teachers were selected using purposive sampling technique, while the teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique. The study collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Data was collected from the head teachers and teachers by use of questionnaires, while that from the Chairmen of the School Management Committee was collected by use of interview schedules. Data collected was then analyzed through descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlations) with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 17. The results were then presented in tabular summaries and charts for easier interpretation. The findings show that all head teachers, being the fund managers of the Free Primary Education Funds, had undertaken some form of financial training to enable them effectively utilize Free Primary Education funds; however, the level of utilization of Free Primary Education funds in public primary schools was not impressive. The main factors affecting the utilization of Free Primary Education funds were: insufficient funding; delay in disbursements; high pupil enrolment levels; high cost of materials; inadequate teaching materials; lack of teacher motivation; inadequate teaching staff; and illiteracy of some committee members. Among the strategies used by public primary schools in mitigating administrative factors influencing utilization of Free Primary Education funds were: requesting for parental support; following the vote heads; involving all key stakeholders; prioritization of school needs; regular meetings; ensuring transparency; and involvement of school committee members to oversee use of funds. Following these findings, the study recommended that the Government of Kenya through established structures in the Ministry of Education should mobilize resources to mitigate administrative factors arising from this study. It is hoped that the findings of the study will assist the Ministry of Education to fill in the gaps that exist in the utilization of FPE funds. The Ministry of Education will be able to formulate policies to safe guard Free Primary Education funds and any grant offered to the basic learning institutions and in the end achieve prudent use of resources.