

**IMPACT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE AMONG PUPILS IN NAKURU EAST SUB COUNTY,  
NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003 was, predictably, welcome by millions of Kenyans. Soon after the programme was initiated, primary schools intake rose from 0.969 million by 2002 to 1.312 million in 2003, an increase of 35%. The sudden increase on the enrolment had an impact on the implementation and subsequently the academic performance output. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the Free Primary Education on academic performance among pupils in Nakuru East Sub- County of Nakuru County, Kenya. Comparative research design was adopted by the study. The study targeted 16831 parents, 41 head teachers, 1218 teachers and 22136 pupils from public primary schools. A sample size of 308 subjects was determined from the target population of 40,226 subjects, using both purposive, as well as, considering recommendation by Kathuri and Pals. The study was anchored on the meads interactionism theory of value. Data was collected using questionnaires and an observation schedule. The questionnaires were researcher developed. The questionnaire was used to collect information from the head teachers, the teachers, the pupils and the parents/guardians. The observation schedule was to collect data regarding the status of the schools visited. Academic performance was measured through performance of Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). Reliability and validity of the instruments for data collection were ensured through a pilot study. Data was collected after obtaining the necessary authority and appointments. The data obtained was checked for completeness, coded, fed into a computer and then analyzed with the help of SPSS version 22 computer software. Both inferential and descriptive statistics were used in the analysis. It was concluded from the results obtained that teaching and learning facilities negatively affected the implementation of (Free Primary Education (FPE) leading to poor academic performance of education. The inadequacy of the teaching and learning materials affected teaching and learning process. The level of funding affected the academic performance either because it was delayed, inadequate or unavailable. The increased enrolment led to lower academic achievement as a result of increased teacher-learner ratio which in turn lowered the teachers' morale. It was, therefore, recommended that teachers should be trained to be creative on how to operate under limited resources. At the same time the teaching force should be increased in order to improve the teacher-pupil ratio. The government of Kenya should expand its sources of funding, as well as, ensuring proper utilization of the limited resources. Finally the Kenya Government and other stakeholders should increase their capacity to improve facilities in order to cope with the increased enrolment.