



EXTRA LEVIES AS DETERMINANT FACTOR IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

Peter Mutia Mbalaka 

South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya
petermutia1@gmail.com

Selpher K. Cheloti

Senior Lecturer, South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya
scheloti@seku.ac.ke, selphercheloti@yahoo.com

Redempta Maithya

Senior Lecturer, South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya
rmaithya@seku.ac.ke

Abstract

Despite the government's efforts in implementing free and compulsory education policy, transition from primary schools and completion rates at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) rates are still below 100 percent, contrary to government efforts to boost them. This study therefore sought to investigate extra levies as determinant factor in the implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to; establish the effects of levying admission fees and BOM teachers' salaries; determine the effects of levying charges for infrastructure installation and determine the impact of levying charges for remedial teaching and teacher motivation on implementation of free and compulsory education in Kitui County. The study was anchored on the Liberal Educational Theory (LET), which proposes that each country's citizen should be accorded freedom and opportunity to access and acquire education without any form of discrimination. The study used descriptive survey research design and collected data from a

sample of 164 school principals, 17 Parents' Association (PA) chairpersons and the Kitui County Director of Education (CDE). Data were collected by use of questionnaire for principals, interview schedules for CDE and PA chairpersons and document review analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed on basis of emerging themes in line with the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. Further, hypothesis was tested using the product moment correlation coefficient at the .05 level of significance. Analyzed results were presented in tables. The findings from the study revealed that there was a negative and significant relationship between extra levies charged and transition and completion rates ($r = -.747$; $p \leq .01$). In view of the foretasted findings, the study concludes that there is a statistically significant relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory public day secondary schools' education in Kitui County. This means that the higher and the more the levies are charged, the lower the transition and completion rates. The study recommends that The Ministry of Education (MOE) should enforce the ban on charging of extra levies in schools for it is illegal and the government should publish all approved levies that a school can charge learners if need arises.

Keywords: Extra levies; determinants; free and compulsory education; public day secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Education is a lifelong social process by which individuals learn skills that are necessary to enable them fit to the life of their society (Balestrino, Gazzimi & Luporini, 2013). Free and compulsory education, is a form of schooling which is financed by public funds and is required of every school age child. By imposing free and compulsory education, states ensure that no school age child is denied education, for even children from poor families get opportunity to attend school (Heyman, 2014). Balestrino et al (2013) assert that secondary education is a critical level in the education system, for it links early childhood and primary education to higher education, besides connecting school system to the labour market. Education enhances development, builds up respect for human rights and freedoms, and enables people to participate optimally in a free society.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), includes the right to education (United Nations, 1948). Article 26 (1) of the declaration stipulates that everyone has the right to free and compulsory education, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989 in section 28 (a) and (b) requires every country to enact legislations that reduce social and financial barriers to primary and

secondary schooling (CRC, 1989). Despite the adoption of the CRC and ratification of Education for All (EFA) 1990, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015, by a great many countries, some of the countries have continued to levy tuition fee. The levying of tuition fee poses a great challenge to accessing secondary schooling (Heyman, 2014). This therefore means that governments need to enact legislations and policies that ensure that basic education is free, compulsory and implementable, characterized by optimal transition and completion rates.

Alec (2007) notes that Massachusetts was the first United States of America (USA) state to pass universal public education law in 1642 and which imposed compulsory school attendance. The compulsory attendance of school law spread to other states till 1918 and Mississippi became the last state to enact the law. The universal public education law was meant to force demographic minorities across America into public schools and requires that every child aged 7-16 years attend school to acquire education. The acquisition of education enables one to contribute fully to development and progress of society. Each USA state and local government has the responsibility of funding schooling to the tune of 90 percent while the federal government contributes 10 percent of the national education budget (Alec, 2007). The free and compulsory education ensures that every child in the USA has access to free public primary and secondary schooling. The execution of the compulsory schooling law leads to high enrolments, retention and completion rates.

All education institutions in Cuba are public and the education sector receives one of the highest annual budget allocations to public education in the world, currently estimated at 13 percent of Cuba's annual budget (Lopez, 2017). Cuba's public education is entirely free, for government subsidizes cost of the public education at the tune of 100 percent. A 2014 World Bank report states that Cuba has the best education system and universal literacy in Latin America and the Caribbean regions (Lopez, 2017). The education is compulsory for all children aged 6-16 years and who attend primary school for 6 years and basic secondary or high school for 3-4 years. Completion rate at primary education is estimated at 99.3 percent and all graduates at this level transit to basic secondary education and then higher secondary level (pre university education) or technical/vocational institutes. Those who qualify join university education and technological polytechnics respectively. This enables Cuba meet the goal of education for all (EFA).

Primary level education in the Dominican Republic is free and compulsory, runs for six years and is designated for 6-11 years age children. Although education is free at the secondary level, it is not compulsory (World Bank, 2018). The secondary school level comprises of two years of lower secondary, four years of upper secondary and is meant for children aged 12-13 years

and 14-17 years respectively. The lower secondary level is meant for general education while the upper secondary level is meant for either vocation and technical education or arts education.

Despite the mandatory nature of primary education, there is little enforcement of attendance leading to low rates of completion at the primary level. This leads to low level of transition to the secondary schools. The non-compulsory nature of secondary education poses a significant impediment to completion of secondary schooling. The current rates of transition and completion are estimated at 93 percent and 62 percent respectively. This means that the Dominican Republic is yet to achieve universal primary and secondary education. This calls for Dominican Republic to enforce attendance at primary school level and make secondary education level mandatory and enforceable (World bank, 2018).

The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR, 1986) re-affirms adherence of African countries to the principle of human and people's rights and freedoms. The rights and freedoms are contained in the declarations, conventions and other legal instruments adopted by the African Union (AU). Article 17 (1) of the charter states that; every individual shall have the right to education. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), article 11 (3) articulates provisions on the right to free and compulsory basic education for the child (ACRWC, 1990). In line with ACRWC, Uganda introduced universal primary education (UPE) in January 1997 and which led to doubling of enrolment in primary schools in a period of 2 years. The demand for secondary education by children who were successfully completing primary schooling under UPE in Uganda led to embarking on Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007. Titeca and Lisa (2015), on a study of the impact of USE on enrolment in Uganda found out that USE has had a continuous positive impact on enrolment and which has been facilitated by the policy on automatic promotion to the next class regardless of performance in formative examinations in previous class.

Free primary education (FPE) was enacted by Tanzanian government in 2002. This led to improvement of primary school enrolment in Tanzania from 59 percent in 2000 to 94 percent in 2011 (Kizito, 2016). In January 2016, Tanzanian government started implementing the policy on free secondary education (FSE) for all children transiting from primary schools. This put the country in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 which requires states to ensure that every citizen completes free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. The FSE excludes extra levies such as for uniform and stationery. With the abolition of fees at the secondary school level, transition, retention and completion rates are expected to improve in the secondary schools in Tanzania.

Somaliland declared free primary public education in 2011, but the government does not finance the schools effectively due to low economic status, according to UNICEF report (2017).

The poor funding of schools leads to inadequacy of physical infrastructure, teaching and learning materials and poor running of schools. Learners are also forced to incur extra costs in purchase of stationery. This results in high dropout rates and which makes Somaliland have one of the lowest primary school gross enrolment rates (GER) in the world at 44.3 percent. Somaliland secondary education, and whose span is 4 years, is neither free nor compulsory. Resultantly there are very low transition and completion rates in secondary schools in Somaliland. This again makes Somaliland have one of the poorest secondary school GER in the world, which stood at 21.3 percent in 2015. To help improve on enrolment and completion, Somaliland needs to enact a policy on free and compulsory education implementation in both primary and secondary schools.

In the State of Eritrea, education is officially compulsory for children aged 7-16 years, but infrastructure is inadequate, making it difficult to accommodate all eligible children (Mengesha & Tessema, 2019). Due to low economic status, the education is only free at basic level. The low economic status is attributable to 30 years war and struggle for independence, gained in 1993 from its mother country – Ethiopia. Environmental threats also contribute to the low economic status. Due to non-funding of the education at secondary level by government and inadequacy of infrastructure, it is estimated that only about 57% and 21% of children attend primary and secondary schooling respectively (Mengesha & Tessema, 2019). This is indicative of huge wastage along educational system from primary to secondary despite the fact that the Eritrean government has sustained effort to build schools and supply trained teachers. Because of teacher inadequacy, learner-teacher ratios are high and estimated at 45:1 and 54:1 at the elementary and secondary levels respectively. On average, the elementary level and secondary level classrooms accommodate 63 learners and 97 learners respectively. The inadequacy of infrastructure and teachers leads to high dropout rate, hence poor transition to secondary and completion at the secondary school level.

Kenya is a signatory to the aforementioned global and regional declarations, besides EFA (1990), MDGs (2000), Universal Primary Education (UPE) 2000 and SDGs (2015) commitments. This led Kenya to reintroduce Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 after failure of initial attempts (Republic of Kenya, 2003) and Free Secondary Education (FSE) in 2008 (Republic of Kenya, 2008). To ensure equal opportunities for all primary school leavers, the government introduced the aspect of compulsion in 2010 and hence free and compulsory basic education in Kenya (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Chapter 4 of the constitution of Kenya - the bill of rights, article 53 (b) provides for free and compulsory basic education for the child.

In 2017, the Kenyan government committed to pay Ksh 22,244 per year per each day student, hence making the day public secondary education totally free and compulsory. This is

geared towards achieving SDG 4 aspect of universalizing secondary education. School head teachers, parents and county administration are required to enforce school attendance so as to boost implementation of the free and compulsory secondary education policy (Basic Education Act, 2013). Part IV of the Act, section 28 (1) makes provision for implementation of the right of every child to free and compulsory basic education, while sections 30 and 40 make parents/guardians and head teachers duty bound to ensure children attend school.

The independent variable linked to implementation of free and compulsory education (dependent variable) that was identified for this study is charging of extra levies. Extra levies refer to other financial contributions required of learners by the school, other than those authorized by the government (Tomasevski, 2003). Such levies include fees for remunerating Board of Management (BOM) teachers, conducting remedial teaching, motivating teachers, hosting education days and installation of school infrastructure. Koya (2015) on a study of educational levies in Fiji, found that imposition of extra levies led to learners being denied admission if they failed to pay. Similarly, Melara, Ayele and Blaustein (2014) studied the effect of free, compulsory, universal basic education (FCUBE) in Ghana. The study found out that irregular disbursement of funds by government led to charging of extra fee by schools to cater for school operations. This led to 40 percent of children from poor families dropping out of school. Demand for extra levies by schools led to girls dropping out of school in slum areas of Nairobi and Turkana Counties, Kenya, hence lowering enrolment and completion rates, besides denying the girls opportunity to pursue their education (Wanzala, 2016).

The government of Kenya enacted the free and compulsory education policy with a view to having 100 percent transition and completion rates in secondary schools (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). However, the 100 percent transition and completion rates in public day secondary schools in Kenya, may not be realized. This is attributable to some schools' continued charging of extra levies. For example, the Kitui County transition rate was 85 percent in 2019 (MOE, 2019) while the 2018 completion rate was 72.8 percent (Mwangi, 2018). The below 100 percent transition and completion rates defined the need for this study; to establish the relationship between institutional charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui county.

Study objectives

The general objective of the study was to determine the relationship between charging of extra levies on learners and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County, Kenya.

Specific study objectives were to:

- i. Establish The effects of levying admission fees and Board of Management (BOM) teachers' salaries on implementation of free and compulsory education in Kitui County.
- ii. Determine the effects of levying charges for infrastructure installation on implementation of free and compulsory education in Kitui County.
- iii. Determine the effects of levying charges for remedial teaching and teacher motivation on implementation of free and compulsory education in Kitui County

Statement of the Problem

The free and compulsory education policy in Kenya was enacted to ensure an increase of access to both primary and secondary education by providing more resources with a view to providing 12 years of basic education (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Notably, 15 percent of the total Kitui County 2018 Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) candidature had not joined form one by February 10th 2019. This indicated a transition rate of 85 percent according to Ministry of Education (MOE) report (MOE, 2019). Similarly, only slightly over 80 percent of the Kitui County 2019 KCPE candidature had enrolled in form 1 by February 11th 2020 as per National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) data (Ndiewo, 2020).

Of the 22,607 learners enrolled in form 1 in 2014 in Kitui County, only 18,071 sat Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in 2017 leading to a completion rate of 79.9 percent (Kitui County Education Office, 2020). A study done by Mwangi (2018) on influence of educational subsidies on completion rate in public day secondary schools in Kitui County showed that secondary school completion rate was low at 72.8 percent in 2018. Similarly, Kitui County form 1 enrolment in 2016 was 23,066 out of which 19,716 sat KCSE in 2019 (Kitui County Education Office, 2020) leading to completion rate of 85.5 percent.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Historical perspectives of free and compulsory education

Alec (2007) notes that compulsory education is as old as recorded human history which started in the classical era. However, enforcement of the compulsory education was restricted to royal, religious and military organizations. Plato (424-348 BCE) is appreciated for having popularized the concept of compulsory education in western intellectual thought (Alec, 2007). Plato's rationale was based on quality education which would lead to intelligent individuals who would create ideal cities.

In Sparta, boys aged 6-7 years would be enrolled to military schools, whose courses were harsh and brutal. Males aged 18-20 years had to pass a test comprising of physical

fitness, military acuity and leadership skills. Failure in the test led to loss of citizenship and political rights. Passing was a rite of passage to manhood and citizenry, besides qualifying to serve in the military training as a soldier until age of 60 years when the soldier could retire and join his family. Informal teaching of children in Judea was a requirement of every parent (Alec, 2007). A Judean sage - Joshua ben Gamla instituted formal education in Judea in the 1st century AD by establishing schools in every town. He made the formal education compulsory for children aged 6 - 8 years and who were taught by teachers called Rabbis.

In the medieval Era, the Aztec Triple Alliance (1428-1521) – a military and political treaty among three city states; Tenochtitlan, Texcoco and Tlacopan ruled central Mexico. The Aztec Triple Alliance is thought to be the first state to execute a system of compulsory education in Mexico (Alec, 2007). In the Early Modern Era, the Protestant Reformation established compulsory education for boys and girls in parts of Germany and later in rest of Europe and the USA. In 1524, Martin Luther called for establishment of compulsory schooling with a view to enabling all parishioners to read the Bible on their own. The Scotland School Establishment Act of 1616 required every parish to establish a school for everyone and which was paid for by parishioners. In the late Modern Era, Massachusetts was the first US state in 1642 to pass a contemporary universal public education law, which required every town to establish and operate a grammar school.

Prior to colonization of Africa, the traditional training that the African societies offered to their members was characterized by provision of survival skills to individuals (Dama, 2013). Members of the African society learned through interaction with their physical and spiritual environments. Family units and traditional schools were structures by which knowledge was provided and acquired. With the coming of colonizers, those structures got undermined by the colonizers. The colonizers then started providing education which was geared towards moral uprightness and production of honest Christian clerks, traders, chiefs and interpreters (Dama 2013).

The colonial government of Kenya established a Department of Education in 1911 (Ojiambo, 2009). Through the department, the government established grants-in-aid system to help in development of education provided by Christian missions. The East African Protectorate Education Commission was appointed in 1919 and mandated to investigate the unsatisfactory status of education for all races in the Protectorate (Ojiambo, 2009). Together with the 1924 Phelps-Stokes Commission, the East Africa Protectorate Education Commission formed the foundation on which Kenyan Education was cemented. The Phelps-Stokes Commission recommended a practically oriented education for Africans.

The Beecher Committee of 1949 reinforced the Phelps-Stokes Commission recommendation of providing practical education (Ojiambo, 2009). In 1952, the Binns Commission was set and which recommended development of teacher education for both colonial and post-colonial period. Besides the commissions, the colonial government passed the 1921, 1931 and 1934 education ordinances and set up educational committees, councils and boards with a view to enhancing quality of African Education (Ojiambo, 2009). An Education development plan was drawn up in mid 1950s to spearhead expansion of secondary and higher education. Within five years, the plan saw enormous increase in pace of education in anticipation of independence and African rule.

The 1961 Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and 1962 conference in Tananarive in Madagascar saw setting of educational priorities by African representatives. The conferences prioritized promotion of economic and social development by providing relevant education. This historical advance formed the basis on which Kenya embarked on formulating educational legal policies that could accelerate acquisition of education and spur its economic development (Ojiambo, 2009).

Drafting of Sessional paper No. 10 in 1965 was the first undertaking by post-independence Kenyan government (Ojiambo, 2009). The paper considered education as much more of an economic than a social service and a crucial wherewithal of addressing shortage of skilled domestic man power and creating equal opportunities for all Kenyans (Republic of Kenya, 1965). The recommendations of UNESCO Addis Ababa conference of 1961 set 1980 as the year by which all African states were to achieve universal primary education (UPE). This drove Kenya to commit, through Kenya National African Union (KANU) manifestoes to attain the UPE (Ojiambo, 2009). The Simon Ominde Commission Report of 1964/1965 supported the objective of offering UPE to every Kenya child by 1971, on the basis of the 1961 Addis Ababa conference resolutions.

In 1971 a presidential decree abolished tuition fees for economically poor districts, while a second presidential decree on 12th December 1973 provided free education for children in standards I-IV (Ojiambo, 2009). This resulted in primary schools' enrolment rising from 1.8 million in 1973 to 2.8 million in January 1974. The astronomical rise in enrolment called for more infrastructure, which made school management committees to levy building fund. In most cases the building fund levy turned out to be higher than the abolished school fees. Out of frustration, many parents withdrew their children from schools in the tune of 1-2 million, hence reversing the gains made previously.

Charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education

Tomasevski (2003) defines extra levies as financial contributions required of parents to the school other than those authorized by government. The levies are meant to fund programs that the collected authorized fees does not address like annual testing, co-curricular activities, book shows, meals, uniform and transport. The additional levies result in inconsistent attendance of school by poor learners who eventually drop out, for the charges become unaffordable to the poor families. This means that extra levies pose a financial barrier to education to poor families even in countries where education is free and compulsory, leading to low level implementation of the free and compulsory education (Tomasevski, 2003).

Fiji government provides grants for tuition fees, teachers' salaries and other support to its basic education institutions. However, the institutions impose extra charges to cater for sports, school magazines, textbooks, extra tuition fee, building fee, uniform fee, coaching fee and book hire fee (Koya, 2015). A study by Koya (2015), on educational levies and their impact on enrolment in schools in Fiji, found that children who did not pay the extra charges for being poor were denied admission and or sent home. This meant that the learners sent home became truant and would eventually drop out, which lowered transition, enrolment and completion rates.

Schooling incurs both upfront and extra costs and hence household income is a critical factor in determining access to education (Hunt, 2008). The extra costs are inclusive of uniforms, transport and opportunity costs of sending a child to school. The school fees and extra costs make children from poor households never to attend school or dropout once they have enrolled. Hunt (2008) notes that a research in 2002 by Brown and Park in rural China, found that economically constrained families had their children three times more likely than children from well off families to drop out of primary schools.

Bangladesh officially abolished tuition fees at public primary schools in 1993, but extra levies in the education system bar participation in the education market (Grenzke, 2005). The extra costs include annual testing levy, activity fees, uniform costs and remedial teaching levy for engaging teachers outside the normal teaching hours. Engagement of teachers for the remedial teaching supplements the limited time children have with teachers during official hours (Grenzke, 2005). A 1990 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report indicated that primary school attendance stood at 68 percent and 60 percent for boys and girls respectively in Bangladesh. This was owed to extra levies charged at school and that some parents were not able to meet, leading to the dropping out of some learners (Grenzke, 2005).

Horgan (2007) asserts that extra levies meant for school dinners, uniforms and school trips costs are charged by primary schools in Northern Ireland. The levies pose difficulties to economically disadvantaged families, with consequences being children missing out, repeating

classes or eventually dropping out of school. Horgan (2007), researched on impact of poverty on young children's experience of school. The respondents to the study were 220 children in the age bracket of 4-11 years, their parents and teachers. The children and their parents were distributed among rural and urban schools and in 15 schools. The research found out that children whose families were economically poor could not afford paying the school levies, hence could not participate fully in school programs like trips and buy full school uniform. Such children became truant in school attendance and resultantly dropped out of school.

Capron (2015) notes that the idea of free education in United Kingdom (UK) is barely realizable, for parents spend on average £800 per child yearly on extra levies. Such school levies are inclusive of costs for meals, uniforms, trips, travel, materials and activities. The charging of extra levies results in poor children falling behind at school due to truancy, suffering embarrassment and or dropping out, with consequent reduction in completion rates. Capron (2015) did a study on the impact of charging of extra levies on learners' performance in academics and attendance of school in UK. The study found out that 20 percent of children from poorest families had missed out on sports classes for they could not purchase the right kit, 20 percent had missed out on school meals and 30 percent had not paid for tuition. The study also found out that a third of the poorest children had fallen behind in studies for they were unable to afford computer and internet facilities at home. This made some of the learners drop out of school.

Ngwenya (2016), explains that tuition in Zimbabwean rural primary schools is free, but not in urban primary schools. This is despite the stipulation by the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe (CRZ) in 2013 that, every citizen has a right to basic and state funded education. A research was done by Ngwenya (2016) on the best way of collecting fees without infringing on the liberties of learners in Zimbabwean primary schools. The research found out that although tuition in rural primary schools was free, the charging of extra levies was a requirement. The levies were meant for examinations, boarding, remunerating teaching and non-teaching staff, provision of equipment and repair, maintenance and improvement. Inability to pay the extra levies led to dropping out of some learners, hence lowered completion rates.

In South Africa, extra levies in education constitute monetary or in kind contributions over and above the legally determined school fees, required of parents /sponsors to pay (Pillay, 2012). The extra fees is incurred by parents when it is demanded by schools that they purchase stationery and textbooks, fund infrastructure installations and capital equipment. For schools that do not include transport in their fees structure, it becomes parents' responsibility to organize for the transport. Poor families unable to afford payment of the extra levies have their

children dropout of school (Pillay, 2002). Their dropping out lowers enrollment and completion rates.

The extra levies borne by parents for their children in senior secondary schools in Ghana are usually more than the fees set by government (Yameda & Ampiah, 2009). The extra levies in education can result in students' non-enrolment or dropping out. The extra levies cater for textbooks, other learning materials, lunch meals, transportation, accommodation, water, fuel, extra classes and pamphlets. A study by Yameda and Ampiah (2009) established that Ghanaian government minimally funded senior secondary education, hence the schools heavily banked on cost sharing by households. The extra fees charged on the households added up to 6 to 10 times the government officially approved fees to be charged on parents. The study further revealed that rural school learners paid as much as urban school learners. Rural school learners who were unable to pay the extra fees ended up dropping out of school and which reduced completion rates.

Extra levies comprising of examination fee, after school coaching and "optional" parent-teacher association dues pose grave consequences for children's education acquisition in Rwanda (William & Abbot, 2014). The fee-free schooling in Rwanda attracts high enrolment rates in Rwanda, but repetition rates remain high and completion rates low, attributable to the charging of extra levies. William and Abbot (2014) did a study on investigation of the impact of the "hidden costs" of schooling in the context of Rwanda's fee-free education policy. The study used a social-science case study, focus groups and interview schedules. 200 respondents comprising of local leaders, school administrators, children and caregivers participated in the study. The study found out that the costs charged on learners by schools negatively impacted on the learners' attendance, performance in academics and completion.

While addressing principals, Kajiado Teachers Service Commission (TSC) County Director urged schools to hire Board of Management (BOM) teachers, for it would take a while before the country sufficiently hires enough teachers in public secondary schools. However, the director dissuaded the principals from demanding extra levies, for the policy prohibits parents from paying levies to remunerate teachers (Masese, 2018). Omandi (2015) carried out a study on contribution of free day secondary education in promoting students' completion rates in public secondary schools in Mvita Sub County, Mombasa County. The study adopted a survey design and a sample of 265 respondents; 12 head teachers, 64 teachers and 189 students. The study found out that since introduction of Free Secondary Education (FSE) in 2008 in Kenya, transition from primary to secondary schools had been increasing, but completion rate had been low for some students dropped out due to inability to pay the extra levies in education.

Mutemi (2015) studied assessment of effects of extra costs on the retention of learners in secondary schools in Matinyani sub county, Kitui County. The study adopted a mixed methods approach by collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Respondents to the study comprised of 7 principals, 7 deputy principals, 28 class teachers, 7 parents' association chairpersons and 1 District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. The study found out that extra costs in education inclusive of uniform and lunch costs and which were financially burdensome to parents, led to truancy of students with some eventually dropping out of school.

Ngwacho, Ayodo and Chemwei (2016) studied effects of extra levies on transition and completion rates in public boarding secondary schools in Kisii County. The study employed a descriptive survey research design and a sample of 10 percent of the head teachers and 10 percent of the parents of the study population. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. The study established that despite introduction of free primary education (FPE) in 2003, parents spent on average Ksh 1674 per child on extra costs. Most parents were not able to pay the extra costs and which led to dropping out of their children hence reduced completion rates.

Similarly a study on influence of educational extra levies on students' participation in public day secondary schools was carried out in Kwanza sub county (Shavanga, 2015). The study adopted a descriptive survey design and a sample of 1827 respondents; 50 teachers, 811 parents and 966 learners. The study found out that there was payment of levies for remedial teaching, co-curricular activities and development. Failure to pay the extra levies led to learners unable to pay being sent home, leading to truancy and in some cases dropping out, hence reduction in enrolment and completion rates.

A study on effect of school fees and extra levies payment on enrollment of girls in boarding public secondary schools in Trans Mara sub County, Kenya, was done by Kiage, Simatwa and Ayondo (2014). The study adopted descriptive survey and correlational designs while data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. The study sample included 6 principals, 1 sub county education officer and 153 girl students. The study found out that payment of extra levies meant for motivation of teachers, uniforms, lunch and development made cost of secondary education for Maasai girls prohibitively high. This led to dropping out of school of girls whose parents were unable to pay the extra levies, leading to decline in enrolment and completion rates.

Lwanga and Atieno (2019) noted that Magarini sub-county in Kilifi County encountered a myriad of challenges ranging from poor and inadequate infrastructure to shortage of teachers in schools. This impeded effective implementation of the free and compulsory education policy.

Hence, BOMs were forced to impose extra levies on parents to put up structures and employ BOM teachers, with a view to improving the standards of education in the area. The schools charged on average Ksh 200/= per learner per month to help pay the BOM teachers, and parents unable to pay had their children sent home. This led to truancy and consequently the learners would drop out of school. School learners who dropped out would engage in menial jobs, principally fishing in pools left after salt extraction. It was estimated that in Ngomeni fishing village, in Kilifi County, 60 percent of professional fishermen were school drop outs, a situation that lowered transition rate from primary to secondary schools.

About 20 percent of the 2019 KCPE candidates had not enrolled in form one by January 27th 2020 (MOE, 2020). This is despite the fact that education in Kenya is considerably subsidized and public day secondary schools are supposed to be free. The below 100 percent transition rate was attributable to a number of extra levies the schools charged to keep them going. The levies, which were imposed by school management included and not limited to uniform, lunch, writing materials and activity levies. Many day scholars came from families that were poverty stricken, hence imposing extra schooling costs caused a financial burden that many of such families could not meet. Some families turned to sending their children to do low grade jobs. This led to reduced transition and completion rates due to failure to enroll in form one and or dropping out of school by learners. This study was done in public day secondary schools in Kitui County to determine the relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education.

Study theory

This study is grounded on Liberal Educational Theory (LET) as proposed by Howe (1992). The Liberal Educational theory proposes that each country's citizen should be accorded freedom and opportunity to acquire education without any form of discrimination. School children have responsibility of utilizing the opportunities by attending and completing school and that their parents have duty of providing school requirements and ensuring that the children attend schools.

METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive survey research design, adopting a mixed methods approach for both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The target population was 655 respondents consisting of all principals in 327 public day secondary schools in Kitui County, all Parents' Association (PA) chairpersons of these schools and Kitui County Director of education (CDE). Kitui County has 327 public day secondary schools distributed in 17 Sub Counties. The

schools were stratified according to sub counties and proportionate stratified sampling technique employed to give an equal representation of schools from each sub county. Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) assert that 20-50% sample size for a descriptive survey design is appropriate.

Systematic random sampling was used to get 50 percent of the schools from each sub county, hence 164 schools. The list of public day secondary schools from Kitui County education office was used and applied a sampling interval of 2, hence 1st, 3rd, 5th -----to get 50 percent of schools in each sub county. All principals of the selected schools were purposively sampled and included in the study since they oversee implementation of the free and compulsory education at school level. Purposive sampling is identification of subjects that satisfy certain criteria (Kothari, 2004).

One school PA chairperson was selected from each sub county, using simple random technique. The technique was executed by writing the name of each school in a given sub county on a piece of paper, then rolling the papers and putting them in a tumbler. A single paper picked from the tumbler would indicate school from which to interview PA chairperson in that sub county. Hence 17 PA chairpersons were selected for interviewing. Interviewing 17 PA chairpersons enabled reaching data saturation and representativeness of each sub county (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Six to twelve interviews enable reaching data saturation in both health and social sciences (Guest et al, 2006). The Kitui CDE was purposively selected for he/she oversees implementation of free and compulsory education policy in the County. The total sample was hence 164 principals, 17 PA chairpersons and 1 CDE, giving a total of 182 respondents. The study used interview schedules, document review analysis and questionnaire for data collection. The researcher established content validity of the research instruments through expert judgment. Test re-test technique was carried out to determine reliability of the research instruments. This was done by administering the questionnaire to 16 principals and the interview schedule to 2 PA chairpersons and who were not involved during the actual data collection.

Qualitative data from the research instruments were transcribed and reported in narratives according to themes in the study objective while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Instrument return/ response was 88.4% return rate for principals' questionnaire, 82.4 % response rate for parents association chairpersons' interview schedule and 100 % response rate for Kitui CDE interview schedule .

Treatment of Likert Type Data in the principals' questionnaire

The interpretation of research findings by use of Likert Scale determines the accuracy of results. In order to measure the variables as used in this study, a Likert type of scale was developed using a scale of 1-5 where by a numerical value of 1=SD – Strongly Disagree; 2=D – Disagree; 3=N – Neutral; 4=A – Agree; and 5= SA – Strongly Agree was employed as recommended by Bishop & Herron (2015). Likert type of scales are sufficient to measure a desired construct where mathematical modelling is involved in data analysis, thus necessitating the need for coalescing indicators of various variables. Carifio and Rocco (2007) aver that during analysis of Likert scale data, one should adopt the schema where; strongly Disagree (SD) = $1 < SD < 1.8$; Disagree (D) = $1.8 < D < 2.6$; Neutral (N) = $2.6 < N < 3.4$; Agree (A) = $3.4 < A < 4.2$; and Strongly Agree (SA) = $4.2 < SA < 5.0$ hence maintaining an equidistance of 0.8 units in the scale. This weighting criteria of responses of Likert-type data as advocated by Carifio and Rocco (2007) was used as an interpretation schema during data analysis in this study.

Relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education

The objective of the study sought to determine the relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County. Data were collected by use of questionnaire for principals' (QP), Parents' Associations (PA) chairpersons' interview schedule, Kitui CDE interview schedule and document review analysis. The QP data was collected on a five-point Likert scale and response values assigned scale values in which 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree; 3= undecided; 2= disagree and 1 = strongly disagree. Measurement of this parameter was informed by the fact that schools charge extra levies despite the implementation of free and compulsory secondary education. Consequently, the study sought to establish the relationship between charging of extra levies and the implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County. Results of this analysis are presented in sub sections 4.8.1.1 through 4.8.1.4 and in Tables 1 and 2.

Analysis of responses from principals pertaining charging of extra levies

Data from principals were collected by use of questionnaire that was designed to get views pertaining different aspects of extra levies charged and their impact on transition and completion of learners. Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Responses from principals on charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education

	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
Charging of extra levy for form 1 admission leads to below 100% transition rate for some learners are unable to pay the levy.	35.9	39.3	1.4	15.2	8.3	3.79	1.30
Charging of extra levies meant for BOM teachers' salary, remedial teaching, teacher motivation, uniform and games equipment leads to learners unable to pay, dropping out hence lowered completion rate.	31.0	42.1	2.1	16.6	8.3	3.71	1.29
Funds charged on students for academic trips, education day and activities leads to some students dropping out if unable to pay	15.2	29.0	4.1	25.5	26.2	2.81	1.48
Charging of infrastructure funds leads to some learners dropping out for are unable to pay and which reduces completion rate	22.8	35.9	4.1	22.1	15.2	3.29	1.42
Valid N (list wise)	145						

From Table 1 it can be observed that majority (75.2 percent) of the school principals agreed that charging of extra levy for form 1 admission leads to below 100% transition rate since some learners are unable to pay the levy, while 23.5 percent disagreed with the statement. Only 1.4 percent of the principals were undecided. The Mean rating for this parameter was 3.79 with standard deviation of 1.3. This implies that on average, most principals were in agreement that when extra levies are charged, they affect transition rates thus negatively affecting transition from primary to secondary schools and consequently the implementation of free and compulsory education gets affected negatively.

Similarly, the study sought to get the views of the principals regarding the effect of charging of levies meant for BOM teachers' salary, remedial teaching, teacher motivation, uniform and games equipment on completion rate. In view of the foregoing aspect, 73.1 percent of the principals agreed while 24.9 percent disagreed to the statement that charging of extra levies to cater for various aspects within the school such as paying BOM teachers' salaries, motivation of teachers and purchase of school uniforms among others lowered completion rates in secondary schools. On average (mean = 3.71 S d = 1.29), majority of the principals agreed that charging of extra levies of whatever form lowered completion rates. This therefore implies that implementation of free public day secondary and compulsory education in secondary schools was being affected by the charging of extra levies as evidenced by low completion rates according to the view of the principals.

Additionally, views were sought from the principals regarding the relationship between funds charged on students for academic trips, education day and activities and students drop out rates. With regard to this parameter, it can be observed that only 44.2 percent of the principals were in agreement that funds charged for academic trips leads to drop out rates while 51.7 percent of the principals disagreed with the statement. On average most principals expressed ambivalence regarding whether charging of extra levies led to students dropping out of school (Mean = 2.81; s d = 1.48).

Finally, the study sought to establish whether charging of infrastructure funds leads to some learners dropping out, for they are unable to pay thus leading to reduction on completion rate. As can be seen from the Table 1, 58.7 percent of the principals were in agreement that the aspect of charging extra levies for infrastructure development led to students dropping out of school while about 37.3 percent of them were of the contrary view. Generally, most principals agreed that extra levies charged for infrastructure development led to students dropping out of school thus lowering completion rates (Mean = 3.29; s d = 1.42).

Analysis of responses from Parents Associations Chairpersons pertaining charging of extra levies

Data from the chairpersons of the Parents' Associations were collected using the interview schedule that was designed to solicit views regarding the various aspects that were under consideration in this research study. Further, the study sought to establish from the chairpersons of Parents Associations the status of various aspects regarding completion and transition of learners in schools. Some of these aspects yielded both quantitative and qualitative responses and are discussed herein. Analysis of the descriptive responses from the interview schedule is as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the nominal items in PA interview schedule on charging of extra levies

Variable	Values	Frequency	Percent
Apart from lunch levy, does your school charge other levies?	Yes	14	100
	Total	14	100
Does your school give official receipts after a student pays the levies?	No	14	100
	Total	14	100
Does the charging of other levies affect transition and completion rates among students?	Negatively	11	78.6
	Positively	3	21.4
	Total	14	100

Firstly, the chair persons of Parents Associations were asked if their schools charged other school levies apart from lunch levy, of which they all responded in the affirmative as can be observed from Table 2. This implies that in spite of the implementation of free and compulsory secondary education, schools do continue to charge extra levies outside the ministry of education guidelines. Some of the extra levies charged according to the chairpersons of the parents associations are meant to cover costs associated with the following items: remedial teaching, books purchase, students' trips, rallies, BOM teachers' salaries, school's infrastructure development and teacher motivation. Further, the chairpersons were asked if their school ever issues receipts for the extra levies charged, of which all of them responded in the negative. This implies that there are no official receipts issued by the schools for charging the extra levies. The reasons given for not issuing receipts were that these levies are charged by schools illegally, as they are not authorized by Ministry of Education (MOE). Further they are not budgeted as part of appropriation-in-aid by the MOE. Therefore, they are collected outside the normal school budget and not sanctioned by the relevant authorities at the ministry of education. Regarding how the charging of extra levies affects transition, 78.6 percent of the chairpersons were of the view that charging of the extra levies affects transition negatively while 21.4 percent said the extra levies do affect transition positively.

Analysis of responses from Kitui County Director of Education pertaining charging of extra levies

As to whether public schools in the county charge extra levies, the Kitui County Director of Education (CDE) gave a confirmatory response. He noted that schools charge extra levies for various reasons, including teacher remuneration, uniform provision, games equipment purchase, academic trips and remedial teaching among others. With regard to whether the schools get official permission in order to charge the levies, the CDE said that it can either be YES or NO depending on the circumstances. In this regard, he noted that there are some instances where schools are officially granted permission based on the requirements of the schools and upon assessment by the relevant authorities. In some other instances, schools do not get permission to collect such levies and therefore end up charging them illegally. However, the CDE averred that charging of extra levies affected negatively both transition and completion rates.

Reasons for charging extra levies as per document review analysis

The document review analysis regarding the reasons for charging extra levies revealed that schools were charging extra levies for purchase of school buses; paying BOM teachers; construction of classrooms and dormitories; remedial teaching levies, even though requests for

remedial teaching are never authorized by the ministry. These findings confirm the findings obtained from the principals, parents' association chairpersons and the Kitui County Director of Education that charging of extra levies negatively affects transition and completion rates in public day secondary schools in Kitui County.

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education

		Levies	Infrastructure	Teachers	Entry behavior	Implementation
Levies	Pearson Correlation	1	.580**	.356**	.249**	-.747**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.003	.000
	N	145	145	145	145	145

Testing of null hypothesis one (H₀₁)

The hypothesis for this study stated thus: There is no statistically significant relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County. From Table 3, it can be observed that the coefficient of correlation between implementation of free and compulsory education and charging of extra levies was negative ($r = -.747$; $p \leq .01$). This implies that the relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education was negative and significant. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = .558$), implies that charging of extra levies can explain 55.8 percent of the variance in the implementation of free and compulsory secondary education in public secondary schools. Consequently, the more the levies charged, the lower is the implementation of free and compulsory education. This means that charging of extra levies has the potential of lowering transition and completion rates, thus negatively impacting on the implementation of free and compulsory education in public secondary schools in Kitui County. As a consequence, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education

Data collected from the principals, chairpersons of parents' associations, the Kitui County Director of Education and document analysis confirmed that schools continue to charge

extra levies despite the government's directive on implementation of free and compulsory secondary education. This is shown in Tables 1 and 2, where it is indicated that majority of the principals, and 100 percent of the PA chairpersons affirmed that schools do charge extra levies for various reasons. This is further confirmed by narration in sub sections 4.8.1.3 and 4.8.1.4 where the Kitui CDE confirmed and document analysis revealed respectively that schools charge extra levies on learners. Reasons provided by the respondents justifying the need for charging of extra levies included; remuneration of teaching and non-teaching staff, uniform provision, games equipment purchase, academic trips and remedial teaching payment among others. On the same note, document analysis regarding the reasons for charging of extra levies revealed that schools were charging these levies for purchase of school buses; paying BOM teachers; construction of classrooms and dormitories.

It is important to note that the PA chairpersons and the County Director of Education also confirmed that charging of extra levies lowered both transition and completion rates of the learners in secondary schools. However, it was found out from the responses given by the parents' association chairpersons and the County Director of Education that the levies were being charged illegally as the schools never issued receipts confirming payment for these levies. Test of the null hypothesis (H_0): there is no statistically significant relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County; result indicates a negative and significant correlation ($r = -.747$; $p \leq .01$) between implementation of free and compulsory education and charging of extra levies as shown in Table 3. This further indicates that charging of extra levies reduces transition and completion rates.

Based on the findings, this study established that charging of extra levies has a significant relationship with the implementation of free and compulsory education in public day secondary schools. In general, the study established that there was a negative relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory secondary education in public day secondary schools in Kitui County. Therefore, charging of extra levies had a negative effect on implementation of free and compulsory education by lowering the transition and completion rates in public day secondary schools within the study area.

The findings in this study are in line with those of a study by Capron (2015) on the impact of charging of extra levies on learners' performance in academics and attendance of school in United Kingdom (UK). The study found out that a third of the poorest children had fallen behind in studies, for they were unable to afford computer and internet facilities at home, and some of the learners eventually dropped out of school. The findings also authenticate a report by Tomasevski, (2003) which stated that extra levies pose a financial barrier to education

for poor families leading to low level implementation of the free and compulsory education. These findings also concur with those of a study by Koya (2015) on educational levies and their impact on enrolment in Fiji schools. The study established that children who did not pay the extra charges were denied admission to schools and thus an opportunity to continue with their studies negatively affected.

A research was done by Ngwenya (2016) on the best way of collecting fees without infringing on the liberties of learners in Zimbabwean primary schools. The research found out that although tuition in rural primary schools was free, the charging of extra levies was a requirement and that inability to pay the extra levies led to dropping out of school by some learners, hence lowering completion rates. Similarly, a study was carried out by Yameda and Ampiah (2009) in Ghana on funding of schools by Ghanaian government. The study established that Ghanaian government minimally funded senior secondary education, hence the schools heavily banked on cost sharing by households. The study further revealed that rural school learners who were unable to pay the extra fees ended up dropping out of school and which would reduce completion rates.

Additionally, William and Abbot (2014) did a study on investigation of the impact of the “hidden costs” of schooling in the context of Rwanda’s fee-free education policy. The study found out that the costs charged on learners by schools negatively impacted on the learners’ attendance, performance in academics and completion of school. The findings by Ngwenya (2016), Yameda and Ampiah (2009) and William and Abbot (2014) concur with the findings of this study.

Omandi (2015) on the other hand, did a study in Mvita sub County Mombasa County on contribution of free day secondary education in promoting students’ completion rates in public secondary schools. The study found out that since introduction of Free Secondary Education (FSE) in 2008 in Kenya, transition from primary to secondary schools has been increasing. However, the study found that completion rate has been low for some students drop out due to inability to pay the extra levies in education. Mutemi (2015) also confirmed in his study of an assessment of effects of extra costs on the retention of learners in secondary schools in Matinyani Sub County in Kitui County that extra levies in education led to some learners dropping out of school. The argument, is in agreement with findings of a study by Kiage, Simatwa and Ayondo (2014) in Trans Mara sub county on effects of school fees and payment of extra levies on enrolment of girls in boarding public secondary schools. The study found out that payment of extra levies meant for motivation of teachers, uniforms purchase, lunch and development led to most Maasai girls dropping out of school.

It is therefore important to note from the findings of this study and related findings as articulated in the literature review that charging of extra levies leads to low transition and completion rates among learners in their educational pursuit.

CONCLUSIONS

Extra levies, which refer to additional costs charged by schools on parents or learners are a burden towards the implementation of free and compulsory education in Kenya and in particular Kitui County. This study established an inverse relationship between charging of extra levies and the implementation of free and compulsory secondary education. This means that the higher and the more the levies charged, the lower the transition and completion rates and consequently the negative implementation of the free and compulsory education. It is on the basis of this finding that the current study rejected the null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between charging of extra levies and implementation of free and compulsory public day secondary schools education in Kitui County. This rejection therefore led to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis and conclusion made that charging of extra levies negatively and significantly affects the implementation of free and compulsory education in Kenya and Kitui County in particular since it leads to reduction of transition and completion rates as found in this study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the current study makes the following recommendations regarding the charging of extra levies;

- i. The Ministry of Education (MOE) should enforce the ban on charging of illegal levies in schools as they are burdensome to parents and against the government effort towards implementation of free and compulsory education.
- ii. The government to publish all approved levies that a school can charge learners if need be for this will bar principals from charging unauthorized levies anyhow.
- iii. Government to supply relief food to schools for feeding vulnerable children in food insecure communities in arid and semi- arid lands (ASALs) for that matter would lead to a stop in charging of lunch levies, which implies an increase in cost of education.

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