

**THE IMPACTS OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS: A CASE
STUDY OF NGULUNI PRIMARY SCHOOL, KAMBU
ZONE, KIBWEZI DISTRICT, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

I YAMBU MUTINDA SHADRACK, do hereby declare that the findings contained in this report are original and that this report has been presented to any other learning institution for the award of certificate, diploma or degree in education.



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APPROVAL

This project initiated by the researcher has been supervised and duly approved as his original findings in the field of education.



.....
MR. SAMANYA BULHAN
SUPERVISOR

Date: 23RD / 04 / 09

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DEDICATION

I do dedicate the findings in this report to my fellow students in the faculty of Education in Kampala International and other in universities in East Africa and recommend them as a basis for further findings. To the parents, school managers and field officers in the ministry of education in Kenya, I strongly believe that the findings in this report will be instrumental towards solving the challenges faced in implementing the free primary education policy, hence my dedication of this report to you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with high humility that I acknowledge the sacrificial assistance rendered by My Supervisor, Mr. Samanya Bulhan of Kampala International University to enable me accomplish this noble obligation. Also acknowledge the tireless effort of Mr. Isaac in editing and typing the findings in this report, and my wife Winfred Mutinda for moral and financial support she extended to me in the period of my study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
GOK	Government of Kenya
FPE	Free Primary Education
F.P.E	Free Primary Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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ABSTRACT

The research embarks on investigating the impacts of free primary education on academic performance of primary school pupils.

The purpose of this study it will be to find out the impacts of free primary education on academic performance of primary school pupils with Nguluni Primary School in Kambu Zone, Kibwezi District of Kenya being a case study. It will also give recommendations to the government, policy makers, educators parents and general public.

The objectives will be to establish whether the teacher pupils ratio in our public primary schools is acceptable, to establish whether resources offered by the government to implement free primary education are sufficient and to determine whether the funds reimbursed by the government for the same properly managed. A descriptive survey design will be used in this study.

In conclusion it is indicative that the teacher pupils ratio is low and sometimes resources for implementing a free primary education are properly used the recommendations are therefore that a number of teachers in our public primary schools should be increased and be highly paid as a way of motivating them. The resources offered by the government towards implementing the free primary education should also be appropriate used.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

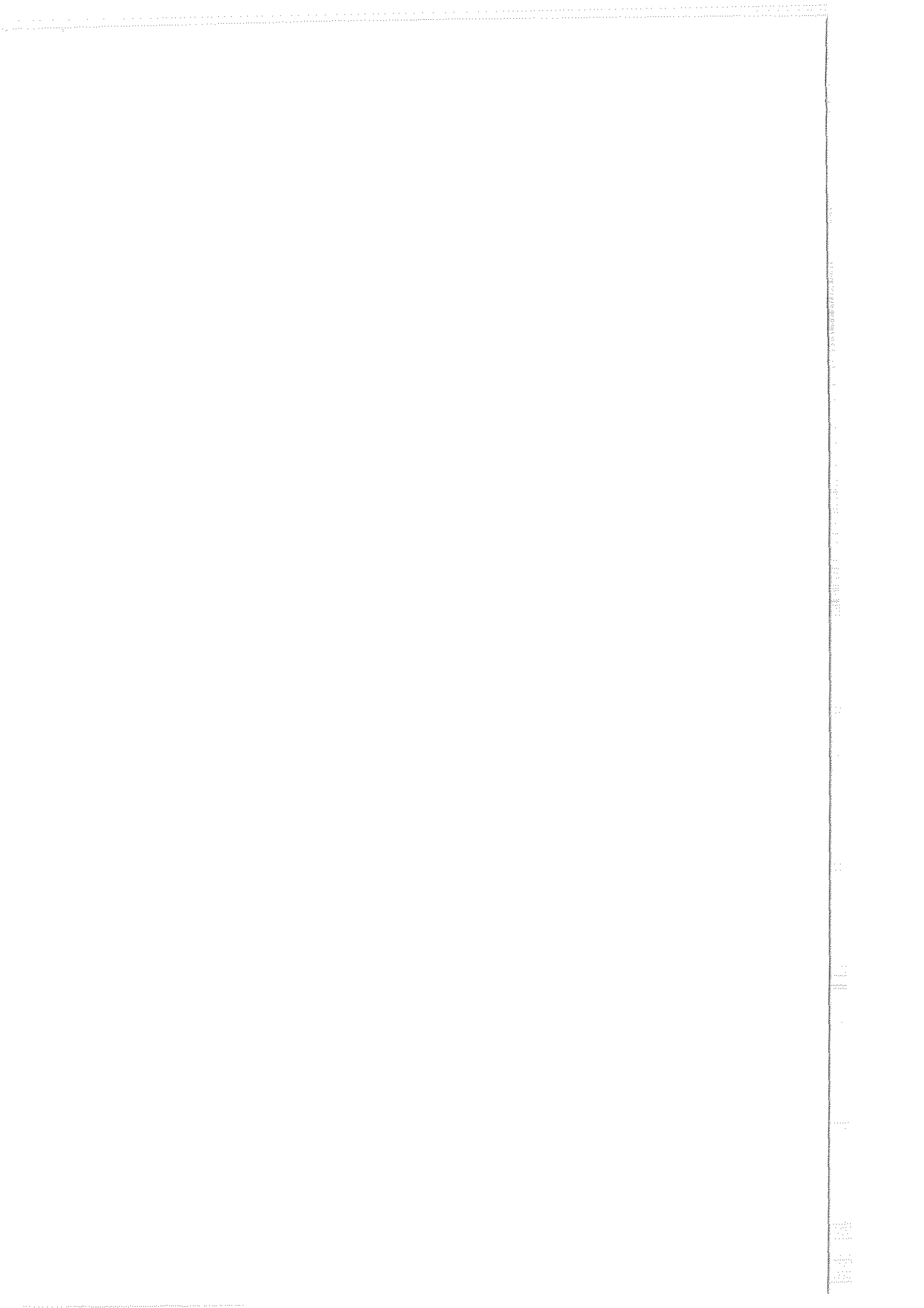
1.1 Background of the Study

Two educationists namely Collin and Donald (1990) said that individuals should be given the best education possible and be allowed to solve their economic difficulties in the best way they can, wherever they find economic opportunity. The ultimate purpose of education is to fulfill the objective of providing equal opportunities to every individual up to a minimum of twelve years in school so that at the terminal level of basic education every individual is an adult and shall have exposed to the essential education for their future choices (GOK 1999).

World bank publication (1995) states that there are two aspects of equity; everyone's right to basic education, the basic knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively in society and the government obligation to ensure that qualified potential students are not denied education because they are from poor or minority communities.

A child has a right to education and it is the duty of the government to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory and to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child and to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity (Article 28 the convention on the Right of the child. Adopted by the general Assembly of the United Nations on 20th November 1989).

Kenya has been ranked among top United Nations member countries likely to achieve the Free Primary Education (F.P.E) goal by the year 2015 (Samuel Otieno, The East African Standard; Kenya). Kenya's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Progress Report attributes the success to the government's decision to introduce free and compulsory primary education.



Following this new policy, gross enrolments in primary schools have increased from 5.8 million in 2002 to at least 7 million early this year. The MDGs are a set of numerical time-bound targets, arising from the Millennium Summit of September 2000 in New York that seeks to improve people's livelihoods in the new century. F.P.E ensures all children get access to quality primary education.

The free and compulsory primary education for Kenyan children, which was one of the key pre-election promises which brought NARC to power in December 2002, has proved not only to be expensive, but also difficult to implement. Some of the challenges facing the FPE programme, which began in January this year, include a severe shortage of classrooms, teachers and facilities. An unexpected 1.5 million children who were previously out-of-school, turned up to attend classes in response to the government's call, bringing a new crisis to the education sector.

In many schools, the classroom sizes, especially in the lower classes, have risen from an average of 40 pupils to 120. The number of children enrolled in primary schools is expected to further increase to over 7.5 million, from the current 5.9 million, by the end of this year, according to the education ministry.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Education is a crucial factor in ending global poverty. With education, employment opportunities are broadened, income levels are increased and maternal and child health is improved. In countries with solid education systems in place, there are lower crime rates, greater economic growth and improved social services.

The way pupils perform academically is directly related to both innate and external forces. Innate forces may include their God given abilities and relative intelligent quotients. External factors will include the class size, pupil- teacher ratios, availability of learning resources among others. Ever since the Kenyan

government introduced free primary education, it seems the external factors of successful learning have been compromised.

The government of Kenya has enacted policies to have every child acquire at least basic education up to the age of eighteen. However proper and adequate follow up is lacking to ensure the children are getting the best possible and are doing to the best of their ability. With the enormous influx of pupils into our public schools due to the introduction of free primary education, It seems that the government had not pre-planned on strategies to ensure its smooth implementation. Areas that are facing short falls include; policies to streamline the timely and adequate reimbursement of fees to cater for stationery and other requirements, mismanagement of the funds by the head teachers, unacceptable teacher- pupil ratios, shortage of classroom space, desks and other teaching aids among others. These factors cumulatively contribute to poor performance of pupils in our public primary schools.

These factors necessitated research into the impacts of free primary education on learners' performance. There is thus need for urgent attention from the government, ministry of education and other stake holders to remedy the situation by ensuring that proper planning and implementation of free primary education is streamlined in order to rescue the repercussions of poor performance before situations get worse.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to find out the impacts of free primary education on academic performance of primary school pupils; a case study of Nguluni Primary school, Kambu Zone, Kibwezi District, Kenya. The study aims to offer recommendations to the government, policy makers, educators, parents and general public. This will be done through an extensive review of related literature and empirical evidence. It aims at helping education researchers, education

administrators and other experts to explore possibilities of developing a more effective quality monitoring and control system of enhancing quality free primary education education.

1.3.1 This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Is the teacher – pupil ratios in Kenyan public primary schools at acceptable levels?
2. Are the resources allocated by the government to the public primary schools enough to cater for the pupils educational needs?
3. Are the funds well managed by the school committees?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objectives

This study seeked to determine the impacts of free primary education on performance of learners; A case study of Nguluni Primary school, Kambu Zone, Kibwezi District, Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

This study was to:

1. Establish whether the teacher- pupil ratios in our public primary schools are acceptable.
2. Establish whether the resources offered by the government to implement the free primary education are sufficient.
3. Determine whether the funds reimbursed for free primary education are properly managed.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study was confined to Nguluni Primary school, Kambu Zone, Kibwezi District, Kenya. This study site will form a sample to represent the public primary schools in the entire country. The study is limited to this area because it is easily

accessible to the researcher and again the researcher is familiar with the area. The study will be directed to standard six and seven pupils, teachers and parents. It will be limited to the contribution of the government, parents and teachers and their contribution to performance of learners. The recent literature will be used to determine how the factors mentioned impact on learners' performance. Due to financial and time constraints the area will be convenient for the researcher.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The strategies employed by the government and other stake holders in implementing the free primary education in public schools have a great impact on learners academic performance. It is therefore of vital importance to offer valid suggestions to be implemented in order to curb deteriorating academic performance of learners due to insufficiencies and loopholes in implementing the free primary education.

The findings of this study will be useful to all the stakeholders, including educational policy makers, teachers, parents and pupils who are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that schools are well placed to offer quality education, molding the learner to become a self reliant person in future life and of value to the society.

In summary the findings will:

- i. Provide the educational planners and policy makers with information on the effects of hawking on pupils academic performance.
- ii. Give an insight on how hawking and interaction with the adult hawking community impacts on pupils' academic and social development.

- iii. Help the public authority especially the Kibwezi Municipal administrators in controlling and restricting involvement of children in hawking and related activities.
- iv. Enable and motivate researchers to do more research on home and social background of students and their effects on pupil's academic performance.
- v. Open the eyes of the parents to take their specific roles in supporting schools and their children to achieve their educational objectives.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

This study aims at investigating the impacts of free primary education on learners' academic performance. This can be done by a review of variables which contribute to the subject matter. The variables are conceptualized in the diagram as follows:

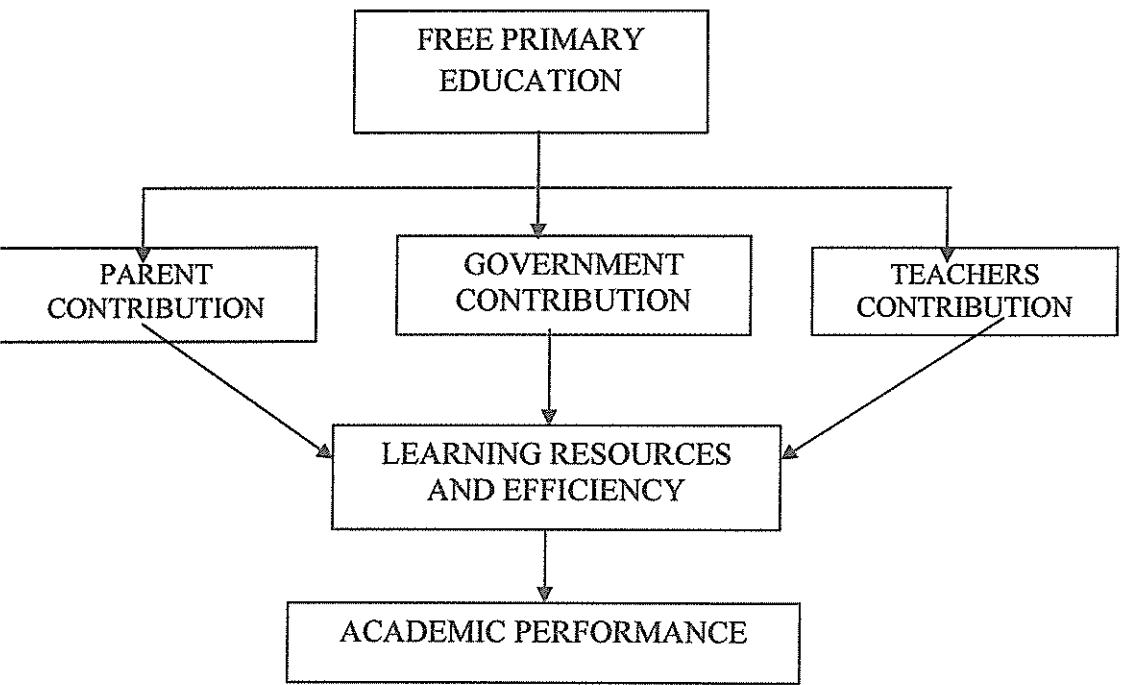


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

The terminologies given here might have extra meanings and interpretations. However, the definitions/ interpretations that follow are basically as per this research project.

Learners' performance: Refers to the kind of result a pupil is able to give or produce in his or her academic work. It could be positive or negative. A pupil could be performing well or poorly.

Zone: This is a grouping of schools as per geographical region.

K.C.P.E- Kenya Certificate of Primary Education; the examination that pupils sit for upon completion of the primary level of education in Kenya.

Resources: Any/ all material and non material things that pupils, teachers and parents require for academic accomplishment and progress.

Quality: The standard of something when it is compared to other things like it.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher viewed to other literatures which are related to Free Primary Education and dropout rates. Alternate sources like text books, hardcopies, magazines and news papers together with loaded material from the internet will be viewed.

According to Penina Mlama (2000) "academic and education activities of a pupil depend on several factors and many of them dropout out of school due to lack of concentration on and un enjoyable study environment".

According to Mellisa under UNESCO observes that dropping out of school has a considerable impact on the future lives of children basing on this argument one the impact would be early marriage. The fact is true that Uganda faces outstanding poverty, which limits parents to sponsor their children after Free Primary Education. Which is freely and paid for by the government.

S.P.Chaube etal (1996) notes that unsatisfactory teaching standards. The inadequacy of training schools and poor pay scale has been responsible for school dropouts in primary schools have studied only up to the middle high school level. Moreover, equipments and reading materials too are insufficient in primary school due to shortage of funds; consequently the academic standard of Free Primary Education is very low.

Dean F. Miller etal (1992) notes that pup in primary school find it knowing how to deal with a moody teacher. For instance in some primary school pupils are not allowed to go out without completing their work or pupils are punished for just moving in classroom without permission. This leads to pupils dropping out.

Carol Simon Weinstein et al. (1997) notes that the increasing number of children in primary school. Along with the increasing diversity, it makes managing classrooms far more challenging than it used to be. Hence, the introduction of Free Primary Education dropouts has increased due to population increase in classrooms.

C.F. Odaet et al (1997) notes that poverty is normally a twin bedfellow of political instability pupils from poor background are always threatened by possibilities of not continuing with their education. They normally dropout or frequently get interrupted and so keep repeating classes, eventually they abandon school.

Lack of facilities in schools. For Free Primary Education to function properly it needs classrooms, playing grounds, storage facilities and staff accommodation of which most schools do not have. A majority of schools operate either in substandard or inadequate facilities.

According to Glen William et al. (2001) notes that since the introduction of Free Primary Education teachers are faced with classes of up to 200 pupils because of unfilled teaching posts. Pupils are often late to school or absent because of child-care or domestic responsibilities or insecurity. This led to pupils dropping out of school because they fail to see the importance of education.

According to ministry of finance, planning and economic development Kampala, and poverty eradication action report (2001—2003) volume one. It been noted that the introduction of the policy of F.P.E with free education for four children in every family has transformed the situation of enrolment, which has risen further each year since 1997 the key issue now is how to keep enrolment high and improve the quality in a very heavily burden system of school dropouts. The most difficult challenge has been to maintain or improve quality with very large increase in quantity. But due to poor quality of education F.P.E has experienced tremendous school dropouts rates for the past years.

According to Gina L. ectal (2001) an education system that encourages teachers to use harsh discipline in order to build an atmosphere of fear and to win respect, compels pupils to run away from school to avoid punishment in relation to F.P.E it loses meaning and direction when students dropout due to harsh punishment.

According to tracing the benefits of poverty action fund to the poor in Uganda, Uganda debt network report no.6 since 1998/99 F.P.E it is still inadequate. In some areas there are inadequate school facilities. For example, children learn in temporary grass thatched buildings with leaking roofs, collapsing mud wall classroom structures and mud floors. These schools lack offices, staff rooms, stores, and clean water sources, adequate desks and textbooks. There is also lack of or poor state of (shared) latrines. This has resulted into absenteeism and/or some children dropping out because they create either a difficult, embarrassing, frightening or uninspiring school-learning environment.

The second United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is to achieve Free Primary Education, more specifically, to "ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling." Currently, there are more than 100 million children around the world of primary school age who are not in school (Abagi, 1993). The majority of these children are in regions of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and within these countries, girls are at the greatest disadvantage in receiving access to education at the primary school age. Since the Millennium Development Goals were launched, there have been many successes. For example, China, Chile, Cuba, Singapore and Sri Lanka are all examples of developing countries that have successfully completed a campaign towards Free Primary Education. It is from these examples of success that the many struggling countries can learn; and

gradually more and more countries will be added to the list of those who have successfully achieved the goal of Free primary education (Beebey, 1968).

Kenya has been ranked among top United Nations member countries likely to achieve the Free Primary Education (F.P.E) goal by the year 2015 (Samuel Otieno, The East African Standard; Kenya). Kenya's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Progress Report attributes the success to the government's decision to introduce free and compulsory primary education. Following this new policy, gross enrolments in primary schools have increased from 5.8 million in 2002 to at least 7 million early this year.

The UN representative says the drop in enrolment since 1991 has been substantial and can be attributed to both rising costs of education and a decrease in employment opportunities. The report further attributes recent unsatisfactory performance in the primary school system to Kenya's previous cost-sharing policy and differential geographic access to educational facilities. To these factors, the 2002-2008 National Development Plan adds staffing problems and mismanagement of education resources (Adams, 1971).

2.2 Challenges facing free primary education

The major challenges facing Kenya's education sector relate to its financing, regional disparities in access, high wastage rates, relevance, quality and reducing child labour. Other specific challenges include immense infrastructure expansion and human resources implications of free primary education. Although the World Bank and other donor agencies have already made commitments towards its support, resource mobilization including teacher training by the Government, still remains a challenge. Another challenge includes the low rates of primary school enrolment in North Eastern Province, closely linked to the nomadic lifestyles of its local populations. High wastage, repetition and drop out rates, all exacerbated by the rising poverty, HIV/Aids epidemic and child labour have also been identified

as one of the factors explaining declining enrolment rates in primary school in Kenya. The provision of adequate learning facilities at the primary school level, including equipment and human resource capacity, impedes the quality and relevance of the imparted skills to pupils (Maengwe, 1985). Causes of school drop outs in F.P.E primary schools

Table I: Challenges facing free primary education

Causes	boys	girls	teachers	Parents
Poverty	6	4	2	2
Strain for teaching resources/ material	4	4	5	3
Drug abuse	4	4	3	2
Congestion in class room and shortage of class room	2	2	4	2
Child labour	3	4	4	4
Diverse age difference among learners	4	4	2	1
Poor payment of teachers	4	2	4	2
Insecurity and long distance	4	4	2	4
Failure to understand the meaning of F.P.E	3	4	4	1
Hunger and malnutrition	3	4	2	1
Early marriage	2	2	4	2
School administration	4	4	2	3
Corruption	3	3	2	4
Poor performance by pupils in F.P.E	3	3	2	2
Lack of discipline among the pupils in F.P.E	3	3	2	2
HIV/AIDs	2	2	4	2
Direct enrollment of pupils to standard 1 by parents to avoid nursery fees	4	3	3	2
TOTAL	68	65	59	45

High level of poverty is most common cause of school drop outs in F.P.E. Where as parents require their children to help them yet big families are unmanageable.

This is in regard to going to collect food and even water from the river. One parent in Kambu zone was asked by the researcher why she does not send her son to school? she answered I cannot grow food for the family alone, if this son does not give a hand, the father goes drinking from morning to evening.

Furthermore lack of teaching materials e.g text books has caused high dropout in Kambu Zone are lacking teaching materials pupils and teachers lack these scholastic materials that are necessary for teaching learning. Pupils in some classes are forced to share a textbook with their teacher. This phenomenon forces some pupils who cannot bear the burden of sharing a book to dropout of school because they lack the basic needs for education.

Besides the above drug abuse in primary schools has become prevalent. And it is picking up in at a highest speed. According to research in Kambu Zone . Many pupils both girls and boys use drugs so as to feel courages and with that hope of becoming clever either by the school administration or by virtue of become drug addicts. some students resort to stealing from their parents so as to buy drugs and finally they resort to dropping out of school so as to do some petty petty jobs like washing cars, prostitution to buy drugs to keep them going.

To add to the above, congestion in classrooms and shortage consequent shortage of classrooms. Has also caused drop out since the introduction of F.P.E program in 1997 the number of pupils who joined increased from 60% to 80% but the problem of congestion in classrooms emerged due to lack of enough classrooms. The population of pupils in most schools is unhealthy. It is common to find a school classroom containing 100 pupils when the capacity of that class is 50 pupils. Healthwise toilets are few, dilapated , dirty and disgusting. This

phenomena forces some of the pupils to drop out of school because the environment for learning is not friendly for them.

Worst if all poor teacher learner ratio. Lack of enough teachers in Kambu Zone division is common in all government aided primary schools, under the F.P.E program. Pupils attend school but there are few teachers to teach them, they make noise most of the day because they are not given assignments to do. The trend goes like that day in day out finally the pupil decides not to go to school because teachers are not teaching them.

To add to the above child labour is common in Kambu Zone most teachers and pupils in Kambu Zone admitted that child labour is causing some of the pupils dropout of school. Some parents stop their children from going to school so as to help them at home; like for instance taking care of their young brother and sisters while the parents are away or they stop them completely to work as maids in town or somewhere. This child automatically becomes a school dropout, although there are laws in Uganda put in place to safeguard children.

Furthermore divergent age among learners in F.P.E. when F.P.E program was introduced in 1997, both the young and old joined primary schools with that uttermost aim of getting free education; but in the process things refused to work out because there was a wide range and gap of age of among the learners, old learners who were slow learners felt intimidated by young learners who were grasping thing quickly and defeating their fellow old learners. Slow learners who were old decided to drop out of school because to them the environment was not accommodative and comfortable.

To make a bad situation worse poor payment of teachers, not only in Kambu Zone but in all school . teachers need good remuneration so as to perform their duties properly. The problem of poor payment of teachers forces teachers to

occupy themselves with other business to make ends meet; and in the process of doing so they fail to perform their duties of teaching pupils, even though it is unprofessional. This affects pupils because the teacher who is supposed to be teaching is occupied with some other activities, it makes some pupils to lose morale in education and they drop out of school.

According to research extra financial payments levied by the respective schools is the most common cause of school dropout like in primary schools in Kenya, the extra financial payments levied greatly contributed to absenteeism and dropping out of school. This is because most of the beneficiaries are from extreme poor families and therefore with the introduction of the fee parents cannot afford.

Among other things insecurity and long distances has also caused drop out in that the problem of unsafe roads and long distances before children get to school is another cause. This long distance are not safe for the children to cross alone as they go to school and so instead they stay at home.

Likewise the failure of parents to understand the meaning of Free Primary Education for example the parents say that the F.P.E program lacks kind sentiments, implying that it was look at them as too poor to afford to educate their children. This poor perception of F.P.E has led to high dropout of pupils from school because their parents do not see any benefit from F.P.E instead they stop their children from going to school to do other things at home.

To add insult to injury consequently hunger and malnutrition are facing the schools in this zone. The F.P.E program does not cater or provide food for pupils, hence they are forced to go home during lunch time. While at home parents are busy attending to their work or daily chores and have not yet prepared food. Therefore children stay at home waiting for food or they start roaming the village to look for what to eat like mangoes or jackfruits

Coupled with the above early marriage and pregnancies affect girls in F.P.E leading to high dropout rates of girls compared to boys. Young girls in primary schools especially adolescents drop out of school because of early pregnancies or early marriage. In most cases mature or old people including teachers impregnate young girls who are supposed to be their daughters and also sometimes, boys and girls in primary schools develop relationships which ends in girls becoming pregnant and dropping out of school. This puts the girl pupil in a disadvantaged side because she finally drop out of school leaving the boy who impregnated her continuing with his studies.

In relation to the above romances are common place and have increased tremendously in primary schools why? Because of pornography, loose rule, parent negligence. School have become natural breeding ground for romantic involvement s. there is a abundant evidence that similar attitudes are often found amongst pupils learning together. Romance relationships among teachers and pupils however have reduced a serious practical problem because they distort the smooth functioning of schools. There have been some high-levels of cases of romantic entanglements that have had devastating effects on careers of pupils both girls and boys. There is negative impact of favoritism or special treatment shown to partners in the relationship, this causes jealousy and sentiment. Sometimes hostility is generated by the romance in a school and output productivity of pupils and pupils is lowered.

As a surprise the researcher found out that in some schools, governing bodies or the administration also a buse F.P.E hence it records dropouts. For example in one school, girls were being used to cook for teachers outside premises which expose the girl pupil to dangers of defilement and rape which affects the girls by becoming pregnant. Girls end up dropping out of school because they are not treated well as compared to boys.

Furthermore consequence corruption in the government sector resulting in misallocation of funds is common and thus teachers go without payment, even schools end up lacking scholastic materials. For teaching learning process to be positively achieved. Therefore to solve this problem teachers and learners should join hands, but in most times it fails especially when teachers are not paid in time and funds that are supposed to be allocated for school are not allocated in time. Consequently the teachers get demoralized when they lack scholastic materials due to corruption in the government hence causing dropout.

Generally there is poor academic performance by pupils. The researcher noted that some pupils drop out of school due to poor performance in academics. Pupils who are academically weak feel they cannot cope up with other pupils who succeed in academics hence they resort to dropping out of school to do other things like hawking clothes among other things in the district.

As a matter of fact there is lack of motivation and guidance among pupil in government aided primary schools. The researcher note that some pupils who are academically weak tend to drop out of school when they are not motivated in every single advancement they make in academics; for weak pupils in class, when they are not motivated they look down upon themselves as in being useless and good for nothing consequently dropping out of school.

Often time the background of the pupil has also caused dropout. One teacher in primary school revealed to the researcher that the background of a pupil matters a lot in academics. Pupils who come from families whose members are educated tend to work hard to achieve academic excellence. while pupils from families whose family members are not educated tend not to work hard in class because they lack role models and motivation among the family members. Consequently some pupils coming from families where the brothers and sisters dropped out of

school, fail to see the importance of education in their life hence they resort to dropping out of school.

Currently lack of discipline among pupils in government aided school, has caused drop out. According to the survey carried out by the researcher some pupils are very disciplined this forces the school administration to send them home to bring their parents for as many as three times until the administration decides to use corporal punishment to instill discipline, and in the process these undisciplined pupil feel intimidated and neglected hence they drop out of school. The researcher noted that some schools are still using corporal punishment although it has been outlawed by the government.

Besides the above, the HIV/AIDS according to research conducted in Kenya many pupil in F.P.E who have dropped out of school because their parents died of Aids scourge or related diseases and they have taken the responsibility of their parents to look after their young brothers and sisters. Yet others have dropped out of school to nurse their sick parents at home.

Last but not least lack of pre-primary preparatory education. The introduction of Free Primary Education (F.P.E) in 2003. has given most parents a lee-way to enroll their children directly to primary schools to avoid nursery fee hence due to this lack of a proper foundation, at the nursery levels, a number of such pupils do not easily cope with school and they end up dropping out of school.

2.3 Key players in implementing free primary education

2.3.1 Government contribution

The free and compulsory primary education for Kenyan children, which was one of the key pre-election promises which brought NARC to power in December 2002, has proved not only to be expensive, but also difficult to implement. Some

of the challenges facing the FPE programme, which began in January this year, include a severe shortage of classrooms, teachers and facilities. An unexpected 1.5 million children who were previously out-of-school, turned up to attend classes in response to the government's call, bringing a new crisis to the education sector.

In many schools, the classroom sizes, especially in the lower classes, have risen from an average of 40 pupils to 120 (Mackay Commission Report, 1976). The number of children enrolled in primary schools is expected to further increase to over 7.5 million, from the current 5.9 million, by the end of this year, according to the education ministry. With the sharp increase in enrollment, the government ought to take measures on streamlining the provision of resources proportional to the number of learners before the matter blows out of proportion (Psacharaporos 2004).

2.3.2 Parents

The parents have the obligation to ensure that their children get the best in terms of academic achievement. They thus have to provide extra inputs into their children education whenever they sense government insufficiencies. Parents on their side developed a tendency of withdrawal from their responsibilities of providing back up resources to their children where government insufficiencies arose. For instance, if the funds by the government are reimbursed late, some parents fail to provide the required resources to their children making it hard for teachers and pupils co-operate in learning.

2.3.3 Head teachers and management committees

Whenever the government reimburses funds for the free primary education vigilant follow-up needs to take place at the school level. The Ministry of Education (MoE) should provide ongoing capacity building to teachers and school heads in the principles of accountability and transparency. Further, community

engagement must continue to be stressed in order to shore up the positive gains of the project. The Ernest and Young report (2007) points to potential backsliding on the decentralized procurement practices which needs to be identified and addressed on a continual basis. Leadership is essential to success and leadership capacity cannot be underestimated in development and implementation of successful projects. Integrity, dynamism, bold decision making, vision, and taking unpopular political decisions characterize some of the most important elements of leadership in this project (MOEST, 2005).

2.4 Challenges

When the government introduced free primary education enrolment shot up and schools became overcrowded, the size of the teaching staff did not increase in corresponding terms. There are inadequate classrooms for the pupils, insufficient teaching and learning materials, and proportionally few qualified teachers to teach the newly inflated classes. With this trend of affairs, the government might remain with no choice but to recruit unqualified and untrained teachers. Worse still, with the rising trends of inflation and deteriorating economy, the untrained teachers might as well become demoralized due to poor salaries, poor housing, and lack of teaching and learning materials. This could lead to compromised education standards in the country. Children in our primary schools are gradually getting frustrated owing to the rising pressure to cope with the shortages. A lot of absenteeism, poor performance, and a very high repetition rate are already being witnessed. Research shows that most challenges facing educational innovations emanate from lack of effective planning and implementation. To confront these problems, there should be a framework of educational change management based on the project model of management (Siringi, 2005).

Free Primary Education does not necessarily result in a drop in quality. Despite the infusion of an additional 1.5 million learners in the system, the quality of

education need not be compromised, and that in fact, the data support an increase in quality particularly for the poorest schools.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

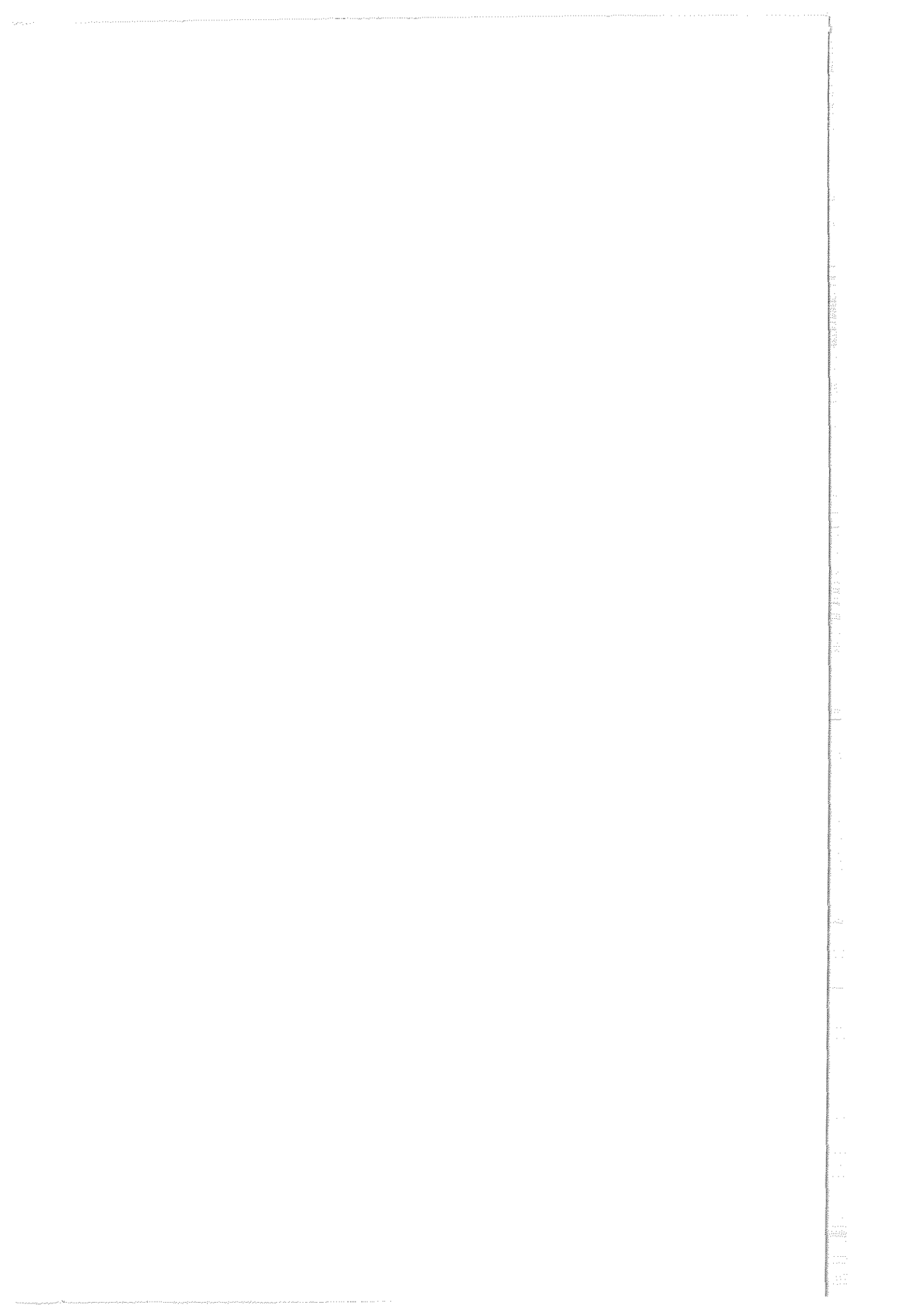
This chapter describes the research design, the study area, the target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments and methods of data collection and data analysis.

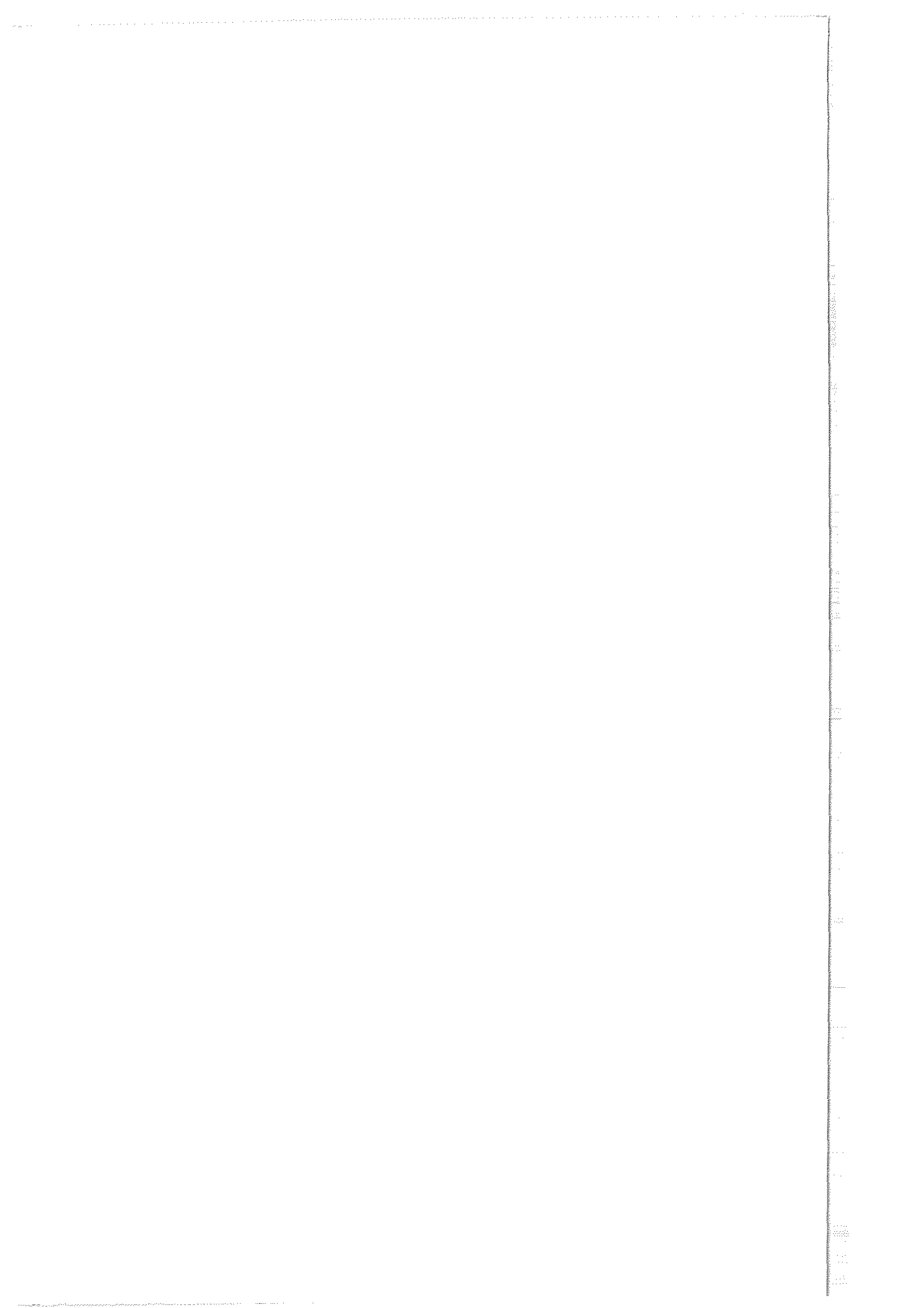
3.1 Research Design

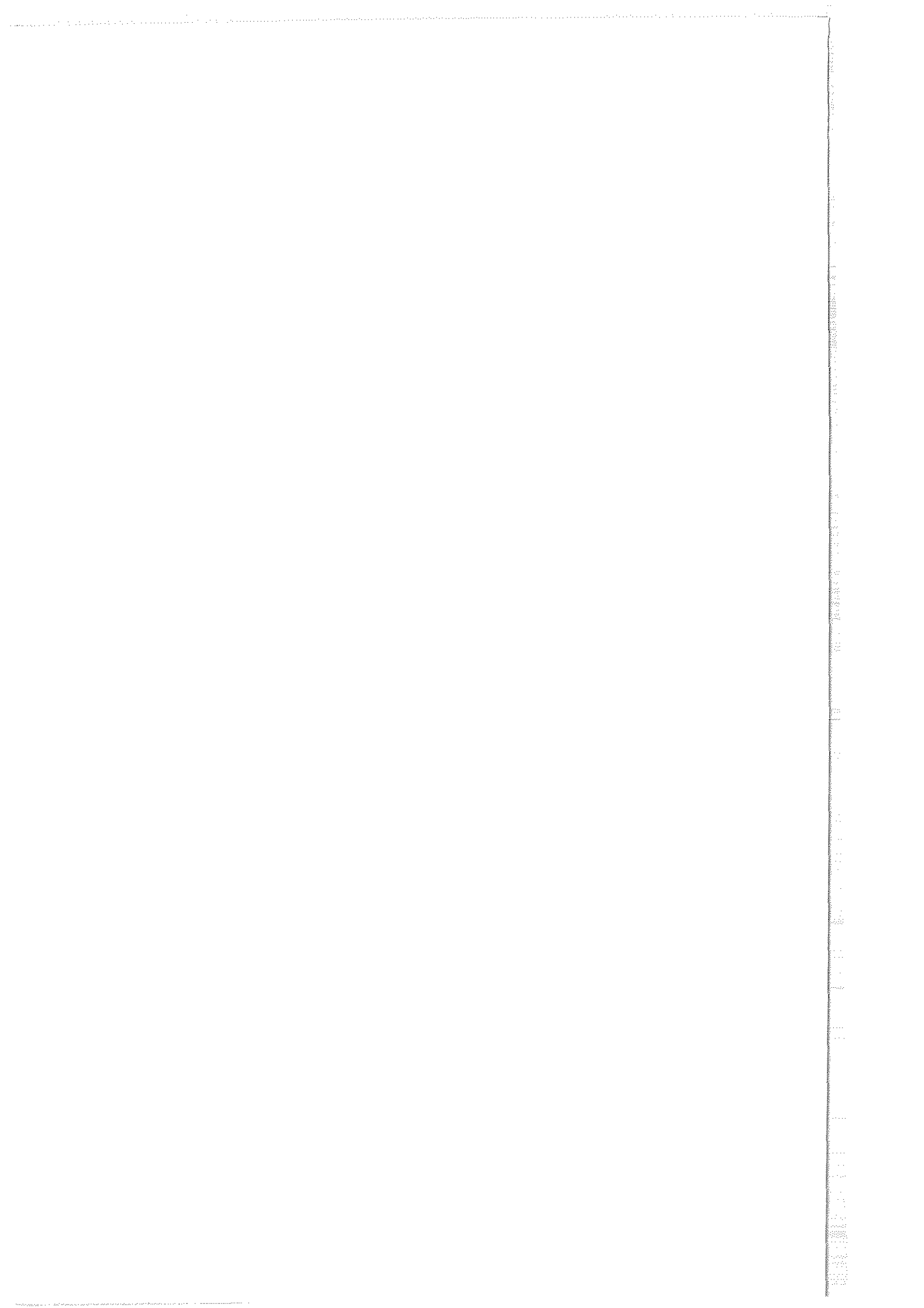
The study will adopt descriptive survey design to investigate the impacts of free primary education on learners performance; A case study of Nguluni Primary school, Kambu Zone, Kibwezi, Kenya. Survey design will describe the nature of the existing conditions hence giving a clear picture of the topic in question (Orodho, 2005). Survey approach assists in determining the relationship between variables that influence the relationship between increase in learners' population and academic performance. Descriptive research (Saunders *et, al.*, 2003). Data on physical facilities will form the basis for descriptive analysis. Consistent with the conceptual framework, the research questions will be set to guide investigations into the problem. Descriptive data and inferential statistics will be used to determine the correlation. The result will be generalized to the larger population.

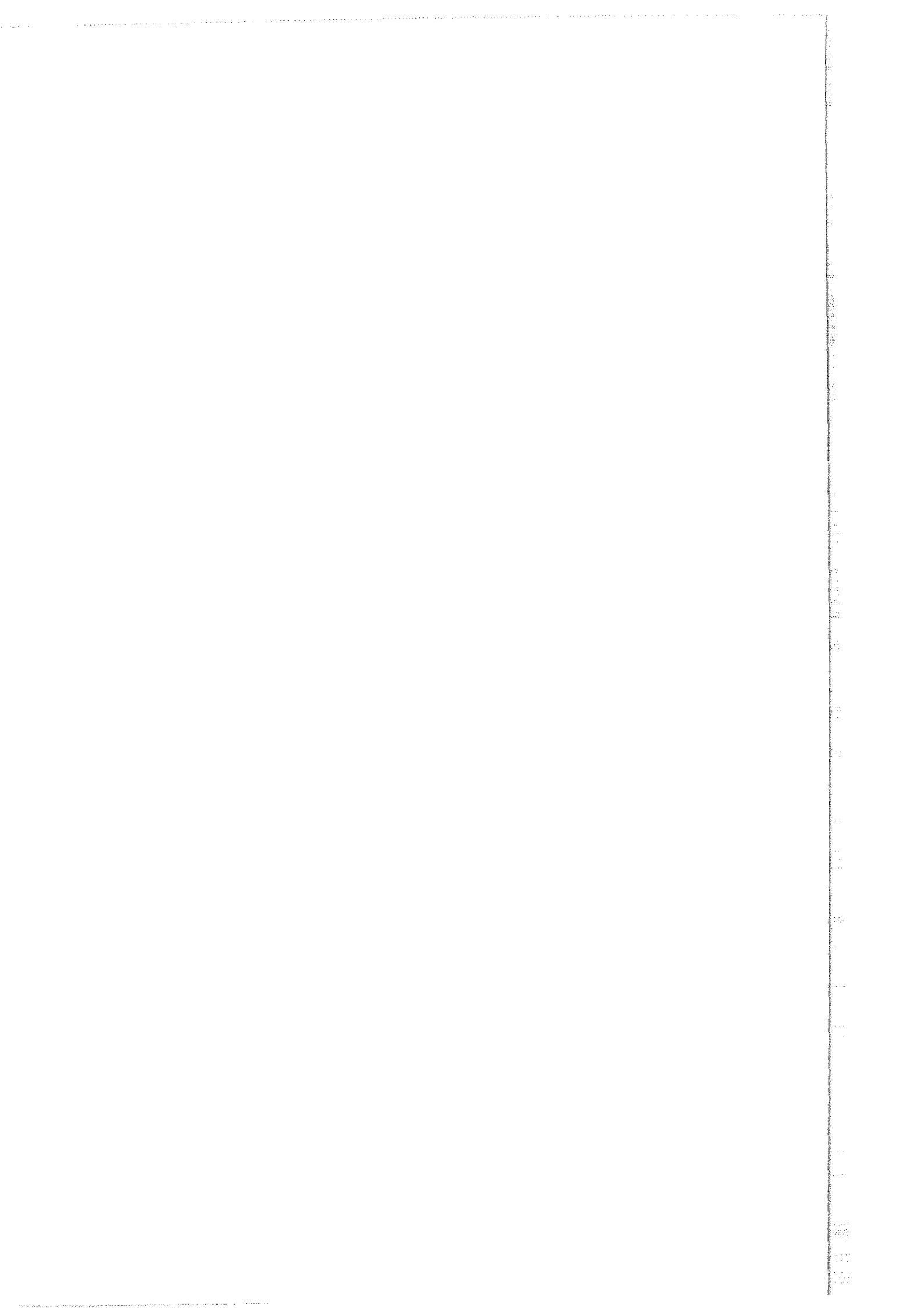
3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Kambu Zone of Kibwezi District in Kenya. Nguluni Primary school will be chosen as the representative sample. The study will involve public primary schools only. The zone was chosen due to accessibility.









3.3 Target population

This research was Nguluni Primary school within Kambu Zone. This is because it is a good representative of the public primary schools in the country. Pupils, teachers and parents will form the target population.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

A combination of probability and non probability sampling design will be used. Probability sampling will form the dominant part of the sampling design especially in regard to respondents. Nguluni Primary school as the research site is already pre determined. The choosing of the respondents will take non probability design. 60 respondents comprising of 20 teachers, 20 parents and 20 pupils will be chosen

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection will done using questionnaires

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Self administered structured and non structured questionnaires was used to collect data related to the themes of the proposed study. The questionnaire will be given to the respondents. The researcher and the research assistant will assist respondents who may not be able to fill the questionnaires. Completed questionnaires will be collected by hand to minimize distortion of respondents answers (Saunders et al, 2003). The questionnaires were chosen because they will reach a large number of subjects. Again, the instrument is relatively cheaper than other instruments in regard to time, money and has no bias.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Orodho (2005) refers to logistics as prior processes, activities or action the researcher must address or carry out before undertaking a research to ensure successful completion of the research project. The researcher will obtain a

research permit. Work plan for the period the research and budget for the research expenses will be prepared. This will ensure that enough funds and time are available to complete the project. A research assistant will be trained prior to the actual fieldwork. Questionnaires will be administered to the subjects in their respective classrooms. Preliminary information and explanations will be collected by hand by the researcher/ research assistant to avoid distortion of respondents' answers by other people. The researcher will follow a rigid procedure to investigate and seek answers to a set of pre-conceived questions through personal interviews. Structured questions will be delivered to the respondents by the researcher. Personal interviews will be used to collect information from the teachers. Teachers will also provide records of the pupils' academic performance. The researcher will work with an understanding and cooperation of the school administrators. These include the DEO, school heads and teachers. Strict privacy of the respondents will be highly respected.

3.7 Data Analysis

After collecting data was organized and broken down into manageable units before subjecting it to statistical analysis. The analysis will be done using descriptive statistics. Megenda *et al* (1999) says that the purpose of the descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe information using a few statistics. The data will be analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively to enable the researcher make certain influence about population value on the basis of obtained sample values. Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient will be computed to test for relationship between the variables. Finally, data will be presented in frequency tables, percentages, pie charts and graphs.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSIONS

According to the results drawn by the researcher from the Information contained on the analyzed questionnaires, in form of tables. It clearly shows factors that need to be ironed out to pave way for free primary education.

As per the solutions and recommendations made during the World conference held in most countries of the world, fundamental efforts towards the achievement of education For All have been made.

The continent of Africa and especially East Africa like Kenya and Uganda were not left out.

The researcher's findings shows that the birth of free primary education was successful though there are factors that have hindered the experiencing specific learning difficulties, making them to continue performing poorly.

These factors were highlighted from the questionnaires analysed as lack of enough facilities like desks, classrooms, teaching force and rigid curriculum which doesn't cater for all learnings.

To eliminate these draw-backs, it calls for the Government in collaboration with parents and well wishers to promote the education for all goals through expansion of classrooms, training, employing more teachers and modifying the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of learners.

According to the teacher's questionnaires analysed , sixty percent cited the shortage of facilities like classrooms, desks, teaching and learning resources as major factors that has hindered learning from being efficient with the

introduction of free primary education as engineered by World conference on Education for All (EFA) Thailand, 1990.

These has led to large numbers of learners admitted per class which has led to increased teacher's work load therefore preventing learners with specific learning difficulties being attended individually.

As result the Freiberg (98-P-7) ideas on the need for teachers building programmes from the scratch involving parents and the community to collaborate as they create Individualized Education Programme (I.E.Ps) and Individualized Family Programmes (I.F.Ps) to promote full continuum of services for learners who need more than regular classrooms.

Justifying the fact well to do families are transferring their children to private schools for better academic performance which conquer with (Beal, 1995) that inclusive education is proactive and comprehensive.

The researcher feels that there is need to expand on the existing facilities and to train more teachers on special needs Education to handle the situation.

It confirms the views of (Schumns & Vaugh, 1993) on the challenges faced when dealing with the emergence of free primary education.

The researchers findings from the learners questionnaires shows that learners received free primary education positively.

This is replicated by the learners. They cited the fact that their parents have been relieved from buying textbooks, writing materials and other learning materials which otherwise could have not be afforded.

This finding matches with the ideas of the children's act (2001) that every child has a right to education irrespective of his/her ability and disability.

According to (Hallahahus & Kauffman, 1994) cites that factors such as teachers attitudes and teachers unpreparedness to teach special need learners evident suggestions teachers need thorough re-training efforts and fundamental changes in teachers college (Brent Staples,)

The researcher feels that teachers should be motivated through rewards alongside re-training to ensure it's efficiency in achieving Free education goal as per article 26 of the Free declaration of human rights (1948).

Further more parents concurred with the teachers and learners on the expansion and putting up of more buildings, employing more teachers and increase on learning and teaching facilities to accommodate the increasing number of learners in schools.

The researcher agrees on the bore suggestions on ways of bettering free primary education. It's the researcher's opinion that all parties handling free education work together on policies and recommendation which have been put forward to make education for All a success.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

This chapter captured the discussions on the data findings from the research questions drawn from the various tables. It dealt with the conclusions and recommendations on the area of the researcher study. Example it gave the way forward for achieving the researched objectives and the areas of concern by future researchers.

According to the teacher's questionnaires analysed, sixty percent cited the shortage of facilities like classrooms, desks, teaching and learning resources as major factors that has hindered learning from being efficient with the introduction of free primary education as engineered by World conference on Education for All (EFA) Thailand, 1990.

These has led to large numbers of learners admitted per class which has led to increased teacher's work load therefore preventing learners with specific learning difficulties being attended individually.

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Justifying the fact well to do families are transferring their children to private schools for better academic performance which conquer with (Beal, 1995) that inclusive education is proactive and comprehensive.

The researcher feels that there is need to expand on the existing facilities and to train more teachers on special needs Education to handle the situation.

It confirms the views of (Schumms & Vaugh, 1993) on the challenges faced when dealing with the emergence of free primary education.

The researchers findings from the learners questionnaires shows that learners received free primary education positively.

This is replicated by ninety percent of the learners. They cited the fact that their parents have been relieved from buying textbooks, writing materials and other learning materials which otherwise could have not be afforded.

This finding matches with the ideas of the children's act (2001) that every child has a right to education irrespective of his/her ability and disability.

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5.2 Research Conclusion

The schools offers an opportunity for pupils to develop whatever talents they posses. In doing so the pupils are aided or hindered by a range of other variables to do with their attitudes. They are also influenced by their family, gender, ethnic background and various other social variables. Those pupils who drop out of school can be supported by their school in their bid to overcome the negative effect of the other societal pressures. The evidence reported here shows that effective schools are better equipped to help the pupil mount a challenge.

The success of such F.P.E schools, however is generally likely to be both partial and limited, because F.P.E schools are also part of the wider society, subject to their norms, rules and influences. It is also important to note that F.P.E schools are not blamed for high dropout rates nor held responsible, unfairly for failure to overcome school dropout amongst pupils.

For families whose lives are disadvantaged in relation to their peers, F.P.E schools remain one of the few mechanism that are able to provided a compensating boost. The more effective the school, the higher proportion of pupils that will get to the starting life chances. How well such pupils perform in the subsequent race will depend on their motivation.

There are obvious lessons from this research for those involved; parents who seek to send their children to F.P.E schools, head teachers who are endeavoring to increase the effectiveness of their schools; and government which is seeking to support F.P.E program in becoming free and more effective. If the aim is to reduce

or curb school dropouts and lift overall standards, then way needed to be sought in which a compensating mechanism can be created or made more readily available. These includes better pre-school provision in F.P.E out of school study-support centres, fuller financial help with school meals, fravel to school, (transport) if possible and for younger pupils such as reading materials or help the school improve itself.

Finally effort are required by the ministry of education in improving salary structures, working conditions and recruitment incentives that will entice qualified teachers into all teaching fields and all communities, rather than lowering standards whether shortages occur. The chronic shortages of teachers in fields like mathematics, science and special education have undermined F.P.E in these fields since F.P.E started in 1997, just as the hiring of hundreds of unqualified entrants has undermined the F.P.E program .

The quality of a government aided schools strongly influences pupils achievements. A good F.P.E school has an orderly, un oppressive atmosphere, active and energetic teachers who take part in making decisions. The head teachers and teachers high expectation for pupils, emphasize academics more than extracurricular activities, and closely monitor pupils performance.

Pupils who like their school do better academically and also are healthier. Adolescents especially boys like school less than younger children adolescents are more satisfied with school if they are involved in making rules and feel support from teachers and other pupils.

Society suffers when young people do not finish school-dropout s are more likely to be unemployed or to have low incomes, which ends up in poor welfare and hence become involved with drugs, crimes and delinquency, in addition the loss of income tax and being a burden to the public treasury.

Perhaps the most important factor in whether or not a pupil will finish school is active engagement; the extent to which the pupil is actively involved in schooling. On the most basic level, active engagement means coming to class on time, being prepared, listening and responding to the teacher and obeying school rules. The second level of engagement consists of getting involved with the class work-asking questions, taking the initiative to seek help when needed, or doing extra reading. Both levels of active engagement tend to pay off in positive school performance by vulnerable pupils.

Self-regulated learners are interested in learning. They set challenging goals and use appropriate strategies to achieve them, they try hard, persist in the face of difficulties and seek help when necessary. Pupils who do not believe in their ability to succeed tend to become frustrated and depressed-feelings that make success harder to attain; hence dropping out of school.

Several reforms in the education sector are underway in Kenya to be able to achieve the F.P.E goal fully. Over the next five years, reforms will focus on strengthening the free primary education policy, governance and management, curriculum review and development, and staffing arrangements. In addition, achieving F.P.E by the year 2015 will require pursuing already existing programmes, especially the textbook and bursary funds and the school feeding programmes. It will also be heavily dependent on the implementation of the children's Act, reaching out to communities and sensitizing them on cultural and other practices that hinder school enrolment and retention (Shiefelbien and Farrell, 1973). Many of these efforts may be supported by enhancing partnership between stakeholders in primary education and provision of an all inclusive education by modifying existing facilities to accommodate children with disabilities as well as training of special education teachers.

5.3 Recommendations

In order to ensure that all learners performs excellently especially those with specific learning difficulties in an inclusive set up in Kambu zone , the researcher recommends that:

- Teachers should be trained in special needs education, be motivated, ensure well staffing of schools and be supplied with sufficient teaching and learning resources to handle learners with varied abilities.

- The Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission to ensure that the teaching force is increased in Kambu zone to ease teacher's workload.

- The Government in collaboration with Non Government Organization , well wishers and other stakeholders to assist in expanding the existing facilities and if possible build more classes, buy desks, to accommodate many learners.

- The Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) in collaboration with curriculum developers to modify the syllabus to cater for learners with special needs education, example use of simpler terminologies in the area of languages and arithmetics.

- Another educational area which has not been systematically studied by me or any other else that I know of is the area of the consistency and the sustainability of the free primary education across the world. This points at an area of need for further research that any researcher could embark on.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Kindly answer the following questionnaires as honestly as possible. The questionnaire is designed specifically for this research. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Do not identify yourself by writing your name anywhere in the questionnaire. Please tick where necessary.

1. Gender: Male [] Female []

2. Age _____ (years)

3. Occupation _____

4. Level of education
 University level []
 Post secondary level []
 Secondary level []
 Primary level []
 Other (specify) _____

5. How many children do you have? _____

6. How many are in school (specify how many in secondary and primary)

7. Do you think the free primary education is successfully implemented in the country?
 Yes [] No []

8. If yes what aspects are successful? _____

9. If no, explain _____

10. Are the funds allocated by the government to your school enough to cater for the needs of the learners? Classify as follows:-

- Enough []
- Almost enough []
- Little []
- Very little []
- Unacceptable []
- Other (specify) []

11. How can you commend on the channel of reimbursement of funds by the government to schools?

- Very fast []
- Fast []
- Slow []
- Very slow []

12. According to you what suggestions can you give to improve the channel of reimbursement of funds? _____

13. How are the resources meant for provision of free primary education managed in the school? _____

14. How has been the transition of the already existing facilities to accommodate the increasing number of pupils? Rate the response as follows

- Acceptable []
- Fair []

Not acceptable []

15. Do you agree with the teacher – pupil ratio at acceptable levels? Rate your response as:

Strongly agree []

Agree []

Strongly disagree []

16. Do you think the government is doing enough to resolve the problem of teacher- pupil ratio? _____

17. What challenges are being faced in implementing free primary education? _____

END

Thank you very much for your responses and co-operation.

APPENDIX II : LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Kampala International University
Department of 10DL
P.O. BOX 20,000
Kampala, Uganda.

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF: THE IMPACT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON PERFORMANCE
OF LEARNERS; A CASE STUDY OF NGULUNI PRIMARY SCHOOL, KAMBU
ZONE, KIBWEZI, KENYA**

I am an undergraduate student at the Kampala International University, currently undertaking a research to investigate the impact of free primary education on performance of learners; a case study of Nguluni Primary school, Kambu Zone, Kibwezi, Kenya

The questionnaire is designed for this research only. Your school has been selected to provide information concerning the study through questionnaires. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only.

I hope you will respond to the questions honestly.

Yours faithfully,

.....
Yambu Mutinda Shadrack
REG. NO: BED/10648/61/DF