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**FACTORS AFFECTING THE MANAGEMENT OF  
FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION FUNDS IN  
GARISSA SUB COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

There has been a growing concern by leaders in Garissa Sub County about low academic performance and transition rates of pupils. Implementation of FPE has been a matter of political expediency rather than a well thought out and planned reform. Inefficient administration at the school, which attempts to deal with problems relating to funding, only serves to exacerbate the situation. This research therefore sought to investigate factors influencing the management of free primary education funds in Garissa Sub County, Kenya. These factors were: FPE funds up take rate, competencies of the school management committees and allocation of FPE funds. The theoretical framework of this study included: Agency theory which explains the agency relationship between central government of Kenya and the SMCs and the challenges thereof; Krist theory which posits that schools alone cannot pay for non – educational services. There needs to be collaboration from all stake holders in the community; and Conventional Wisdom theory which postulates that provision of FPE funds is not the solution to free primary education in Kenya per se. The research design of this study was a descriptive survey design. The target population of this study was a total of 96 respondents comprising of the Head Teachers, chairmen and treasurers of the SMCs of the 32 public primary schools in Garissa sub-county. The sample size was 60 respondents, that is, 20 Head Teachers, 20 chairmen and 20 treasurers who were selected purposively. Open and closed – ended questionnaires were used as the instruments for collecting primary data while secondary data was gotten from education and higher learning journals. Data was analyzed using Chi-square test of significance and all hypotheses were tested at 95% confidence level. Analyzed data is presented in forms of frequency tables and percentages. The findings revealed that competencies of the SMC and the uptake rates have significance influence on the management of FPE funds while the allocation of the FPE funds was found to have insignificant influence on the management of FPE funds. These results are in line with conventional wisdom theory in that allocation of the FPE funds is not important per se especially if the competency of the SMC and the uptake rate of the FPE funds are wanting. This study therefore recommends that the government should ensure that the priority in proper management of FPE funds is to select competent members of the SMC and also to put in place systems that ensure FPE funds are used smoothly without bottlenecks which create opportunities for mismanagement of these funds.