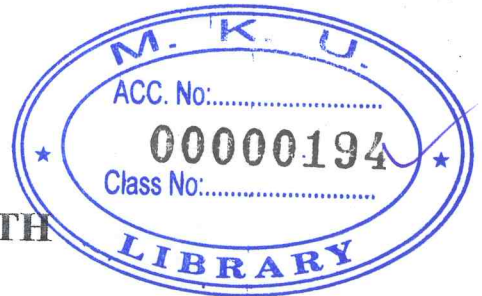


**THE IMPACT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON QUALITY OF
EDUCATION IN VIEW OF ENVIROMENTAL DISPERITIES
AMONG SCHOOLS IN MOMBASA COUNTY, KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

The government of Kenya under the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) throughout the country in 2003. From that time on the policy has been applauded and criticized at the same time by various stake holders. Despite many studies examining the impact of FPE nationally, district or county scale, very little work has been done to find out how the policy has affected schools with different social, economic and political dispensations. Mombasa County has a total of 65 public primary schools distributed in the four major divisions of Kisauni, Island, Chagamwe and Likoni. Purposive sampling was used to select two schools from each division. This was done to ensure fair representation on the different social status in the environment. The following schools were sampled; Khadija, frere town, Likoni, Mrima, Mbheni, Bondeni, Umoja, and Kipevu. This study aimed to look at the impact of free primary (FPE) on quality of education in view of environmental disparities among schools in Kenya a case study of Mombasa County. The study was guided by the following objectives; to ascertain the impact of FPE on the students' learning environment, to find out how FPE has influenced the students performance on examinations, to find out the methods used in different schools to improve quality and last but not least to determine if educational inequality between schools have been exacerbated, sustained or relieved by FPE. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers and questionnaires employed to collect data from the respondents. All data collected were summarized and analyzed with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS) computer software and the results presented in the form of figures, tables and graphs. The study determined the following; that FPE has improved the learning environments of most schools, the performance of students in national and internal examinations have improved rather than gone down, the schools located in the low income areas have had greater challenge in their effort to maintain or improve quality of education as a result of FPE and last but not least the educational inequalities among schools have not been exacerbated, sustained or relieved by FPE. This study concluded that the policy apart from enhancing access has also improved the quality of education among the residents of Mombasa County. This is in the light of the fact that many children who could otherwise have not received education are at least able to.