

**EFFECTS OF FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION ON
PERFORMANCE IN THE NEW SUB COUNTY SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN KIENI WEST SUB-COUNTY OF NYERI
COUNTY, KENYA.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The government's commitment towards the provision of affordable and quality education led to the launch of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 and later Free Secondary Education (FSE) in 2008. These policies have led to high enrolment and retention rates of students in secondary schools leading to establishment of new sub county secondary schools. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of FSE on performance in these newly established schools in Kieni West Sub County of Nyeri County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was all the twenty newly established sub county secondary schools in Kieni West Sub County since 2008 comprising of 20 principals, one hundred and eighty teachers, one Sub County Education Officer (SCEO) and one Sub County Staffing Officer (SCSO). The sample size comprised of 15 principals from these sub county schools, 90 teachers, the SCEO and the SCSO giving a total of 107 respondents. Proportionate sampling was used to select the principals and teachers. Questionnaires were used as instruments for collecting data from the principals and teachers while interview schedules were administered to the SCEO and the SCSO. Validation of the instrument was done by experts in research and piloting. Reliability was tested by subjecting the instruments to a pilot study. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics after cleaning and coding. Quantative data was analyzed using frequent counts, means and percentages while qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis based on meanings and implications arising from respondents' information and documented data. The study found out that majority of principals (85.7%) indicated that FSE has affected KCPE entry level. The study also shows that FSE has affected enrollment and admission into secondary schools. Majority (64.29%) of schools were single streamed with between 20-39 students per stream. The study recommended that the admission into the secondary school should be reviewed to avoid learners with very low marks into the secondary schools. These learners should be guided into technical and vocational institutions where they can rediscover other talents.