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Impact of free primary education: A case study of government schools in Kabwe Urban District

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Abstract
This paper is an examination of the impact of free primary education in twenty government selected primary schools of Kabwe urban district in central province of Zambia. In order to achieve the aim above, the study objectives were to examine Free Primary Education on the provision of quality of education, to find out whether the government provides adequate funding to schools and to investigate whether FPE has helped primary school learners precede to the next stage.
The study used the general questions to come up with the impact of free primary education on selected government schools. The general question was addressed through the following questions: Does the government fund the primary schools adequately? Has Free Primary Education helped in the provision of quality of education? And how does Free Primary Education enable primary school learners to proceed to the next stage?
The study implemented a descriptive approach design to collect information on the impact of Free Primary Education on selected government schools in Kabwe urban district. The study participants comprised of 20 head teachers, 20 teachers, 5 pupils 4 workers at DEBS office, and the district education board secretary. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Computer program and Microsoft excel was used to analyse quantitative data from the questionnaires. Simple descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages, and the results are presented in frequency tables, bar graphs and pie.
Findings indicate that, Free Primary Education had enabled many pupils to enroll in school regardless of their socio-economic status; the achievement of the policy was associated with challenges. Among which were inadequacy and delay of funding, over enrolment, inadequate educational supplies, and inadequate teaching staff. The number of children has increased, yet the number of teachers remained constant, if not reduced. Due to large numbers, it was not possible for the teachers to give all the children the attention they deserved. This was coupled by the teachers filling to give many assignments (home work) compared with private schools. Therefore, pupils did not have enough work to practice or help them revise what they had learnt. Enrolment has increased causing congestion in classrooms, a state of affairs that does not augur well for effective learning and teaching. This has also increased the number of children sharing a desk.

Keywords: primary education, government schools, Kabwe Urban District

Introduction
The chapter gives the background to the study. It also states the statement of the problem, aims of the study, objectives, and research questions, importance of the study, delimitation as well as limitations of the study and finally, operational definitions of key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background to the Study
Education forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development, and reduce social inequality (World Bank, 1998). UNESCO (2005) [12-13] asserts that, the level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development. Globally, education is recognized as a basic human right. Bishop (1989) indicates that in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights laid down (Article 26) that everyone has the right to education and that education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.
In face of this, Zambia's education policy has gone through a number of changes. Sikwibele (2003) [9], contend that before 1964, the climate allowed for the existence of a parallel system of education which was justified on racial and other lines. In 1965, the new Zambian Government introduced a "Free Education Policy" to reverse the many years of injustice imposed on the Africans through the introduction of education fees and other charges they could hardly afford.
Education for all has been discussed in international forums, for example United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and its follow-up in Dakar, Senegal in 2000. Consequently, governments around the world have invested huge amounts of their expenditure on education.
The Report on Educational Developments in 1966-1967 by the Ministry of Education (1967) states that, on 2nd September 1966, a new Education Act (Number 28 of 1966) came into effect. The act legally recognized changes from "fee paying" or "non-fee-paying" to "scheduled" or "non-scheduled" in order to take care of equity issues. Tuition fees were not charged in all government schools except for a small number of primary schools where nominal fees were charged. Boarding fees were not charged in the vast majority of the secondary schools.
The move towards education for all has had a number of implications for secondary education in Africa. The demand for secondary education is increasing rapidly in almost all sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries. The World Bank (2008) notes that between 1999 and 2005 primary school intake increased by almost 40%; adding that even though survival rates have

remained stable so far, this still implies a very large increase in the number of primary school graduates that are seeking a place in secondary school. With increasing completion rates the number of primary school leavers could even triple by 2020 in many countries in SSA (Ledoux and Mingat, quoted in Verspoor, 2008b) [17]. This creates an enormous challenge for secondary education policy which needs to be designed not only to respond to inevitable rapid increase in demand for access but also to provide the quality of instruction necessary to ensure the supply of personnel with higher levels of education and training demanded by a growing and modernizing economy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Free Primary Education Policy (Grades 1-7) was pronounced in February 2002 by the President of the Republic of Zambia, late Dr. Levy P. Mwanawasa. This was followed up by a circular (ME/71/126 No.3; 2002 dated 15th March, 2002) from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education to all schools and education officers explaining what Free Primary Education entailed (MOE, 2003). Presently, much research has not been done on the impacts of Free Primary Education on government school, for this reason this study was conducted.

1.3 The aim

The study is aimed at investigating the impact of free primary education in the selected government schools.

1.4 Objectives

1. Find out whether the government provides adequate funding to schools.
2. To examine FPE on the provision of quality of education.
3. To investigate whether FPE has helped primary school learners proceed to the secondary school

1.5 Research Questions

1. Does the government fund the primary schools adequately?
2. Has Free Primary Education helped in the provision of quality of education?
3. How does Free Primary Education enable primary school learners to proceed to the secondary school?

1.6 Significance of the study

It's hoped that the outcomes of the study will help provided knowledge to various stakeholders that are providing education. On the other hand, it is also hoped that organization and donors would benefit from this study by strengthening their struggle for the call worldwide 'education for all. Finally, the study would be beneficial to other researchers and scholars who may find the study valuable to add to the existing body of knowledge. This would go a long way in forming the basis of their argument in the same research area.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The study will be based on Human capital theory: According to Psacharopoulos *et al*. (2004a), the Human Theory Capital has roots in the works of classical authors such as Adams Smith (1776) and Alfred Marshall (1890). The former concluded that 'a man educated at the expense of much labour and time may be compared to one of those expensive machines… and the work he learns to perform should replace to him the whole expense of his education Mincer (1958), Schultz (1961) and Backer (1975) postulate that time and money spent on education builds human capital hence one should be able to estimate the rate of return on such investment, in a way similar to investment in physical capital.

Therefore, the introduction of Free Primary Education meant that the government want to invest in its citizens in order to develop. Government aimed at providing primary education to all children. Human capital theory holds that the well-being of a society is a function not only of the traditional stocks of financial capital, labour and natural resources but also of the knowledge and skills of individuals. This theory predicts that increased knowledge and skill will yield improved economic outcomes for both individuals and societies, especially in modern societies, where it is widely held that knowledge and skill convey a greater economic and social premium than in the past. There is evidence that human capital development is a strong influence on educational policy, with statements to this effect being found in the goal and mission statements of many educational agencies and jurisdictions. It is from this fact that, the theory will be used to access the impact of Free Primary Education in selected government primary schools in Kabwe urban.

1.8 Operational Definition of terms

Access: An opportunity or a right of a person to be in school

Completion Rate: is the proportion of pupils who actually complete the education cycle. In this study it refers to the completion of seven years of Primary education cycle, from Grade 1 to 7.

Disparities: Lack of equality in the provision of school opportunities to the school age population.

Dropout Rate: The percentages of pupils or students who dropout from a given grade in a given school year

Gross Enrollment Ratio: Total enrolment as a percentage of the official school age population.

Literacy: The ability to read and write with comprehension, as well as to make simple arithmetical calculations basic cognitive skills enabling one to obtain and process information in a meaningful manner.

Net Enrolment Ratio: Enrolment of official age group expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

Surge: Sudden increase in value or number of pupils in a class or school in a given school year.

2. Literature Review

This chapter will discuss the momentous of literature acknowledged on the impact of Free Primary Education on government schools. Besides that, it will present a review of available data on countries that have put into practice the Free Primary Education focusing on it impact on schools: areas of funding of schools, progression rate of the pupils to the next stage as well as on the quality of education.

2.1 Provision of Free Primary Education Worldwide

At the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (EFA), the development community established the achievement of universal basic education as a top priority. This was reconfirmed in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, and at the United Nations Millennium Summit, where 189 nations and the international development

community promised to guarantee universal basic education by 2015. Arising from this meeting, participants recognized that provision of education at that time was seriously deficient and it had to be made more relevant and qualitatively improved, as well as available. Henceforth, the declaration was made that basic education should be provided to all children (UNESCO Education for all 2009) [16].

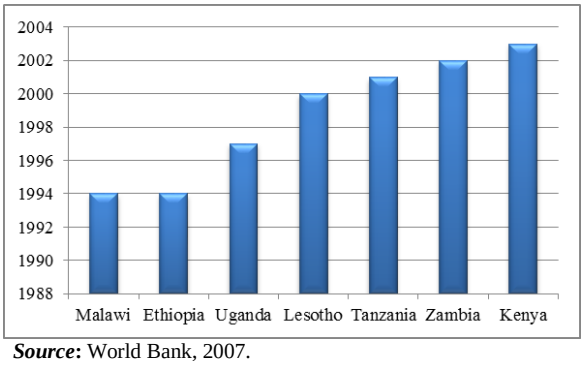
Worldwide statistic indicates that the costs of schooling inhibit school enrollment. Parents in Indonesia, China, the Solomon Islands, and many African countries cite user fees as a major obstacle to enrolling their children in school (Saroso 2005; Yardley 2005; Pacific News 2005) [21]. In 2001, parents and teachers in Tanzania said that non-payment of fees was the prime reason why children did not attend school (Oxfam 2007) [8]. Zambia's Central Statistics Office estimated that at least 45 percent of children who drop out of school did so because they could not pay school fees (Tembo and Ndhlovu 2005) [11].

In order to provide education to all the children worldwide, handful of countries between 1960 and the early 1990s, embarked on the provision of free education. For instance Barbados, Botswana, Costa Rica, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe were able to provide primary education without charging households for the cost of tuition (Mehrotra and Jolly 1997). Adding to this a number of European countries such as Norway, France, and Sweden and Finland, which recognized that education is fundamental human right provided free education (Norwegian Ministry of Education Research, 2005) [19].

Furthermore, UNESCO Report (2009) [16] states that, Finland's main education objectives policy was to provide education to all citizens with education opportunities to access education irrespective of age, economic situation or gender. It is suffice to mention that, in the United States of America (USA) elementary schooling is free and compulsory to all children (World Education Services, 2004). In India, the Central government provides 80 percent of financing Free Primary Education, while the local states implement and provide the rest of financing (Government of India, 1994).

2.2 Free Primary Education in Africa

Literature has revealed that a number of countries in Africa have introduced the Free Education Policy at Basic School levels (UNESCO, 2003a) [12] As alluded to, these African countries that have introduced Free Education Policy recognized the many implications of reducing the cost of education to parents, reacting to the enrollment surge and the provision of quality education (Kaulule, 2006).



***Source*:** World Bank, 2007.

Fig 1: Countries that have put into practice Free Primary Education in Africa

Free education in African started with School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI). Whose main theme was to seek for acceleration of progress towards quality education for all children by supporting policies that remove cost barriers, preventing parents from enrolling and maintaining their children at school? In Ghana, for example, primary school fees were first abolished in 1961; whereas in Kenya and Tanzania, fee abolition policies were introduced in 1974. These policies had a significant impact on enrollment and resulted in rapid gains toward the goal of universal primary education (UPE). This suggests that the inability to pay for schooling is indeed a major obstacle to education for the poor and other disadvantaged groups such as girls, orphans, and disabled children. In 2004, South Africa outlawed fees for the two poorest quintiles. Most countries that eliminated school fees experienced a jump in gross primary enrollment, ranging from 5 percent in Zambia to 68 percent in Uganda. In 1994, Malawi eliminated school fees. By the next year, gross primary enrollment increased from 89 to 133 percent. In the case of Kenya, the elimination of fees resulted in 1.2 million additional students entering the school system.

The authentication from countries that have eliminated school fees shows that free education policies have been successful in reaching poor and marginalized populations. Enrollment rates grew quickest among the poor in Cambodia, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia with the removal of fees. For example, enrollment rates in Uganda grew quicker among the poor than the non-poor after the government abolished school fees, thus narrowing the enrollment gap between the two groups from a 36 percentage point difference in 1992 to 11 percentage points in 1997 (Deininger 2003).

2.3 Free Primary Education in Zambia

Zambia like any other country following this free education policy holds fast to the call by the world organizations that had been insisting on Education for All. One of the principles for the development of education systems in Zambia is for the government to enhance equity by eliminating sources of educational disadvantages such as gender, physical, social or economic factors (MOE, 1996). Zambia's free primary Education (FPE) was declared and instantaneously introduced in 2002. This means that education would be free for all pupils from grades 1 – 7. All user fees were abolished, and uniforms were no longer compulsory. The introduction of FPE was supported by Zambia's 2002 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which outlined the elimination of user fees for basic education as a way to reduce poverty (Government of the Republic of Zambia, 2002). The 2003-2007 Strategy Plans for Education also called for the abolition of schools fees (MOE, 2003). WWW. State House Gov. Zm 28th March, 2009 stipulated that the government introduced FPE in order to increase access for poor members of various communities to access basic education.

Studies by Mulenga Mambwe (2010) indicates that, the introduction of free basic education (FBE) in Zambia in 2002 during the Basic Educational Sub-sector Investment Programme (BESSIP), significantly improved access to primary education, especially after declining enrolments in the 1990s. Furthermore, Mulenga Mambwe (2010) articulated that, the Zambian government's decision to introduce free primary education arose from the three main principles of the ministry of education, quoting MOE (1996) he has mentioned

them has protecting the right of individuals, to promote the social economic well-being of all citizen and to achieve a good quality of life for every citizen. The FPE has been received with mixed feelings from different sections of the society. While some have expressed feelings of discontentment, failure, betrayal among others, many low income members of the population view it as a God sent opportunity (Onyango, 2003). It is one of the indivisible, inalienable and plainly speaking, one of the most basic of all the rights.

2.4 Enrolment rate due to Free Primary Education

A study by Manzo (2006) concealed that the introduction of free primary education in some Sub-Sahara African countries led to an increase in enrolment such that classrooms in government primary schools were filled beyond normal capacity. In some countries including Malawi and Uganda, the introduction of free primary education has had an enormous effect. In Uganda, enrolment increased from 2.6million to 5.3million pupils in 1997 (IOB, 2008) [1]. While in Malawi, Primary school enrolment increased from 1.6million pupils in 1993 to over 3 million after the introduction of free primary education (Mwansa *et al*., 2004 in IOB, 2008) [1]. Copious pupils who had left school because their parents could no longer afford the schools fees, return after the execution of FPE.

Prior to the preface of Free Basic Education, the rate of school dropouts kept on increasing because the majority could not pay user fees. This is because about 80% of the population lived below the poverty datum line (Chengo and Musonda, 2005). National estimates indicate that in 2000, over 570 000 or 30% of school-age population were not in regular schools. By 2003, this number decreased to 480 000 or 23.4 %. With the coming of community schools, the number reduced further to 340 000 or 16.6% of the school age children (MOE, 2004). Additionally, as years progressed, the Government of the Republic of Zambia (2011:94) states that, "Pupil school enrolment increased to 3.6 million in 2009 as compared to 2.9 million in 2005 for basic education." Net Enrolment Ratio increased from 93% in 2005 to 97% in 2009, while the Gender Parity Index (GPI) improved from 0.95 in 2005 to 0.99 in 2009 indicating an insignificant GPI of 0.04.

In Zambia 2005 statistics from the Ministry of education indicate that in 2005, a total of 444,300 pupils enrolled in grade 1 out of which 225,231 were females and 219,069 were males. It was reported that there was an increase of 16.7% in enrolment from 2004 to 2005 (MOE, 2006). Additionally a report by the ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry MCTI, 2007), documented a rise in gross enrolment ratio for basic education from 75.1% in 2000 to 104.6% in 2005. In 2001, the gross primary enrolment rate was 78.7%, and the net primary rate was 66.0%.

Relatively, data between 2000 and 2014, the overall indication is that Zambia's education sector has experienced noticeable improvements. Since 2002, when the government announced the Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy, the MESVTEE has registered over 1.2 million more learners, growing Zambia's net enrolment from 71 per cent in 1999 to over 97 per cent in 2013.

The FPE policy directed heads of primary schools not to charge any kind of fees in recognition of various economic challenges facing the general population especially in rural areas. This was further compounded by the escalating numbers of orphans due to HIV/AIDS related deaths. The policy directive also barred schools from denying children from attending school on account of not having a uniform. For children that had dropped out of the education system, the FPE directed that schools invite them back with no questions asked. This requirement is fully articulated under the MESVTEE's Re-Entry Policy which encourages girls especially, to return to school in the event of falling pregnant (Central Statistical Office: 2012: 27).

Musonda (2010) mention that in Sub-Sahara Africa, access to education is reported to be 100%, but the problem still remains with those accessing it reaching the last grade (UNESCO, 2006) [15].

Furthermore, MDG Progress Report (2013:22) indicates that, Primary school net enrolment: Zambia has made steady progress on primary school enrolment, which has increased from 80 percent in 1990 to 93.7 percent in 2010. The improvement is linked to several factors such as development of education infrastructure and introduction of free education.

Additionally, Duncan *et al*, 2003) contend that, Due to this rise in enrolment, the grants could not purchase critical resources needed for effective teaching and learning. Moreover, the grants were often and are still not released on time and are inadequate. It is from this background that in 2003, the Ministry of Education developed a new allocation scheme which took school size into account. Mwansa *et al*, (2004:38). Affirms that "The largest schools (Grades 1 and 2) received 3 million kwacha (US $600), whereas smaller schools (Grades 3, 4 and 5) and Community Schools received 2.6 million kwacha (US $520) per quarter"

Despite this step, for many schools, the grants were still not sufficient enough to meet the overwhelming needs and several schools reacted by raising PTA fees at the upper basic school level (Grades 8and 9). Moreover, IOB, (2008:68) [1] asserts that, "The pupil teacher ratio increased from 49:1 between 2002 and 2003 to 57:1 in 2005" In some cases, there was congestion in classrooms with an average number of 77 pupils per class. The pupil book ratio rose to 18:1 and six pupils could share a desk and in extreme cases eleven children could use one desk (Chengo and Musonda, 2005). Additionally, grants could not meet costs for utility services like water, electricity and security. To make matters worse, many schools were not decided on what type of fundraising ventures to embark on to raise additional funds. The pupil performance in numeracy and literacy was and is still poor with only 33% pass rate due to overcrowding.

MOE, (2011a) mentioned that, during the year 2010, 341,326 (182,320 boys and 159,006) registered for Grade Seven Examinations. Out of this number, only 42% performed better while 58% did not do well. It was noted with concern that 34,621 pupils (17,700 boys and 16,921 girls) were recorded to be absent during the examination giving a national percentage of 10.14%.

A study by World Bank, (2006) stipulate that, some of the contributing factors to the poor performance and absenteeism at basic level were, delayed disbursement of funds, inadequate teaching and learning materials and desks, reduced pupil teacher contact time, inadequate funding for bursary support to meet ever increasing demand due to increase in the number of orphans and vulnerable children and continued existence of classroom congestion due to limited infrastructure and this has

continued to compromise the quality of education, leading to poor quality being seen as a major challenge facing Zambia in education.

2.5 Completion rate of grade 1-7

Study by Mulenga Mambwe (2010) states that, completion rate are said to have increased over the period since independence until late 1970s after the introduction of PAT funds (MOE, Boards, 2005). Nevertheless, the country witnessed a decrease in completion rate from the year 1988. An example of decline in completion rates was between 1988 and 1994. Overall, only 79% of those who entered grade 1 in 1988 reached grade 7 in 1994 (MOE, 1996). The completion rate is reported to have decreased further between 1996 and 1998 with an increase in school dropout (MOE, 2000).

Kelly (1994) has reported that, the introduction of cost – sharing bought about a severe decline in school participation, for example, completion rates went down from 100% in the mid-1980s to 75% in 1990s. About 10-15% of the final year pupils (grade 7) were unable to sit for examination because of inability to raise the prescribe fees. Furthermore, Kelly as distinguished that the problem of low demand for primary education in both urban and rural areas reaching alarming proportions around mid-1980 and early grade actually completed grade 7. Some of example were as Mbangatu in 1986 school in Western Province recorded that out of 108 children, who entered grade 1 in 1986, only 61 completed grade 7.

The aggregate net primary school enrolment in Africa rose from 64 per cent in 2000 to 87 per cent in 2010 in the 29 countries with available data. Excluding North Africa, enrolment rose markedly from 58 per cent to 76 per cent over the same period, an annual increase of 1.5 percentage points, which is considerable given the high population growth in Africa (UN, 2012). For North Africa, enrolment rose from 88 per cent in 2000 to 96 per cent in 2010, reflecting a 10 percentage point narrowing in the difference between that region and the rest of Africa. Even so, progress varies widely across African countries.

The completion rates of the full primary cycle in most countries in Sub-Sahara Africa are between 60 to 70 percent (DFID, 2001). Additionally, a report from the world Bank on Education for All indicates that one third of all children enrolled fail to complete their education through grade 7 in many developing countries, less than 60% of primary school pupils who enroll in first grade reach the last grade of schooling (World Bank, 2007). UNESCO (2005) [13] recorded that despite an increase in the number of children going to school today, many are not to go beyond grade 5 of primary. However, Zambia has made progress in boosting primary school completion rates. The proportion of pupils reaching Grade 7 has increased from 64 percent in 1990 to 90.9 percent in 2010. Disaggregation by sex shows that the improvement in the same period was higher for girls (32.6 percentage points) than for boys (19.8 percentage points). This was partly on account of the Programme for Advancement of Girls' Education and the re-entry policy. The latter may by now be showing a positive, albeit minor, impact MDG Progress Report (2010:23).

Table 1: Shows pupils reaching grade 7 in percentages

	Primary School Net Enrolment %									
	1990	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2006**	**2009**
Total	80	71.1	76.6	77.7	81.3	85.1	95.6	97	97	102
Girls	69	69.6	75.3	76.4	82.4	84.6	95.8	98	98	104.6
Boys	71	72.7	77.8	78.8	81.3	85.6	95.3	96	96	103.6

***Source*:** UNESCO 2007

Zambia made significant progress towards the realization of universal primary education by 2015 and the elimination of gender disparity in primary education. Enrolments rose by over 1,500,000 learners at Basic School level between 2002 and 2010 and the proportion of females enrolled at that level was close to 50 percent. In addition, the completion rate at Basic School level was over 90 percent. However, gender parity in secondary schools and tertiary institutions remained a challenge between 2002 and 2010. A completion rate for Grade Seven, however, has significantly improved due to the introduction of free Basic education and the removal of cut-off points. At Grade 9 it also increased from 35.3 percent to 52.7 percent between 2002 and 2009. Although the rate was quite low, this was a significant increase considering that the rate rose by 17.4 percentage points. The completion rate for girls, however, slightly lagged behind that for boys. The completion rate for Grade 12 also improved (Zambia Education Sector Plan 2010-2015). Education is a major factor in enhancing a country's social and economic development as it aids in fighting against poverty and hunger. Since 1990, the percentage of pupils reaching Grade 7 has improved from 64% to 85.2% although literacy rates have shown a decline from 75% in 1990 to 70% in 2004. The potential for achieving Universal Primary Education for boys and girls by 2015 exists especially when it is considered that the rate increased by almost 10 percentage points (from 73% to 82.2%) in one year (2003 to 2004).

2.6 FPE has increased access to primary education

Zambia has made substantial progress in developing its basic education system in recent years. With the framework for accelerated growth in primary education enrollment set by the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Program (BESSIP) (1999-2002), a policy abolishing school fees for Grades 1-7 was established in 2002 and operationalized by the 2003-2007 Ministry of Education Strategic Plan. Access improved rapidly for economically disadvantaged students, and net enrollment increased from 74 percent in 2002 to 97 percent in 2007. Investments in school construction and teacher training were instrumental in increasing access, and increases in the number and quality of school facilities coupled with investments in textbooks helped maintain the quality of learning outcomes during the expansion period. Work has continued through Zambia's Education Sector National Implementation

Framework II (2008- 2010) and National Implementation Framework III (2011-2015). Pooling external assistance through a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) originally established during the implementation of BESSIP, the government has controlled financing of the education sector while donors have participated in program management with the opportunity to target and/or manage their own funding for specific components. While the SWAP has been useful in garnering and coordinating external as well as domestic finances for education (education as part of Zambia's national budget increased from 16 percent in 2006 to 20 percent in 2010), ODA to education in Zambia has been in decline. Total ODA to education in Zambia decreased by 26 percent from 2006 to 2011 ($71.2 million to $52.6 million). Basic education has born a disproportionate share of this cut, suffering a 43 percent reduction over the same period ($21.5 million to $12.4 million) (Republic of Zambia Ministry of Education, 2010).

While the World Bank was integral in establishing Zambia's education SWAp and has been an active partner, IDA support to basic education in Zambia has been minimal. Since 2000, IDA has committed a total of $14.8 million to Zambia's basic education system: $9.2 million in 2000 through the Social Investment Fund (14 percent of the total project commitment) and $5.6 million in the Emergency Drought Recovery Project (11 percent of the total project commitment). IDA currently has active projects in Zambia worth a total value of $503.2 million, two-thirds of which is dedicated to agriculture and transportation. Meanwhile, 184,000 children were still failing to benefit from a basic education in 2010.

One of the three major principles that captured the underlining spirit of the Education for All (EFA) objectives in Zambia relates to access, which emphasized commitment to universal provision of opportunities for a defined minimum level of education. Although this principle is centrally concerned with opportunities for the school-age population, it also embraced provision for the adult population, which in the earlier years, did not have access to such opportunities. The Living Conditions Monitoring Survey of 1998 had found a Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 68% among children aged 7-13 (the age group for primary education, Grades 1-7). In 2004, enrolment in Grades 1-7 increased by 39%, while enrolment in Grades 1-9 increased by 40%. During a period when the school-age population was estimated to have been growing by 2% annually, enrolment was increasing by about 9%. The rapid growth in enrolment is primarily on account of the policy of Free Education at Grades 1-7 (introduced in 2002), supported by the completion of about 900 new classrooms each year at new and existing schools. Although 7 years old is the official age of entry into Grade 1, many Zambian children enter at age 8 or older. The profile of Age-Specific Enrolment Rates1 in 2004 peaks at ages 9-12, when 96% of Zambian children were enrolled in schools. It may, therefore, be concluded that entry into the education system is now close to being universal (UNESCO, 2007)

2.7 Government funding for education

There is some evidence that governments that have eliminated user fees have attempted to fund such policies through increased spending on education. In Malawi, education spending rose from 13 percent of the total government budget in 1994/1995 (3.5 percent of GDP) to 20 percent in 1997/1998 (4.7 percent of GDP). The share of recurrent resources going to primary education rose from approximately 50 percent in 1993/1994 to around 60 percent in 1990/2000 (World Bank 2002c). As gross enrollments doubled over the decade, per pupil spending on primary education in real terms also increased. Specifically, real unit costs at the primary and secondary level increased, implying large increases in real public education expenditures, and the increases appeared to have been captured disproportionately by the poorer income groups in Malawi (World Bank 2002c). It is suffice to say that, the budg*et al*location to education in Zambia is the lowest in the sub-region. In 2001, just over 20% of the total budget was allocated to education compared to 25% - 30% in other countries (MOE, 2003). On the overall, education allocation as a proportion of GDP increased from 2.3% to an estimated allocation of 4.1% in 2002, this included external funding (MOE, 2003:18). In the 2011 budget, the estimated allocation to education slightly went up to about 6% but even then, this is below as compared to the overwhelming needs of these schools. This indicates difficulties in the operation of the schools to date.

Study by Museba Robert Ellison (2012) shows that, the Gross Enrolment Ratio for grades 1-9 rose from 75.1% in 2000 to 104.6% in 2005 while the Net Enrolment Ratio rose to 92.3% from 68.1% in 2000 due to the introduction of FBE. However, this development does not correspond to the high schools, which was only 21.5% meaning that less than 30% of children that should access to high schools education had no such opportunity (Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2009). Again, it is noted with dismay that whereas Zambia was successful in improving access to education, the quality of education, as measured by test and examination results is still poor. The weaknesses are related to severe underfunding, large differences in pupil teacher ratio and pupil classroom ratio that exist between and within schools (IOB, 2008) [1]. Pupil teacher ratios are considerably higher in remote rural areas. Enrolment rates are higher in the highest wealth quintiles and the wealthiest regions.

As alluded to, the elimination of fees for primary schooling in Uganda was also accompanied by restructuring of education expenditures. Education expenditures grew from 16.4 percent of the national, discretionary, recurrent budget in 1996 to about 30 percent in 2000 (Uganda Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, n. d.). Spending on primary education increased from less than 40 percent of the overall education budget throughout the early 1990s to about 70 percent in 1997/98 to present. Funds for construction and maintenance grew to six times their previous levels (Deininger 2003). Per student government expenditures on primary education in Cameroon rose by 114 percent, from CFAF 21,000 in 1995 to CFAF 45,000 in 2001.17 In Tanzania, 29,922 new classrooms were built between 2002 and 2004, with the support of communities using development grants. Total expenditures for education in Tanzania more than doubled between 1998 and 2002 (World Bank 2005a) [19]. Zambia's government proposed to increase budgetary contributions to the education sector to at least 20.5 percent in 2000; by 2005, public education expenditures accounted for 24.1 percent of total government spending. Lastly, in Cambodia, between 1996 and 2003, direct government spending on education rose from US$31 million to US$75.8 million and represented 19.1 percent of the total government recurrent budget by 2004. A large proportion of the increase

was funneled to the non-wage recurrent sector. In particular, the government used the largest proportion of non-wage funds to finance the Priority Action Program (PAP), which was designed to raise enrollment among children in grades 1-9 by reducing school costs for the poorest families (World Bank 2005g) [19].

According to Orlosky (1984), adequacy of finance and its effective management determines the way the school is managed and whether or not the school will meet its objectives. If finances from the government are not adequate, then the schools are not able to procure all the necessary goods and services needed to meet their objectives. Similarly, the government is expected to ensure that funds are released to schools in time. The head teacher's role in financial management includes budgeting, accounting and internal auditing The Gross Enrolment Ratio for grades 1-9 rose from 75.1% in 2000 to 104.6% in 2005 while the Net Enrolment Ratio rose to 92.3% from 68.1% in 2000 due to the introduction of FBE. However, this development does not correspond to the high schools, which was only 21.5% meaning that less than 30% of children that should access to high schools education had no such opportunity (Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2009). Again, it is noted with dismay that whereas Zambia was successful in improving access to education, the quality of education, as measured by test and examination results is still poor. The weaknesses are related to severe underfunding, large differences in pupil teacher ratio and pupil classroom ratio that exist between and within schools (IOB, 2008) [1]. Pupil teacher ratios are considerably higher in remote rural areas. Enrolment rates are higher in the highest wealth quintiles and the wealthiest regions.

A new study on Education has called on the Zambian government to do more to ensure more resources are allocated to education in view of erratic donor funding to the sector. The study entitled "Zambia: Effective delivery of public services" by Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project (AfriMAP) says the level of funding for the Zambian education sector significantly explains poor sector performance in terms of both access and service delivery in quality. The report contends that although budg*et al*location to the education sector has risen over the years from 17% in 2008 to 25% in 2010, this is still not enough. It cites major challenges faced by the sector as poor planning and implementation. The study also calls on the government to focus on reducing the pupil-teacher ratio, which has impacted negatively on quality education, and improve the conditions of service for teachers. It further calls on government to overcome issues of planning and capacity management of education delivery, which it says has affected the ministry's ability to consolidate any gains made in the past and address future challenges. A strategic plan was finalized in 2003, facilitating the appropriate integration of the whole education sector. Work begun on a PRSP, provided the necessary, if belated, impetus for this plan. During the 1990s, the numbers of teachers had declined, due both to HIV/AIDS, as well as a policy of not recruiting untrained teachers. Concomitantly, pupil teacher ratios had worsened, official school-going ages.

In 2000, 27% of total education expenditure was externally financed. It is still too early to judge the long term impact of the introduction of FPE in Zambia. However, there is concern that the quality of education does not deteriorate as greater access is afforded. Teacher attrition has been considerable, estimated at about 5% per year and whilst untrained teachers are not being hired in the Government schools, community schools have relied primarily on unqualified teachers. The graduates of the new Zambia Teacher Education Course (ZATEC) programme under BESSIP should produce sufficient numbers of teachers of newly qualified teachers, however. Efforts are being made to overcome the critical shortage of educational materials particularly a shortage of textbooks. Whilst reliance on parents to fund these costs has moved to Government, parents are still required to contribute to the schools' physical infrastructure and their maintenance. As access expands, the balancing act for Government will become trickier, as it will need to meet parental demands for quality whilst intake improves. Part of this challenge will be met by integrating into the basic school curriculum provision for the development by children of the skills that will enable them to contribute to society, to have access to formal and non-formal employment opportunities, and to be able to continue learning through life. Whether the targets are met for reduced repetition and drop out, and increased learning will be telling.

2.8 Do free primary education help in delivery of quality of education

The policy of Free Primary Education (FPE) has seen a tremendous increase in enrolment of school-going children from 5 million in January 2003 to 7.2 million in May 2003 and to 8 million by May 2009 (World Bank Report, 2009) [20]. This rapid increase in numbers of pupils has created constraints and challenges to successful implementation of FPE in Kenya thereby compromising the quality of education.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology which was used in the study. It discuss the research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and the ethical issues.

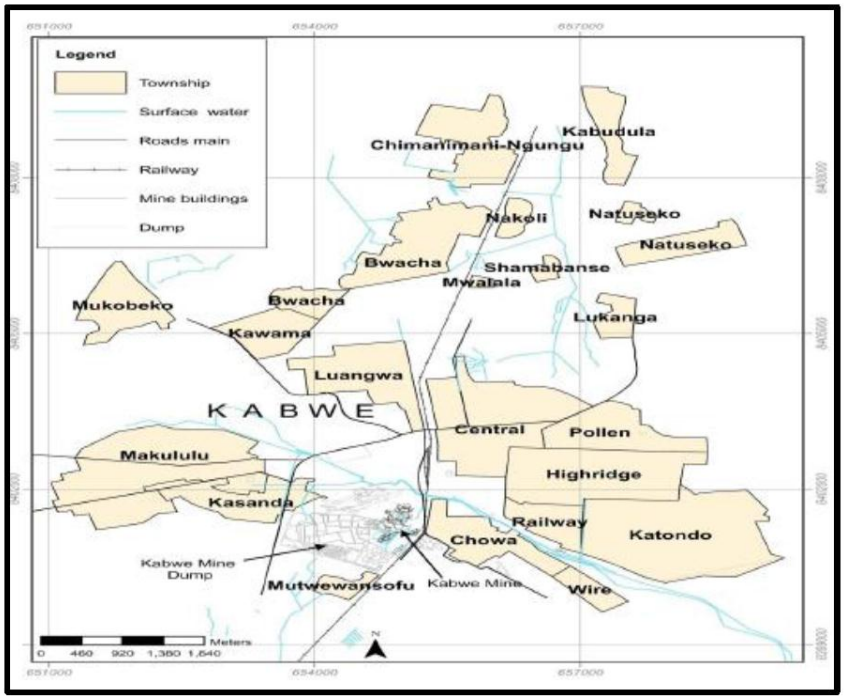
3.1 Location of the study area

This part of the research report provides descriptive data on geographical location of Kabwe urban.

3.2 Geographical location of Kabwe district

The study was conducted in Kabwe district urban centre of Central province. Twenty government schools were sampled.

Kabwe is situated in the Central Province of Zambia, about 138 kilometers north of the nation's capital, Lusaka. It further lies in the mid veld with average altitude of 1207 meters, located between latitude 14º 27′ South and longitude 28º 27′ East on central plateau. It has an annual average temperature of 20.2º with the monthly average temperature of the hottest at 26.8º while the lowest monthly average temperature at 14.2º. The average total annual rainfall is 966 millimeters (KMC, 2010**).** Kabwe district was born and grew out of the discovery of lead. The Kabwe mine site occupies approximately 3 km² and is situated south of Kabwe town. The official census in 2010 records a population of 202,914 people in Kabwe**.** However, it is believed that the number is closer to 300,000, with informal settlements that are not captured on the census (Census official report, 2010)



***Source*:** www.googlemap

Fig 2: Location map of Kabwe district.

3.2 Research design

The study made use of descriptive survey research design. Kerlinger (1975) [3] affirms that descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but may equally lead to formulation of important principles of knowledge and coming up with solutions to significant problems. Equally quantitative method is said to be qualitative because several researchers advocate combining the two methods not only for the purpose of triangulation but also for the purpose of drawing from the strength of both methods since both have their own strengths and weaknesses.

3.3 Target population

The target population included teachers, pupils, head teachers, staff officers in the Ministry of General Education in government primary schools and the district education Board secretary of Kabwe district.

3.4 Sample size

A sample is a small portion of a target population. Sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population, (Orodho, 2002). From the population frame the required number of subjects, respondents, elements or institutions will be selected in order to make a sample size. There are 113 schools in Kabwe district. Out of 113 schools only twenty primary schools were sampled randomly. The schools include Buseko primary, Ngungu basic school, mtishede, lunganga, Natuseko, mukobeko, Kamuchanga,Nakoli,Kasanda malombe, kantondo, Makululu, Kwashi, Benkafupi, Mine primary, Kuunika, Arteco, Mpima Prisons, St mary's, Neemtree, Kangomba, basic school and Chindwin. Out of this sample 20 head teachers were purposively selected including pupils and teachers from each school and were expected to give relevant information concerning the impact of free primary education in their school, others include four 'officials at district education board secretary's office and the District education board secretary were selected purposively as well giving us a total of fifty respondent. The sample size was choose due to the fact that the study was being carried out during the time of national examinations and it was during the time when the pupils were writing end of term test at the same time the research was denied leave making it difficult for the researcher to maximums on the distance, time as well as trying to cut down on the cost part of it.

3.5 Sampling techniques.

Both simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to come up with the sample size of fifty respondents: twenty head teachers, twenty teachers, and four education staff and the district education board secretary. Questionnaires and an interview schedule were used to provide the needed data. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The independent variable for the study will be impact of free primary education while the dependent variable is government schools. Random sampling and purposive methods was used to help target a group which is suitable to bring out rich information related to the central issue being studied for in-depth analysis (Black, 1999; Kombo and Tromp, 2009). White (2003), has stated that, simple random technique is a selection technique that provides each population element an equal chance of being included in the sample. Random sampling ensured that all individuals from the defined population had equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample and it provided more precise estimates (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999) [4, 7]. Head teacher, teachers,

District education Board Secretary, pupils and staff at DEBs office were purposively selected and interviewed by the researcher to identify impact of FPE. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993) [2], in purposive sampling the researcher's judgment will be used to select those respondents who best met the purposes of the study. Kombo and Tromp (2006: 82) affirms that, "the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting participants who will provide the richest information for in-depth analysis related to the central issue being studied.

3.6 Instruments for data collection

In view of the fact that the study is intended to be a descriptive survey, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The investigator used an open ended questionnaires as the primary data collection instruments**.** According to Bell, (1993), a self-administered questionnaire is the only way to elicit self-report on people's opinion, attitudes, beliefs and values. The questionnaire was designed to give a brief introduction of respondents. Therefore, three instruments were engaged in data collection for the study. The questionnaire was divided into sections representing the various variables adopted for study. Each section of the chosen study included closed structured and open ended questions which sought the views, opinion, and attitude from the respondent which might not have been captured. Furthermore, in order to collect equitable data, books, official records and reports for the District were consulted as well.

3.7 Data collection procedure

The researcher personally administers the questionnaire to the respondents. The selected schools were visited and the questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The respondents were assured that strict confidentiality was maintained in dealing with the responses. The interviews were used to get opinions from the stated respondents on the impact of Free Primary Education on government schools. Secondary data were obtained from official records, reports, internet, dissertations, books available in the libraries and journals.

3.8 Data analysis

The research findings required both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Quantitative analysis entails analyzing numbers about a situation by choosing specific aspects of that situation**.** Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained. The statistics were used to include frequency counts, means and percentages. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Computer program for analysis and Microsoft excel was used to analyse quantitative data from the questionnaires. The results of data analysis are presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

3.9 Ethical consideration

To make collection of data easier as per obligation in research, consent to carry out this study was sought after from pertinent authorities at the Information and Communication University Zambia, the District Education Board Secretary's Office and the Head teachers' of respective Primary Schools. All data collected during this study is used exclusively for the intention of the study, and were kept strictly secretly. Approval was sought from respondents and no informant was forced to participate in the study. Moreover, names of the respondents and institutions were not going to be disclosed in any way. Furthermore, the research was fully explained to the subjects in advance and "de-briefed" them afterwards.

3.10 Scope of the study

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter one, includes the introduction/background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions, significance of the study, conceptual framework and operation definition. Chapter two with a review of three bodies of literature: government funding to schools, FPE on the provision of quality of education and progression of learners especially grade sevens to secondary school. Chapter three focuses on the research methodology for this study. Chapter four has provided an overview of the case being studied. Chapter five will address the findings on the objectives. Chapter 6 will have the focus on the conclusion and recommendation to the study.

3.11 Delimitation of the Study

The study was limited to twenty (20) selected government primary schools in Kabwe urban. The government schools were chosen because they have direct operations with government. Adding to this, these schools were purposively selected for the idea of providing easier access to the schools since the researcher is working within the urban area of Kabwe.

3.12 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to twenty (20) government schools within Kabwe urban District of the Central Province. For this reason, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other districts in the province. The researcher faced the problem on reaching the respondent since the research was being carried out during the time of national examinations and it was during the time when the pupils were writing end of term test. This meant that most teachers were busy carrying out this national duty. Additionally, respondent such as pupils were preparing to write their examination as well as the end of the term tests this in itself created a big gap to the research findings.

4. Data Presentation

This chapter presents the findings of the study which was aimed at investigating the impact of free primary education in the selected government schools. The findings are presented according to the objectives: find out whether the government provides adequate funding to schools, to examine Free Primary Education on the provision of quality of education, to investigate whether Free Primary Education has helped primary school learners precede to the next stage.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents as Captured in subsections of the data collection instrument tool.

4.1.1 Distribution of Respondent by gender

A total of 45 respondents were drawn both randomly and purposively as presented in table 1. The survey covered almost the summary of distribution number of head teachers, teachers and pupils on the bases of gender except for the

education board secretary. While table 2 shows the distribution of all respondent covered by sex, while table 3 shows the distribution of head teachers by sex and table 3 shows the distribution of teachers by gender.

Distribution of all respondent covered by gender

Table 2: Distribution of all respondent covered by gender

Respondent	Gender			
	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
Head Teacher	12	60	8	40
Teachers	9	45	11	55
Pupils	2	40	3	60
District Education Board Secretary	1 (100%)	-	-	-

***Source*:** Field data 2015

Demographic Characteristics

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics

Group	Gender, frequency and %			Group	Gender, frequency and %		
	Gender	Frequency	%		Gender	frequency	%
Head Teachers	Male	12	60	Teachers	Male	9	45
	Female	8	40		Female	11	55
Group		Age, frequency and percent		Group	Age, frequency and percent		
Age of head teachers	Age range	frequency	%	Teachers	AGE	Frequency	%
	40-45	9	45		35-39	3	15
	45-49	6	30		40-44	9	45
	50+	5	25		45-49	6	30
					50+	2	10
	Educational levels by respondent			Group	Number of years in employment		
Head teachers	Education level	Frequency	%	Head teacher	Years	Frequency	%
	Primary diploma	6	30		10-15	6	30
	Secondary degree	6	30		15+	14	70
	Secondary diploma	2	10				
	Secondary degree	6	30				

***Source*:** Field data 2015

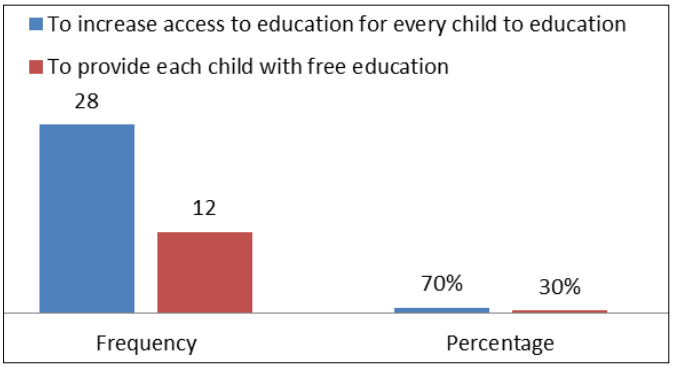
Table 3 above shows data on gender, age education levels' number of years in employment of head teachers and teachers. It was observed that schools under investigation therefore, had both young (who are energetic) as well as old (experienced) teachers who can work jointly to help realize the goal of FPE in Zambia. The study found a fair distribution of head teachers and teachers in all the age categories. The table above shows that 30% (6) of respondent have primary degrees, another 30% (6) have secondary degree, the other 30% (6) are primary diploma holders and the remaining 10% (2) are secondary school diploma holders. This is an indication that the head teachers are capable of bring out issues appropriately. Furthermore, the data from the above specify that, 70% (14) of the respondent are in employment for more than 15 years now, this means that the respondent have at least had enough time to see the challenges in education cycles of which I believe that even the data given stand to be of value. The other respondents are within 10- 15 years accounting for 30% (6).

4.2 Funding of schools by the government in support of Free Primary Education.

It is evident that the funds received from the government in support of free primary education were inadequate as confirmed by 18 (90 %) of the head teachers.

4.2.1 Time FPE funds is received by schools

It also emerged that the funds allocated to schools are irregular and did not arrive in time to help the school meat the cost of running as confirmed by 95% (19) of the head teachers.



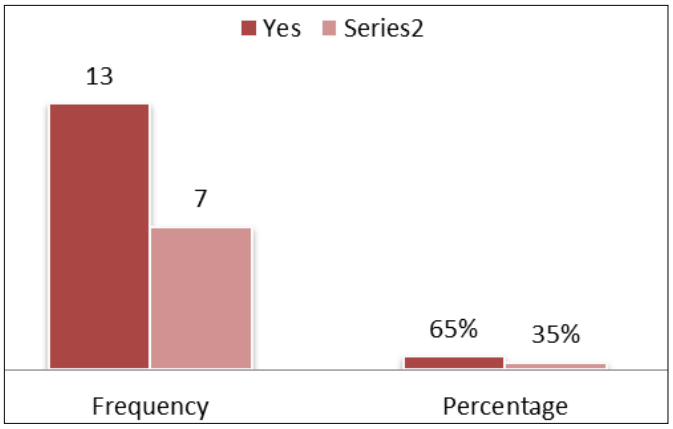
***Source*:** Field Data 2015

Fig 3: Purpose of Free primary Education Funds

The above figure indicated that out of the 40 respondent (20 head teachers and 20 teachers) 70% (28) of the respondent said that the purpose of free primary education is to increase the access to education for every child, while 30% (12) of the respondent stated that the purpose was to provide each child with free education.

4.3 Free Primary Education and Quality of Education

The enrolment rate in the schools under investigation proved to be high as confirmed by respondent from the figures below. Out of the 50 respondent, (38) 76% of them confirmed that the enrolment is high while (12) 24% of respondent confirmed that the enrolment is low.



***Source*:** Field Data 2015

Fig 4: Shows effects of teacher pupils ratio and performance

From the figure above shows that 65% (19) of the teachers stated that enrolment affects the performance of pupils and 35% (7) says that enrolment does not affect performance of the learner. The said by the teachers is also in line with the head teacher's view has seen from table 4 below.

Table 4: Shows teacher pupil ration and performance

Teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	5	20%
Total	20	100%

***Source*:** Field data 2015

5. Discussion of the Findings

This chapter discusses the findings which were presented in chapter four. The discussion is steered by the research objectives as follows; to find out whether the government provides adequate funding to schools, to examine FPE on the provision of quality of education and to investigate whether FPE has helped primary school learners precede to the next stage.

5.1 Government funds the primary schools adequately

The study indicated that the fund disbursed to schools were not enough to meet the running cost of the schools, As a result parents were being made to contribute extra levies in the name of the PTA project fund, civilian day. This result are also confirmed by Meki (2004), who found out that grants though provided to schools, they were not adequate especially for most urban and big schools to pay for utility bills. The above findings were to a large scope in compliance with those alluded to by Kasonde (2003) who carried out an Assessment of the Education Policy, and observed that even if schools were ordered not to charge fees at lower and middle basic school levels, the government has failed to meet the demand of the schools adequately.

Furthermore it also emerged that the funds allocated to schools are irregular and did not arrive in time to help the school meet the running cost such as the general purpose for support materials like repairs, transport and recurrent expenditure. On the other hand, funds did not allow for flexibility in spending. This has made schools to charge PTA project funds to help run the school affairs. In support of the finding, it is suffice to say that, the budg*et al*location to education in Zambia is the lowest in the sub-region. In 2001, just over 20% of the total budget was allocated to education compared to 25% - 30% in other countries (MOE, 2003). On the overall, education allocation as a proportion of GDP increased from 2.3% to an estimated allocation of 4.1% in 2002, this included external funding (MOE, 2003:18).

In support to the finding the Gross Enrolment Ratio for grades 1-9 in 2000 rose from 75.1% to 104.6% in 2005 while the Net Enrolment Ratio rose to 92.3% from 68.1% in 2000 due to the introduction of FBE. Nevertheless, this development does not correspond to the high schools, which was only 21.5% meaning that less than 30% of children that should access to high schools education had no such opportunity (Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, 2009). In addition, the study pointed out that, the insufficiency and impediment in funding resulted in a delay in purchases of the materials needed for the running of the free primary education policy like chalk, text books, exercise books, mathematical instrument sets, pencils, rulers, rubbers and other school requisites. The schools' infrastructure could not be maintained resulting in rundown schools.

In a well presented manner, According to Orlosky (1984), adequacy of finance and its effective management determines the way the school is managed and whether or not the school will meet its objectives. If finances from the government are not adequate, then the schools are not able to procure all the necessary goods and services needed to meet their objectives. Similarly, the government is expected to ensure that funds are released to schools in time. It also emerged that the funds allocated to schools are irregular and did not arrive in time to help the school meat the cost of running as confirmed by 95% (19) of the head teachers.

5.2 Free Primary Education in the provision of quality of education

The study indicated that the enrolment rate in most schools under investigation proved to be very high (see 4.5). This high enrolment has greater impact on the provisions of quality education. Although it increased the access to education but on the other hand it has increased the size of the class making it difficulties for the teacher to attend to the pupils. The study found teachers handled classes with 40, 55 or 60 pupils.

In line with the literature, Free Primary Education (FPE) has seen a tremendous increase in enrolment of school-going children from 5 million in January 2003 to 7.2 million in May 2003 and to 8 million by May 2009 (World Bank Report, 2009) [20].

In such cases, pupils hardly got the attention they deserved; hence, many were not learning much. Teacher-pupil interaction is minimal and teachers can only move with the brighter pupils, leaving out the slow learners. Without personalized attention, the weak learners are unlikely to perform well. Teachers admitted that they could not give individualized attention to the pupils and that it was not possible to assist slow learners or those with special needs. Furthermore, the quality of education is declining under Free

Primary Education. It is difficult on the part of a teacher to teach and give exercises and mark the books at once. Adding to this, in most cases the attention is not given to slow learners and so they will keep lagging behind. However, without personalized attention, the weak learners are unlikely to perform well. Teachers admitted that they could not give individualized attention to the pupils and that it was not possible to assist slow learners or those with special needs (see Figure: 4 and Table 4)

5.3 Free Primary Education enables primary school learners to proceed to secondary schools

It was reviewed that the progression rate of the pupils has improved greatly this is due to FP. Because of the increase in the number of pupils accessing education, the completion late at grade seven has been high. The study indicated that, the number of pupil's crossing over to other grade is very high due to the high enrolment. The abolishment of user fees has attracted a lot of children to attend schools. Noting from the 2015 grade seven results is vivid to mention that out number of 337 706 pupils entered for the grade Seven examinations and only 304, 429 pupils sat for the examinations giving has a progression rate of 93.49 percent. It suffices to mention that, Zambia has made progress in boosting primary school completion rates. The proportion of pupils reaching Grade 7 has increased from 64 percent in 1990 to 90.9 percent in 2010. Disaggregation by sex shows that the improvement in the same period was higher for girls (32.6 percentage points) than for boys (19.8 percentage points). This was partly on account of the Programme for Advancement of Girls' Education and the re-entry policy.

5.4 Summary

The main purpose of this chapter was to discuss the findings of the study, which was focused on the impact of free Primary Education on selected government schools. The study reviewed that, the impact of Free primary Education was described by challenges which included: increased enrolments, regular and inadequate provision of free primary education materials, teaching over crowded classes, delayed and inadequate funding, it has also been discovered that free primary education has baring on the quality education delivery, low literacy levels, poor performance and teacher' inability to teach effectively due to high enrolment rate.

Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

The core values of the study was to investigate the impact of Free primary Education on the government schools. The study however, was focused on bridging the information gap in the areas to do with the impact of Free primary Education in government school: such as funding of the school to support the FPE, quality of FPE in the provision of quality of education as well as how the free primary education help learners to progress to the next grade. Therefore, it's imperative to mention that it is against this vivid background that the chapter proposes make conclusion and recommendation of the mentioned study.

It is worthwhile to mention that, the conclusions and the recommendations are based on the research findings from informants. The sample size was 50 respondents out of these, there are 20 head teachers, 20 teachers, five pupils, four officials at DEBs office and one DEBS. However, apart from the pupils who were interviewed the rest of the respondent were subjected to the questionnaires. The data analysis and presentation of results were organized around the research questions and objectives that were created. Therefore, the conclusions and recommendations are based on the findings in relation to study objectives. In the face of the fact that Free Primary Education had enabled many pupils to enroll in school regardless of their socio-economic status, the achievement of the policy was associated with challenges. Among which were inadequacy and delay of funding, over enrolment, inadequate educational supplies, and inadequate teaching staff. The number of children has increased, yet the number of teachers remained constant, if not reduced. That meant that some classes or subjects were not taught. Due to large numbers, it was not possible for the teachers to give all the children the attention they deserved. This was cupped by the teachers failing to give many assignments as used to happen in the past, so the pupils did not have enough work to practice or help them revise what they had learnt: "Enrolment has increased causing congestion in classrooms, a scenario that does not augur well for effective learning and teaching. This has also increased the number of children sharing a desk than it used to be in the past.

6.2 Recommendation

In view of the findings and based on suggestions by the various respondents, the following recommendations should be considered if the Free Primary Education is to succeed.

- The payout of Free Primary Education funds should be sent to schools on time preferably during holidays so that schools can plan and purchase school requisites in time.
- The government should allocate adequate funds for the schools requisites such learning and teaching materials. Further, the government should also bring it to the attention of the parents to support the government in areas do with PTA contributions.
- Funding should be adequate for all the schools' requisites including an allocation for school assessment and sporting activities and in order to increase efficiency.
- The government should increase allocation for the expansion of school infrastructure especially in existing schools to match with the current population explosion and decongest the classes to a normal enrolment.

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