

**EFFECTS OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION (FPE) ON THE QUALITY OF
LEARNING IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMBAKASI DISTRICT,
NAIROBI COUNTY**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
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ABSTRACT

The study was on effects of Free Primary Education (FPE) on the quality of learning in public primary schools in Embakasi District, Nairobi County. The purpose was to investigate how FPE had impacted on the quality of learning. Embakasi is the most populous district in the county, and host to a number of slums. Quite a proportion of school going children never attended school before the introduction of the FPE programme. The programme made it mandatory that all children attend school. The district was therefore most exposed to the full effects of FPE. Four research objectives were developed. The first was to assess the status of the physical facilities relative to the provision of quality of learning in public primary schools while the second was to assess the provision of the teaching and learning resources relative to the provision of quality of learning in public primary schools. The third was to establish how increased enrolment had impacted on the pupils' academic performance in the selected public primary schools while the fourth investigated the levels of parental involvement in the provision of quality of learning. The study was guided by the Capital Theory of School Effectiveness and Improvement. All the 20 public primary schools in the district were targeted by the study. The target population was 29647 pupils, 660 teachers and 20 head teachers. The sample size was 4 head teachers 48 teachers and 300 pupils as the respondents. Simple random method was employed to select 4 schools from the district and purposive sampling was used to select the head teachers, teachers and pupils. An interview guide was used to collect data from the head teachers, while questionnaire tools were used to collect the information from the teachers and the pupils. Validity of the instruments was done through experts in research and piloting. Reliability was tested by subjecting the instruments to a pilot study through test retest technique. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 which was used to generate the frequencies, percentages and bar graphs. The study established that schools in the district lacked physical facilities. Whereas most schools had adequate playground for their pupils, some schools experienced shortage of teachers while others lacked adequate number of class rooms, desks for pupils, tables for teachers, safe drinking water, toilets for pupils, toilets for teaching staff and libraries. The study established that schools lacked adequate teaching and learning resources. Schools lacked exercise books, textbooks, pens and pencils for pupils, teaching manuals and teaching aids. The failure of the Government to remit FPE funds to schools in time led to schools asking parents to provide the resources. The performance trend in the district was on the decline in the past five years and that education quality standards in the district were on the decline. Parental involvement in the provision of quality of learning was high as they were involved in paying for educational trips, buying textbooks, school uniforms, desks and in paying admission fees. They also participated in school feeding programmes and reward programmes through the PTA. The study recommended that the MoE and TSC ensure posting of adequate number of teachers in all the schools within the district, That MoE ensures adequate school infrastructure including number of class rooms, desks for pupils, tables for teachers, Safe drinking water, toilets for pupils, toilets for teaching staff and libraries, that all schools were fenced since only 60 per cent of the schools had fences to secure their environment and that the MoE ensures timely disbursement of FPE funds while adopting the most current enrolment figures since delays and disparities in disbursements led to schools asking parents to provide the learning resources. Further research was suggested on the effect of school feeding programmes in public primary school education and the effects of Free Secondary Education (FPE) on the quality of learning.