EFFECT OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION ON GROWTH AND
SUSTAINABILITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS IN
MARSABIT CENTRAL SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES OF KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for consideration of any certification. This research project has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited using current APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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<tr>
<td>ECDE : Early Childhood Development Education</td>
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<td>ECE : Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>EFA : Education for All</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPE : Free Primary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIA : Kenya institute of administration</td>
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<td>MDG : Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>SSE : Subsidized Secondary Education</td>
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<td>UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to investigate the effect of free primary education on growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county, Kenya. The main problem of this study was that, despite Early Childhood Education being the foundation of learning in later school level it was not free like in the case of primary school, or subsidized as in the case of secondary schools. This therefore means that parents with children in ECE Centers must pay fees for their children to be in school, a situation which is likely to threaten the growth and sustainability of ECE. It is feared that a number of parents opt to withhold their children at home until they are of age for the free primary education (FPE) which is financed by the government. This in essence means that FPE may deny the ECE Centers the finances with which to run their programmes thus negatively impacting on their growth and sustainability. This study sought to assess the effects of free primary education on the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in Marsabit Central Sub-county. The study used a sample size of 147 respondents comprising of 21 ECE Centres, 42 ECE teachers and 105 ECE parents. The study used primarily the questionnaire as the only instrument for data collection. Data obtained from open ended questions was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively using descriptive statistic (i.e. calculations based on means frequencies and percentages) from the response given by the participants for each item. The findings were presented on graphs, pie charts and percentages. The study found out that majority (66.67%) of pupils paid fees ranging 200-500 per month, 21.43% paid fees of 500-1000 and 11.9% paid 1500-2000 respectively. Majority of the parents (79.66%) cited that they were not able to pay fees charged in the ECE centers. FPE programme was the major cause (54.76%) of job insecurity of the ECE teachers. FPE has threatened the enrolment and retention of ECE children and consequently reduced income for ECE Centers to be able to pay teachers’ salaries. The study found that enrolment and retention in the ECE centers was not consistent. The study concluded that the FPE programme had contributed to the decrease of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county. The study recommends the government to support ECE learning centers across the country to enhance proper education growth of the pupils.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction
The chapter discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, limitation, scope and delimitations of the study, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. The chapter concludes with operational definition of terms as used in the study.

1.1 Background to the Study
Over sixty years ago education was declared a basic human right for every person, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948. Since then, it has been reaffirmed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the Conventional on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), among others.

In 1990, over 150 governments adopted the world declaration of education for all at Jomtien, Thailand to boost efforts towards delivering the right to education. Ten years later, the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal reaffirmed this commitment and adopted the six education for all (EFA) goals that run to 2015: which emphasize: expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children among other things. 180 countries signed up to make these goals happen, committing to putting legal frameworks, policies and finance in place so that everyone, no matter what their circumstances, could have an
In line with the above international human rights instruments the U.S government emphasizes that the first years of schooling for its children, is mandatory. Like many things, this varies from region to region; education is considered a local matter in most part under U.S. law. It typically begins in the fall after the child's sixth birthday, though in some areas five-year-olds who are near their sixth birthday are allowed to enter first grade. Grades 2 through 12 follow for the next eleven years; education is not compulsory past 16 in most states, though some states are debating rising the drop-out age to 18. In addition, there are several years of "schooling" prior to first grade. Kindergarten (German for "children's garden") is a class for 5-year-olds. It is generally optional (though recommended); in some districts it is only half-day. Most public school districts make kindergarten available for children within their district.

In England Clark (1998) reveals that the modern system of education in this country stemmed mainly from the second half of the 19th-century. During this time, all racial,
religious and ethnic groups were to have access to the same type of education and in the same type of setting. Education in the early years flourished with early childhood development programs and on the other end of the spectrum higher education after high school became more attainable for many. It was not until the Education Act of 1870 or the "Forster Act",

In Africa and specifically Lesotho, education has undergone a transformation in recent years, meaning that the country has embraced free primary education (FPE) and in addition, it is compulsory even though there are more girls than boys attending school (MoEST, 2000; 2001; UNICEF, 2010). Elsewhere in Malawi, the country has until recently had high poverty as well as illiteracy rates, low primary enrollment and also completion rates as Avenstrup (2004) shows for it was the first country ahead of three other countries from East and West Africa to start working towards Universal Primary Education.

In Kenya, Free primary education was started in 1971 (Ngaroga, 2001) in a bid to make primary school accessible to all children particularly those from disadvantaged areas such as Marsabit and Mandera. However, after about a decade or so, the programme collapsed but was re-introduced in 2003 (Otach, 2008). The re-birth of the programme created a positive outcome because it resulted in significant increase in enrolment in a majority of the schools with more than 1.5 million children who were previously out of school gaining access to education. The Kenya government concentrated much on primary school children and subsidized secondary school education programs. ECE seem to have
been left out of this free basic education and parents with children in ECE are therefore required to pay for the service which is unimaginable judging from the fact that these are the formative years and more effort is needed in building a strong foundation for later learning in other levels. Worse still, according to Republic of Kenya (2005) in Sessional Paper, No.1 of 2005) it is likely that parents are holding their children from attending ECE until they are of age to be admitted to primary school. The implication is that such a practice can overwhelm the existence of ECE. In addition, low enrollment rates may contribute to lack of sustainability of the Centers due to reduced resources emanating from the declining number of children since it is money paid to the Centers that is used to run and maintain them. There was therefore need to find out the real magnitude of impact of free primary education on growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

An Early Childhood Education Center where growth and all millstones are developed and sustained bears good consequences. This is because implementation of ECE strengthens learning at all levels and hence builds confidence in parents and children’s learning. The learners and the parents appreciate the need for a smooth transition to deal with stress on how to finance their children education and every day’s emerging issues and challenges. All these enhance growth and sustainability particularly if free primary education was made a reality in Early Childhood Education Centers. However the bone of contention is that, ECE, unlike in the case of primary schools, is neither free nor subsidized as in secondary schools. Parents with children in ECE must therefore finance their children’s education. Further it is suspected that parents were holding their children from attending
ECE until they were of age to be admitted to primary school. Nevertheless, there appears to be no studies conducted to show the true magnitude of the problem. If children skip ECE and go directly to primary school, this could inhibit growth and sustainability of ECE Centers. Similarly, reduced number of children in ECE sector may deny the Centres fees used to run and maintain them thereby limiting their growth and sustainability. It is against this background that researcher felt compelled to consider assessing the effect of the free primary education on the growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education Centers.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the effect of free primary education (FPE) on the growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education Centers. Specifically, the influence of FPE was scrutinized against the following ECE Center variables: financing of ECE Centers through payment of fees and salary of teachers, teaching personnel issues related to job security as well as their development career-wise, and children’s participation in terms of rate of enrolment and their retention in the Centres.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

i. To establish the influence of FPE on payment ECE Center fees.

ii. To find out the influence of FPE on payment of ECE teachers’ salary.

iii. To determine the influence of FPE on the job security of ECE teachers.

iv. To establish the influence of FPE on ECE teachers’ career development.
v. To find out the influence of FPE on the enrolment rate of ECE children.

vi. To investigate the influence of FPE on retention of children in ECE Centers.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions below:

i. What is the influence of FPE on the payment of ECE Centre fees?

ii. What is the influence of FPE on the payment of ECE teachers’ salary?

iii. What is the influence of FPE on job security of ECE teachers?

iv. What is the influence of FPE on ECE teachers’ career development?

v. What is the influence of FPE on the enrolment rate of ECE children?

vi. What is the influence of FPE on retention of children in pre-schools?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study may benefit children, in ECE Centers’ in growth and sustainability. The government through the Ministry of Education may be challenged into formulation of appropriate policies in future on how to improve enrolment/retention rate of ECE children and ultimately growth and sustainability of ECE Centers. The findings of this study wound also contribute to the body of knowledge and serve as a source of reference to educators. Notably, the study can enlighten policy makers on job security of ECE teachers. ECE Centers may use recommendations made to enhance teachers’ career and growth as well as sustainability of ECE Centers in general.
1.7 Limitation and Delimitation of the Study

1.7.1 Limitations of the Study

Some respondents were not willing to disclose information for unknown fears. The researcher tried to gain their trust during the study by assuring them confidentiality of the information they would give. The study area is extremely hot, has insecurity issues and some areas may not be easily accessible, but the researcher used every possible resource to ensure his comfort, safety and any available transport to reach to those areas.

1.7.2 Delimitation of the Study

The study was confined to Early Childhood Education Centers, ECE teachers and parents with children in the Centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county. The study was delimited to free primary education and its effects on the growth and sustainability of ECE centers. It could have been the researchers wish to carry out the study in all public ECE centers but geographical terrain and poor infrastructure were major hindrances. The study was therefore limited to Marsabit Central Sub--county.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher took into consideration three basic assumptions during the study

i. The respondents gave honest and unbiased information during data collection period

ii. The target population was not too difficult to access during the study period.

iii. The insecurity concern in the region was not a hindrance during data collection procedure.
1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Liberalism Theory. This theory was developed by Herbert (1902) thus calls on full freedom of education and equal opportunities for all community members including children without discrimination. The theory assert that, the primary purpose of the government among other aspects is to promote social progress by curing or curbing social evils such as negative effects of free pre-primary education on the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers, unemployment, crime, poverty etc. the theory is relevant in other words, the government has the mandate to address the felt needs of the society through initiatives or education policies that ensure proper management of schools at all levels in order to bring about positive change and growth among its citizen. Without sustainability of ECE centers, children will miss out on their basic right to education and their individual liberty and social progress for the present and future will be curtailed.

The theory is relevant in that, the independent variable of this study: free primary education may influence the growth and sustainability of ECE centers thereby negatively influencing source of ECE finances, ability to raise teacher salaries, professional advancement and job security of ECE teachers. ECE children’s enrollment as well as retention rates may also be affected since parents will not see the need to take their children to ECE Centers where they are required to pay fees while public primary schools are free.
The government needs to put measures into place to boost influence the growth and sustainability of ECE centers; this is because education can help in improving the lives of the children in future by breaking the cycle of poverty. If ECE Centers continue paying fees while primary schools are free, the ECE Centers will be closed permanently and the children will not be able to get education. The emphasis here is that the government could consider offering free ECE services to enable young children to access this important education which lays the foundation for lifelong learning. If the government offers free ECE services, then the FPE will not interfere with the growth and development of ECE Centers nor access and retention of the children. It will also prevent parents from restricting their children from attending ECE Centers in a bid to waiting until they access entry into primary school where free education is offered. School fees will also no longer keep ECE children away from school. Instead of ECE Centers dying out, the government needs to encourage their growth and sustainability through putting up more schools to enable young children to enroll and access the Centers easily or conveniently without ant heart-ache.

Liberal theorists insist on measures which if put into place will help to reduce the social and economic inequalities that divide the society. Investment in early childhood education by the government can end inter-generational cycles of poverty, diseases, violence and discrimination. The government must treat its citizens with fairness and dignity in order to ensure they succeed as individuals and hence as a nation as stipulated in the objectives for education in Kenya. People’s position in the global economy depend on their competences which must be nurtured or developed during early childhood for
sustainable results. What is attained during early childhood is never easy to erase and hence any efforts towards the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers is worth venturing into by the government.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

While FPE is accessible in primary school, parents must finance early childhood education. The interplay between the independent variable (effect of FPE) and the dependent variable (growth and sustainability of ECE Centers) is presented in figure 1.1 below.
Independent Variable
Free Primary Education (FPE)

Dependent Variable
Growth and Sustainability of ECE Centers in Terms of:
- Financing of ECE Centers
  - Payment of school fees
  - Payment of ECE teachers
- Teaching Personnel
  - Job security
  - Teacher career development
- Children’s’ Participation
  - Enrolment
  - Retention

Intervening variables
- Introducing free ECE
- Ensuring of government financial aid to ECE Centres
- Making ECE a pre-requisite for joining primary school

Outcomes:
- ECE finance remittance ensured
- Timely payment of ECE teachers salary ensured
- ECE teachers’ job secured
- ECE teachers’ careers developed
- ECE children’s enrolment enhanced
- Children retained in ECE Centres

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Diagram on Influence of FPE on Growth and Sustainability of ECE Centers

Source: Researcher 2015

With ECE not being included in the FPE programme, parents of young children may feel discouraged to finance this service while older children’s education is free. Those who
pay might not do it consistently, and if forced to, could withdraw their children from Early Childhood Education Centres, opting to wait for them to turn 6 years and join Std One. If children skipped early childhood education, the Centers would lack the finances to run and manage them thereby negatively affecting the institutions. Most importantly, this would curtail teachers’ pay and provision of physical resources in the Centres, both of which are financed through fees paid by parents.

If children enrolled directly into standard one, ECE teachers would feel that their jobs were threatened and may opt to leave the profession in search of other careers. Additionally, if teachers would end up not embracing opportunities to develop their career nor refreshing their professional skills, hence their upward mobility would be limited, thereby affecting the growth and sustainability of their ECE Centers. Withdrawing children from ECE Centers and keeping them at home until they are eligible for FPE may affect the enrollment and retention rate in the Centers. This would also deny such children the opportunity to access developmentally or age appropriate stimulation.

Consequently, failure to retain children in ECE Centers would limit finances, resulting in the Centers failure to sustain them leading to their collapse or closure. However, if intervention measures such as introducing free ECE, provision of government financial support to the Centers and making ECE a pre-requisite for joining Std 1, positive outcomes would be realized. Free ECE services would ensure regular flow of financial support and timely payment of teachers. ECE teachers will also feel that their jobs are
secure and their career development will be enhanced through regular provision of further training in their work. These initiatives will culminate into higher enrollment and retention rates of children thereby realizing the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Growth : Progress or positive change in the status of ECE Centre programmes.

Sustainability : Meeting the needs of present, without compromising Early Childhood Education Centres in fulfilling their needs.

Early Childhood Education: Education a child receives up to the age of eight years (includes Kindergarten and nursery).

ECE Centre : All the institutions that offer educational experiences to children before they join primary school.

Job security : Probability that an ECE teacher will keep their job

Retention : The capacity to hold children to remain in Early Childhood Education Centres.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction
This chapter discusses on free primary education, growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education, effect of Free Primary Education on growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Centers, effect of Free Primary Education on early childhood education, Teaching Personnel, effect of Free Primary Education on Early Childhood Education, children’s participation and summary of literature review

2.1 Free Education
The birth of free basic education for children is a complex process. In USA for example, the history of education starts from the 17th century Cremin (1970) and covers the trends in educational philosophy, policy, institutions, as well as formal and informal learning. During this time, literacy levels were very high in USA. The schools were all male, with few facilities for girls. In the 18th century, the system of education was more inclusive. However, children of all ages learnt under one teacher in one class room. Although these schools were publicly supplied at the local or town level, they were not free, and instead were supported by tuition or "rate bills."

The 19th century however, was the progressive era whereby a lot of development was witnessed and by the year 1870, all states had free elementary schools. The 20th century in contrast ushered in more inclusivism and the idea of education for all. Most public school programs were free and had kindergarten sections by 1910 and the state controlled
free public education. School attendance was mandatory and education was universal. The states also became much more responsible for financing education whereby local property taxes financed 68% of public school expenses, while the states contributed 30%. Beside these existing literature, in Kenya no comparative studies was made for adaptations of best practices and sustainability of free basic educations including early childhood. Therefore leaving gaps for similar research work.

In England, Clark (1998) reveals that the modern system of education in this country stemmed mainly from the second half of the 19th-century. During this time, all racial, religious and ethnic groups were to have access to the same type of education and in the same type of setting. Education in the early years flourished with early childhood development programs and on the other end of the spectrum higher education after high school became more attainable for many. It was not until the Education Act of 1870 or the "Forster Act", that saw the birth of the modern system of education in England. This not only gave rise to a national system of state education but also assured the existence of a dual system- voluntary denominational schools and nondenominational state schools. Most of the schools were run at a fee but elementary education became effectively free with the passing of the 1891 Education Act to the relief of most parents particularly those from lower socio-economic settings.

Basic education in Portugal like in the rest of Europe is free (Government of Portugal, 2011). However, early childhood education is not fully free. Children from four months to three years may frequent a nursery but majority of them are not free. Those under the
Portuguese Social Security are however partly financed by the state and parents pay according to their income. Education for three to five year olds is offered in both state-run and private kindergartens and those under the state are free of charge. The different modalities used to deliver services to different categories of children can be analyzed through different perspective and solution put forth for parent, teachers and policy makers to adopt better strategies for accessibility and transitions.

In Asia, the Indonesian Education System at all levels is required to ensure compulsory and quality education for all children aged 7-15 years. It is therefore a right for all Indonesians aged 7-15 years of age to receive basic formal education equivalent to junior high school (Puslitjaknov, 2006). There are however some indicators of failure caused by several things that have been identified, such as, the lack of replacement funding in place of fees and the loss of quality due to overcrowding and subsequent high drop-out rates (Rosser, Joshi & Edwin, 2011). In early childhood, the National Education System Act 20 of 2003 provides the basis for the expansion of early childhood education services. However, the law is vague in relation to the status of early childhood education services because even though the law recognizes the sector as a stage preceding basic education, early childhood services are not part of the formal education system, so participation is not compulsory. Education in most African countries similarly follows global patterns and being third world countries characterized by poverty, provision of education generally but particularly for early childhood without a fee has encountered many challenges as Avenstrup (2004) shows in a study involving Lesotho, Kenya, Uganda and Malawi.
In Uganda specifically, the country has for example, had a sleeping Universal Free Primary Education (UPE) policy from 1987. However, it was not until relative stability was attained in 1997 when FPE was implemented, following the new government’s manifesto. In Lesotho, education has also undergone a transformation despite similar challenges as in Uganda and has not only embraced free primary education (FPE) but it is also compulsory for all children (MoEST, 2000; 2001; UNICEF, 2010). In Malawi, primary education like in many countries is also free MoE, 2000. However, the country has until recently had high poverty as well as illiteracy rates, low primary enrollment and completion rates Avenstrup (2004). In 1994, the government introduced free primary education and the number of students escalated to over three million Kadzamira and Ross, (2000). This created a huge challenge due to lack of classrooms, teaching/learning materials, and qualified teaching personnel. The above findings affirmed that free education is important for implementations of UPE and other human right-based universal declaration. However the extent and status of the implementation and impediments in Kenya systems of education were not clearly spent by any recent research.

Locally in Kenya, the government in an effort to ensure education for all children, similarly introduced the free primary education (FPE) in 1971 when tuition fees was abolished for the economically marginalized districts in the country (Ngaroga, 2001). By July 1973 areas such as Marsabit, Mandera, West-pokot, Wajir, Tana River, Turkana, Samburu, Garissa and Lamu had free primary education up until 1980s when the programme collapsed. In 2003 however, the government re-introduced
the free primary education programme with the aim of providing more opportunities to
the disadvantaged school age children (Otach, 2008).

The policy abolished fees and other levies that had previously posed a
serious hindrance to children wanting to access education (Okwach and George,
1997). The free primary education policy has been described as laudable (Rob et al.,
2004), because of its effect on gross enrolment rate (GER) which increased from 92% in
2002 to 104% in 2003 of the school age children population (Otach, 2008)), resulting in
more than 1.5 million children who were previously out-of-school joining primary
schools (UNESCO, 2005). The government later on subsidized secondary education
(SSE) for older children (Republic of Kenya, 2005a; 2006b).

Early childhood education in Kenya however, is not free but the sector receives minimal
subsidy from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) at an average
of less than 1% of its total budget (UNESCO, 2006). ECE is therefore mainly financed by
parents or local communities. Considering that most Kenyan communities live below the
poverty line, financing of ECE Centers therefore is a huge problem.

that parents are holding their children from attending ECE until they are of age to be
admitted to primary school. This may have a negative influence on the growth and
sustainability of the Centers which are run and managed with the finances collected in
form of fees. Retaining or with holding of the children by their parents may lead to low
enrollment rates thereby further reduced fee being received by the Centers. In addition, reduced number of children may lead to collapse or closure of the Centers. The declining number of children would also interfere with the Centers’ ability to pay or retain the teachers since it is money paid to the Centers that is used to run and maintain them. The Centers and also teachers on their part would not see sense in staff career development sponsorship programs since such endeavors require finances. Teachers would also feel insecure with their employment and decide to abandon their non-paying jobs.

Although UNICEF (2010) reveals that there are studies on increased school enrolment, the main emphasis has been on primary and secondary schools. Therefore it would not be in order to generalize increased enrolment of FPE and Subsidized Secondary Education (SSE) to ECE Centers. With the unplanned establishment of ECE Centers in the county, some started in very poor environment which has put the quality of education at question (Sifuna, 2003). Against this background of poor ECE environment Centers, many communities, especially the predominantly poor and vulnerable such as those in ASAL areas like Marsabit Central Sub-county have been unable to benefit from free education since it directly targets children from standard one and above. Hence the researcher felt the need to assess the effects of the free primary education on the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county.

In 2002, NARC government implemented the FPE policy, which was a campaign pledge to the voters. The FPE initiative focuses on attaining EFA and in particular, Universal Primary Education (UPE). “Key concerns are access, retention, equity, quality and
relevance and internal and external efficiencies within the education system (MOEST, 2005a, pp3)". Through the FPE policy, the NARC government is scrutinizing the current 8-4-4 systems, which had previously been coupled with retention and reduced enrolment before it came to power. The government's focus is also on "quality education and training as a human right in accordance to Kenya law and international conventions. The FPE implementation in 2003 is critical to attaining the EFA as a key objective to realizing the UPE goal (MOEST, 2005 pp3)."

The goal of the current government is to have education and training for development translated *Elimu Bora Kwa Maendeleo*. The MOEST is mandated with this mission and it works with the stakeholders, to provide, promote and coordinate quality lifelong education training and research for Kenyans sustainable development and responsible citizenry. The ministry is responsible for providing appropriate regulatory framework, develop policies and guidelines, provide support, mobilize resources for education sector inputs and coordinate human capital development through education and training. The overall goal of MOEST and the government is to achieve EFA by 2015 in tandem with international commitments (MOEST, 2005 pp28).

The current education system consists of Early Childhood Education (ECE), primary and secondary education. ECE takes one year. At the end of the primary education, pupils sit 13 for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) prepared by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). Performance in the KCPE determines who is admitted to secondary schools. At the end of secondary education, students sit for the
Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education, also administered by the KNEC. The Joint Admissions Board (JAB) is responsible for selecting students to joining public universities. Students can apply directly to private universities, which are guided by the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). There are departments at the MOEST headquarters and within the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) management that are responsible for coordinating and preparing curriculum for special needs education. MOEST also manages teacher training. “Special education suffers from inadequate funding, lack of clear policy framework, low progress in assessing and placing children with disabilities, few qualified teachers to handle children with special needs, lack of teaching and learning resources among others (UNESCO, 2006, pp28)”.

2.2 Growth and Sustainability of ECE

The provision of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Kenya is a joint effort between households, communities and the government (KIE, 1995). The sector has witnessed significant growth with ECE Centers having increased from 29,455 in 2003 to 37,263 in 2007. The total enrolment rose from 1,538,069 in 2003 to 1,691,093 in 2007. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in ECE Centers increased to 59.3 in 2007 from 56.8 in 2003. Growth and sustainability of a programme could be in terms of flow of numbers/enrolment of learners and in this case ECE children, finances to support the programme, provision of teacher development opportunities and a conducive work environment (Mugo, 2014).
Whereas the growth in enrolment is a welcome development in the education sector, there is concern over that in ECE which stood at 59.3% when compared to primary school level at 107.6% in 2007 from 102.8% in 2003 (M.O.E. Education statistics Booklet 2003-2007). Based on MoE (2010), it can be deduced that with the advent of Free Primary Education, (FPE), some parents are circumventing the ECE level by enrolling their children in primary school without going through ECE. In view of the importance of ECE as the foundation for quality education, all efforts must be made to improve the growth and sustainability of the sector. Mugo (2014) asserts that for any programme to realize growth and sustenance, it must appear to ensure or address the felt needs of the society. The best way to ascertain their needs could be through research to find out from them why ECE seems to be on the decline and if indeed FPE is the real cause of the downward trend. Solutions to avert the problem could then be sought. During the study, efforts were made to assess through research whether or not FPE has any effect on the growth and sustainability of ECE in Marsabit Central Sub-county, Kenya.

2.3 Effect of FPE on Growth and Sustainability of ECE Centers

2.3.1 Effect of FPE on Financing of ECE Centers

The running of any institution like an ECE Centre requires finances. In Kenya as in most African countries ECE education is not free. Parents of ECE children therefore are forced to finance the programs despite the fact that most of them are poor citizens living below the poverty line. Financing the physical materials/ resources in the ECE Centers go hand in hand with the constant flow and adequate financing of ECE Center programme/
activities. For example, it is the finances that the ECE Centers collect that go into provision of feeding programs in the Centers, buying all the physical and material resources used in the institutions among other requirements. FPE has interfered with the flow of cash in ECE Centers. According to EFA (2007; parents with children aged below six years in Lesotho, did not enroll them in ECE Centers but sent them direct to standard one where education is free thereby denying the Centers the much needed finances. With the increasingly reluctance of parents to pay for ECE, FPE has made it even more difficult to mobilize resources from parents for the Centers which is therefore a great concern as it negatively impacts on the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers in that the children miss out on receiving an education suitable for them.

As revealed in the ECE summit report of June, 2013, ECE teachers need to be remunerated with a salary that is competitive and considerable as per their academic qualifications. However, since early childhood education is not free, the ECE or ‘Nursery’ school teachers as they are popularly known are not on the government’s payroll. Their pay therefore comes from the school fees paid by parents for their children’s education. Many of the trained ECE teachers have been left in the hands of crooked entrepreneurs who give them peanut for pay and leave them to work in deplorable conditions leading to demotivation towards their delivering of efficient services. The net result is a maladjusted, poorly nurtured and poorly socialized children who fail to understand their purpose early in life.
ECE teachers’ salaries are not harmonized which leads to discrepancies in the way they are paid. Their salaries cannot be approximated and they are forced to negotiate pay with their employers who are mainly parent communities. When parents fail to meet their obligations to pay school fees or they withdraw their children from ECE and keep them at home to evade payment, the teachers are forced to go without pay and some for long duration of time. The reasoning is that children of the above parents will still be enrolled in primary school since ECE is not a pre-requisite to joining primary school. To curb the problem of non-payment of salaries to ECE teachers, ECE needs to be made a basic requirement for joining primary school. Alternatively, extending free education to Early Childhood Education Centres would be a viable solution. During the study, was determined how FPE has contributed to the decline of ECE fee payment thereby making it difficult to pay salaries to ECE teachers.

2.3.2 Effect of FPE on ECE Teaching Personnel

Job Security has to do with how safe or protected the teacher feels about his or her work. In other words, Job security is the probability that an individual will keep his or her job. A job with a high level of security is such that a person with the job would have a small chance of becoming un-employed.

Studies on job insecurity indicate that job reorganization, change of job, hours worked or workload, burn out, risk and unacceptable behaviors such as harassment (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989; Bartrum, 2006). Another cause of job insecurity could be when a job does not experience growth in which case workers could be laid off any time (Bartrum, 2006,
Alterman, Luckhaupt, Dahlhamer, Ward & Calvert, 2010). The basic economic theory concurs with these sentiments and reveals that during periods of economic expansion businesses experience increased demand, which in turn necessitates investment in more capital or labor (Alterman et. al., 2010). When a job experiences growth job confidence and security typically increase. However, the opposite often occurs when business is threatened. With FPE threatening enrolment and retention of ECE children and consequently reduced income for ECE Centers to be able to pay teachers’ salaries, it is very likely that the teachers will not only lose their salaries but worse still, their jobs. Living with constant insecurity of losing a job can be very stressful. Some studies suggest that living with job insecurity or the fear of losing one’s job can be harmful to health (Alterman et. al., 2010). During the study, efforts were made to determine whether or not FPE has any effect on ECE teachers’ job security and hence the negative growth and unsustainability of ECE Centers in ECE Centers sampled.

Job insecurity has been defined as an individual’s expectation about continuity in a job situation (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997), overall concern about the future existence of the job (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996), perception of a potential threat to continuity in one’s current job (Heaney, Israel & House, 1994) and powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). One general theme underling the various definitions is that, job insecurity is a subjective phenomenon, it is based on the individual’s perceptions and interpretation of the immediate work environment. In contrast to actual job loss, job insecurity refer to the anticipating of this stressful event in such a way that the nature and continue existence of one’s job are
perceived to be at risk. This implies that the feeling of job insecurity may differ between individuals even if they are exposed to the same objective situation, and individual may differ in their reaction to perception of the job at risk.

Rosenblatt & Ruvio, (1996) further points out that while job insecurity is likely to be prevalent in the context of downsizing, that is, among employees in organization about to undertake, or already undergoing changes, that may reduce the no of jobs available as in case of merger and acquisition, it also appears that job insecurity can be an important factor in seeming unthreatened job situation. There is also agreement that job insecurity only occurs in the case of involuntary job loss (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van-Vuuen, 1991). These researchers went further to argue that job insecurity reflects the discrepancy between the levels of security a person experience and the level he/she prefer. Studies on job insecurity have suggested that perceived threats concerning the nature and continued existence of a job may have detrimental consequence as job loss itself (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995). This is consistent with the central proposition of stress research that anticipation of a stressful event represents an equal important or perhaps even greater, source of anxiety than the actual stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Samuel and Chipunza, (2009) found a strong association between job security and employees retention. This is even more so in underdeveloped and developing economies, like Nigeria, where job security presents an important factor in employment decision making of individuals. The radical change from a traditionally secure working environment to a rapidly changing and insecure one could be expected to have an impact
not only on the wellbeing of individual, but on their work attitude and behavior, and, also on the long run, on the vitality of the organization. Workers react to job insecurity and their reactions have consequences for organizational effectiveness, the success or failure of any downsizing strategy is essentially determined by the reactions of the survivors in the organization.

As noted by Kozlowski, Chaos, Smith & Helund (1993) job insecurity has consistently been found to associate with reduced level of work attitudes such as job satisfaction and increased turnover. Ashford, Lee & Bobko (1989) findings shows that employees who felt insecure about their future employment were more dissatisfied with their jobs and likely to look for job elsewhere compared to those perceived their future job situation as more secure.

Moreover, perceived insecurity concerning one’s future role in the organization may also make employee less inclined to remain with the organization. Job insecurity, like any stressor could lead to a withdrawal response as manifested in for, example higher level of turnover intention (Burke & Nelson, 1998).

The introduction of FPE in Kenya has motivated many teachers to further their academic qualification. Education Quarterly report (2009), the government aims to construct new schools to meet the increasing number of students in primary schools. Many ECE teachers have therefore enrolled in primary school teacher training programs because of the job employment opportunity unfolding and under more secure employer. As a result,
there has been a shortage of qualified teachers in ECE centers. The 70% funding which the community gives to ECE programme is hardly enough to meet the economic needs of teachers let alone sponsoring them for further training. ECE Centers in poor and marginalized areas like Marsabit Central Sub-county get even lesser funding compared to those in urban areas. FPE is thus negatively contributing to the lack of teachers who have deliberately sought to upgrade their professional qualification in order to be employed as primary school teachers. The growth and sustainability of ECE Centers is therefore affected since the wellbeing of the Centers largely depends on the presence of the teachers.

2.3.3 Effect of FPE on ECE Children’s Participation

ECE teachers’ salaries are in most cases covered by parental fees, unlike their counterparts in primary schools who are paid by the government. According to an official report, the salary scale of ECE Centers is paid in proportion to the number of children the teacher happens to enroll in the Centers. Thus, the level of teachers’ remuneration depends on the total number of children enrolled as well as parents’ ability to pay fees (Otach, 2008). The possibility of the ECE teachers attaining a fair pay is also worsened by the fact that a good number of parents are withdrawing their children from the Centers where they are required to pay fees and keeping them home till they attain the age to qualify for FPE where there is no payment. As a result, the reduced number of ECE children enrolments brought about by FPE could be a major blow to teachers, whose remuneration has been meager and unstable even before the introduction of FPE. Cases of lack or reduced pay for ECE teachers and job insecurity could thus negatively
influence the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers particularly in poor communities.
During the study, efforts were made to establish whether or not FPE has any effect on
ECE teacher’s job security and professional development.

Although free primary education is a noble venture by the government, a study by KIE
(2004) involving challenges of implementing FPE in Kenya revealed that FPE could be
linked to reduced retention of children in public early childhood centres. In North Eastern
Province for instance, the implementation of FPE contributed to a negative decrease in
ECE enrolment and also retention. As was the case in Lesotho, some areas, parents
decided to keep their children at home to wait until their children were of age to enroll for
free primary education UNESCO (2005).

In a study in Migwani by Lusiola (2011), FPE has similarly contributed to reduced
retention of children in some ECE Centers in public schools due to closure in order to
give more room for standard one pupils in primary school due to the influx of numbers.
Parents who were able to transfer their children to private ECE Centers did so but those
who were poor and could not afford to pay for private ECE had their children stay at
home. FPE therefore negatively affected retention rates of children in public early
childhood Centres. During the study, efforts were made to find out whether FPE has any
effect on the growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education Centres in Marsabit
Central Sub-county in terms of children’s enrollment and retention in the Centres.
2.4 Summary of Literature Review

The literature review has revealed that governments all over the world have embraced Free Primary Education (FPE) but ECE is predominantly not free. Parents therefore have to pay fees for their children in ECE Centers. Some parents are unable or unwilling to pay ECE Centre fees and therefore let their children skip ECE until they attain the age to enroll for FPE. The children are thus denied the opportunity to enroll for ECE or to remain in school for meaningful stimulation activities. It further robs ECE Centers the finances to pay teachers' salaries or run their programs. The overall growth and sustainability of the Centers is thus curtailed.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
The study sought to access effect of free primary education on growth and sustainability of early childhood education centres in Marsabit Central Sub-county Kenya. This chapter discusses the research design, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, variables, data collection instruments, pilot study, validity and reliability, data collection techniques and procedure, methods of data analysis and logical and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design
The study adopted a descriptive survey design to investigate the effects of FDE on growth and sustainability of ECD centers. The design is used in preliminary and exploratory studies (Orodho, 2002) to allow researchers to gather information like in the current study, summarize, interpret and present the findings for the sake of clarification (Borg & Gall, 1989:5). Further as Polite (1995) asserts, another purpose of the descriptive survey is to observe, describe and document aspects of a situation like the current phenomena as it naturally occurred thus giving an accurate account of the situation. The study sought to evaluate the effect of FPE in relation to ECE Centres.

3.2 Location of the Study
The study was carried out in Marsabit Central Sub-county. The area has a population of 40,333 people (National Population Census, 2009). There are 72 Early Childhood
Education Centres in the Sub County and teachers. The justification for selecting the area was the fact that over a short period of time the area has seen a rapid growth in the number of Early Childhood Education Centres. Some of them opened and grew to be big schools but with the birth of FPE others failed to progress and closed down which implies that the enrolment figures were declining steadily. This presented an issue that required investigation and hence there was need to conduct the study in order to confirm or dispute whether there was an actual decline in enrollment of children following the inception of FPA. It was postulated that the opening and closing of Early Childhood Education Centres could be linked to FPE policy which encouraged all children from age six to go to school without making ECE Centre education mandatory and free which could be the major reason they collapsed.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for the study included all the 72 ECE Centers, a similar number of pre-school teachers and 2,500 parents of pre-school children within Marsabit Sub-county.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

3.4.1 Sampling Techniques

Multi-stage sampling technique was employed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000; Alreck and Settle, 1995).

Stage 1 – Pre-schools: Simple random sampling was used to select 21 (29%) out of the 72 pre-schools in Marsabit Central Sub-county. According to Gay (1992); Kothari (2004) a sample size of 10 – 30% of the target population is adequate for studies involving
descriptive design. The sampling process involved writing of names of all the 72 ECE Centers on pieces of papers, then folding and putting them according to the 3 divisions i.e. Central, Gadamoji and Dirri divisions. The researcher then shuffled them separately and drew out a name of a school from each bowl 7 times ending up with a total of 21 to be studied.

Stage 2 – ECE Teachers

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 42 teachers and 21 teachers from the ECE Centres sampled.

Stage 3 - Parents of Pre-school Children

Using lists of parents from the selected schools with the help of ECE teachers, 5 parents were sampled at random from each of the school.

3.4.2 Sample Size

As Table 3.1 shows, the sample size was composed of 21 pre-schools (i.e. 30% of the 72 pre-schools) in the district and 2 ECE teachers from each sampled Centre and 105 parents.
Table 3.1 Sampling Frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>% Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of ECD centers</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of ECD teachers</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of parents of ECD children</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2716</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Target population, Marsabit County education office July, 2014)

3.6 Variables

In this study, there were two main variables namely the independent and the dependent variables as described below.

3.6.1 Independent Variables

The independent variable was free primary education which may affect the dependent variable in form of:

i) **ECE Centre Financial Status**
   - Payment of school fees
   - Payment of pre-school teachers

ii) **Teaching Personnel**
   - Job security
   - Teacher career development
iii) Children’s Participation

- Children’s enrolment rate in ECE Centers
- Retention of children in ECE Centers

3.6.2 Dependent Variable

Effect of FPE was determined through examining the level of growth and sustainability of ECE Centers. Each statement’s response options ranged from strongly agree (SA) agree (A), not sure (Ns), Disagree (D) strongly disagree (SD). The scoring ranged from highest (Strongly Agree) being assigned 5 points while the lowest (Strongly Disagree) was allocated 1 point.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

The study primarily used questionnaires for collecting data from ECE teachers and parents.

3.7.1 Questionnaires for ECE Teachers

This questionnaire was designated for Early Childhood Education teachers in Marsabit Central Sub-county. The questionnaire was divided into 6 parts each entailing the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was divided into the following parts Part A Finance, B payment of teachers, C job security, D teacher development, E enrolment and F retention.
3.7.2 Parents of ECE Questionnaire

Parents form the main financiers of ECE Centre activities. They provided information on the influence of FPE on, finances, payment of teachers, job security, teacher’s development and enrolment as well as retention of their children to the Centres.

3.8. Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in five (5) Early Childhood Education Centers using 5 ECE teachers and 20 parents (4 from each Centre) to ascertain validity and reliability of the research instruments a month prior to the main study. Piloting assisted in improving through removing any ambiguities in the instruments as well as checking on any unforeseen problems.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

3.9.1 Validity

The researcher aimed to focus on content validity, which is the accuracy with which an instrument measures the factor under study. Content validity was measured through cross checking of research questions and questionnaires formulated. Face validity was checked through consultation of colleagues at work place in relation to diction used.

3.9.2 Reliability

The researcher used the test retest method to measure reliability of the instruments of data collection. Sampled individuals were given the questionnaire twice but at different intervals. Spearman correlation coefficient was then used to tabulate the results. A
correlation coefficient of 0.84 was attained and thus considered good enough for the instruments of research.

3.10 Data Collection Techniques and Procedure

A letter was obtained by the researcher from the graduate school Kenyatta University to enable him to get a permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations (NACOSTI) and letter of Authority from the sub county education officer Marsabit Central Sub-county to allow him carry out research in the Early Childhood Education Centres. The researcher then visited the twenty one sampled centres with the help of the teachers. The parents respondents were given one week to complete answering the questionnaires after which the researcher personally collected the instruments through the teachers.

3.11 Methods of Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitatively data analysis technique were used to analyze data because they complement each other. Specifically, data collected from the field was first edited to remove errors from written responses which were not required. Coding was then done and then the data were entered into the computer for analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In particular, quantitative data were analysed using frequencies and percentages while for qualitative data, information was categorized into sub themes based on the objectives and presented in narrative form.
3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues such as: ensuring informed consent of participants, guaranteeing them no harm, confidentiality/privacy and anonymity (Creswell, 2003). The respondents were also supplied with all the necessary information including the purpose and nature of the research, and their right to choose whether or not to participate.
4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and discussions of the study’s findings. The main objective of the study was to assess the effect of free primary education on growth and sustainability of early childhood education in Marsabit Central Sub-county in Marsabit County. The chapter is organized into six sections as follows: general/demographic information of the respondent, influence of FPE on the payment of Early Childhood Education Centres, influence of FPE on payment of ECE teachers salary, influence of FPE on the job security of ECE teachers, ECE teachers career development and influence of FPE on the job security of ECE teachers, ECE teachers career development and influence of FPE on retention of children in Early Childhood Education Centres. Results of the analysis were presented using tables, pie charts and bar graphs which were then discussed on the basis of the literature reviewed.

4.2 Analysis of Data

Data obtained from the questionnaires for ECE teachers and the interview schedules for parents were mainly analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Based on the following research questions:

i. What is the influence of FPE on the payment of ECE Centre fees?

ii. What is the influence of FPE on the payment of ECE teachers’ salary?

iii. What is the influence of FPE on job security of ECE teachers?

iv. What is the influence of FPE on ECE teachers’ career development?
v. What is the influence of FPE on the enrolment rate of pre-school children?

vi. What is the influence of FPE on retention of children in pre-schools?

### 4.2.1 Response Rate

The questionnaires were administered to 147 respondents. After data collection, the 139 questionnaires were returned. The results were tabulated in Table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaires</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administered</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that the response rate was 95.2%. This high response rate was due to the fact that the questionnaires were administered at the agreed time and date. They were collected after one week hence the respondents had adequate time to read and understand the questions and fill them at their convenient time. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and above 70% rated very good. This also corroborates Bailey (2000) assertion that a response rate of 50% is adequate, while a response rate greater than 70% is very good. Thus the response rate of 95.24 was rate as good and therefore adequate for data analysis.
The study was guided by six objectives:

i. To establish the influence of FPE on the payment of Early Childhood Education Center fees.

ii. To find out the influence of FPE on payment of ECE teachers' salary.

iii. To determine the influence of FPE on the job security of ECE teachers.

iv. To establish the influence of FPE on ECE teachers' career development.

v. To find out the influence of FPE on the enrolment rate of ECE children and

vi. To investigate the influence of FPE on retention of children in ECE Centers.

This section presents the findings based on these objectives.

### 4.3 Influence of FPE on Payment of ECE Center Fees

The first objective of the study was establishing the influence of FPE on payment of ECE Center fees. This was concerned with amount of school fees paid, promptness in the payment of fees and reasons for rate payment of fees. The study sought to establish from teachers whether children in ECE centers paid school fees. The findings are presented in Figure 4.1;
Figure 4.1 Payment of ECE Centre Fees

Figure 4.1 shows that all, 147 (100%) teachers agreed that ECE children paid school fees. The running of any institution like an ECE Centre requires finances. In Kenya as in most African countries ECE education is not free. Parents of ECE children therefore are forced to finance the programmes despite the fact that most of them are poor citizens living below the poverty line. Financing the physical materials/resources in the ECE Centers go hand in hand with the constant flow and adequate financing of ECE Center programme/activities. For example, it is the finances that the ECE Centers collect that go into provision of feeding programmes in the Centers, buying all the physical and material resources used in the institutions among other requirements. FPE has interfered with the flow of cash in ECE Centers. According to EFA (2007; parents with children aged below six years in Lesotho, did not enroll them in ECE Centers but sent them direct to standard one where education is free thereby denying the Centers the much needed finances. With
the increasingly reluctance of parents to pay for ECE, FPE has made it even more difficult to mobilize resources from parents for the Centers which is therefore a great concern as it negatively impacts on the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers in that the children miss out on receiving an education suitable for them. The study also sought to establish the amount of fees paid per month by the ECE children. The findings are presented in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Amount of Fees paid in ECE Centres

Figure 4.2 shows that majority of the respondents 107 (66.67%) had reported that pupils paid fees between Ksh.200-500 per month, followed by 34 (21.43%) who reported that the children paid between Ksh. 500-1000 while19 (11.9%) of them reported that the children paid Ksh1500-2000 per month. The study was also designed to evaluate the
affordability of the ECE school fees. The responses from the parents are presented in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Affordability of fees payments by the parents

Figure 4.3 shows that only 30.51% of the parents were able to pay fees consistently every month, while the rest (69.49%) were not able to do so. These findings call for the urgent need for the County government to expedite the process of allocating funds to make ECE free just like FPE and FSE. The study also sought to establish the promptness payment of school fees. The study investigated the proportion of the ECE children who paid schools fees by Mid-Term. The Early Childhood Education teachers who were the main units of analysis gave their responses which are presented in Figure 4.4.
Figure 4.4 ECE teachers' Responses on Payments of School Fees by mid-term

Figure 4.4 shows that majority, 126 (73.81%) of the respondents reported that only 25% of the fees had been paid by midterm, 27 (16.67%) of the respondents reported that 50% of the fees had been paid by mid-term and only 15 (9.52%) reported that 75% of the total school fees had been paid by mid-term. The parents of the ECD children also gave their responses on the promptness in payment of ECE fees by mid of the term. Results are presented in Figure 4.5.
Figure 4.5 Payments of school fees by midterm

Figure 4.5 shows that majority, 72.9% of the parents were only able to pay 25% of the school fees by the middle of the term, 17.8% only paid 50% by midterm, 5.9% of the parents paid 75% of the fees while only 3.93% of the parents paid fully the fees by the mid of the term respectively. This implies that the schools fees are not paid promptly hence the running of the Early Childhood Education Centers is put in jeopardy. This calls for the need for the County Assemblies in the two Counties to enact a bill that will allow for the allocation of funds for the Early Childhood Education Centers.

The study was also designed to find out the reasons behind the late payment of school fees. The Early Childhood Education teachers gave their responses as presented in Figure 4.6
Figure 4.6 Reasons for late school fees payment

Figure 4.6 shows that majority, 88 (54.8%) of the respondents cited that the reason behind late payment of fees was the view that ECE should be free, followed by 42 (19.1%) who cited low income while 30 (26.2%) cited the lack of commitment on the part of the parents. The parents also gave their responses on the reasons behind the late payment of ECE fees. The findings are presented in Table 4.2.
Table 4.2 Reasons for lack of prompt payment of school fees as cited by parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not consider it a priority</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees is too high</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not see the reason why ECE is charged</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 shows that majority, 92 (80.7%) of the parents who were not able to pay the fees in time felt that the fees were too high, 12 (10.5%) did not consider the payment of school fees as a priority while 10 (8.77%) parents did not see the reason as to why ECE was being charged. These findings shows that most parents were not feeling obligated to pay school fees for ECE. This follows the FSE and FPE. This implies that the payment of ECE fees had been negatively influenced by FSE and FPE. The study aimed at establishing the ability of parents in paying ECE fees. These findings are presented in Figure 4.7.
Figure 4.7 Parents’ ability to pay ECE Centre fees

Figure 4.7 shows that majority, 79.66% of the parents were not able to pay the ECE fee, 12.71% were able and only 7.63% were very able. This shows that majority of the residents in the two marginalized counties cannot afford the fees charged by the ECD centers. The County Governments should move with speed to finance ECE.

The study was also designed to establish the parental views on the payment of ECE fees. The parents rated their views on how happy they were with the payment of ECE fees on a five point Likert scale from strongly agreed to strongly disagreed. The findings are presented in Figure 4.8.
Figure 4.8: Parental view on Payment of Pre-School Fees

Figure 4.8 shows that majority, 53.39% of the parents strongly disagreed that they were happy with the pre-school fees payment, followed by 27.97% who disagreed, next 12.71% agreed and only 7.63% strongly agreed that they were happy with the payment of ECE fees. This implies that payment of the fees is not likely to be taken seriously because majority of the parents were not happy with payment of the ECE fees. This can be attributed by the fact that these parents have or know that children in primary schools and day secondary fees do not pay fees. They then cannot understand why they should pay fees for even younger children in ECE centers. This means that FPE had negatively impacted the payment of ECE fees.
4.4. Influence of FPE on Payment of ECE Teachers’ Salary

The second objective of the study was to find out the influence of FPE on payment of ECE teachers’ salary. This objective was broken down into source of salaries for ECE teachers, amount of salary paid to ECE teachers, frequency and promptness in the payment of salaries.

The study also aimed at establishing the source of salaries for the ECE teachers. All (100%) of the Early Childhood Education teachers reported that their salary came from the payments made by the parents to the school. This implies the need to diversify the sources of the ECE teachers’ salaries so as to ease the burden of school fees from the parents. ECE teachers’ salaries are in most cases covered by parental fees, unlike their counterparts in primary schools who are paid by the government. According to an official report, the salary scale of ECE Centers is paid in proportion to the number of children the teacher happens to enroll in the Centers. Thus, the level of teachers’ remuneration depends on the total number of children enrolled as well as parents’ ability to pay fees (Otach, 2008). The possibility of the ECE teachers attaining a fair pay is also worsened by the fact that a good number of parents are withdrawing their children from the Centers where they are required to pay fees and keeping them home till they attain the age to qualify for FPE where there is no payment. As a result, the reduced number of ECE children enrolments brought about by FPE could be a major blow to teachers, whose remuneration has been meager and unstable even before the introduction of FPE. Cases of lack or reduced pay for ECE teachers and job insecurity could thus negatively influence the growth and sustainability of ECE Centers particularly in poor communities.
During the study, efforts were made to establish whether or not FPE has any effect on ECE teacher's job security and professional development.

The study was also designed to establish the amount of salary paid to ECE teachers. The responses from the Early Childhood Education teachers are presented in figure 4.9

![Figure 4.9: Distribution of ECE Teachers' Monthly Salaries](image)

Figure 4.9 shows that majority, 76.2% of the ECE teachers earned a salary of between Ksh. 3000-5000 while 23.8% earned a salary between Ksh. 6000-10,000. These findings imply that majority of the ECE teachers were poorly remunerated. The employees paid by the National and County governments with similar qualifications were receiving better perks. This calls for the need for TSC, the body mandated to hire and remunerate the teachers in Kenya to expedite the process of hiring ECE teachers. On the other hand the
National Assembly should also enact laws to facilitate such exercise and then allocate fees for their payment. The study also sought to establish the consistency in the payment of salaries to the ECE teachers. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Consistency in the Payment of ECE Teachers' Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consistent</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>76.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that majority, 32 (76.19%) of the respondents indicated that the salaries were sometimes consistently paid at the end of the month, 6 (14.29%) indicated that the salaries were always paid consistently every month while 4 (9.52%) responded that their salaries were never paid consistently. The implication here is that the salaries of the ECE teachers should be harmonized and paid consistently to motivate the teachers thereby enhancing the quality of ECE learning. The study was also set out to establish the promptness in payment of ECE teachers' salaries. The findings are presented in Figure 4.10.
Figure 4.10 Promptness in the Payments of ECE Teachers’ Salary

Figure 4.10 shows that majority, 54.76% of the respondents were sometimes paid on time, 30.95% were never paid on time while 14.29% were always paid on time. This inconsistent in paying promptly implies the need to pay these teachers from a single employer. This will ensure the salaries are paid promptly. The study also aimed on establishing on the parents’ response on the call to pay full school fees and promptly to enable payment of ECE teachers’ salaries. The responses were rated on a five point Likert-scale from strongly agreed to strongly disagreed. The findings are presented in Figure 4.11.
Figure 4.11 Parents' Response on the Call on Payment Schools in Full and on Time

Figure 4.11 shows that majority of the parents, 47.46% did not respond positively when called by ECE teachers for non-payment or prompt payment of school fees for their children, 23.73% also did not respond positively, 25.42% agreed to respond positively while only 3.38% strongly agreed to respond positively. This shows the negativity with which they hold the payment of schools fees for ECE learners. This may be attributed to the view that ECE should also be free just the FPE. The study concludes that FPE negatively influence the payment of school fees for ECE.

4.5. Influence of FPE on the Job Security of ECE Teachers

The third objective of the study was to determine the influence of FPE on the job security of ECE teachers. This section discusses the findings under the following headings: job
security for the ECE teachers, causes of job security for the ECE teachers and working conditions. The study was also designed to find out the respondents view on the state of job security of the ECE teachers. The findings are presented in Figure 4.12.

![Figure 4.12 Job security of ECE Teachers in Marsabit Central Sub-county](image)

Figure 4.12 shows that majority, 64.29% of the respondents viewed the ECE teachers' jobs been very insecure, 29.57% said it was insecure and only 3.14% who posited that the job was secure. These findings imply that most ECE teachers do not find their jobs secure and therefore are not likely to dedicate the time fully to them. In addition, this posts a precarious situation because the foundation of the children future rests with the education they receive in ECE centers. There is need to provide job security to the teachers so as secure the future of the children of Marsabit Central Sub-county. The parents also rated the level of job security for ECE teacher in Marsabit Central Sub-county. These findings are presented in Figure 4.13.
Figure 4.13 Rating of job security of ECE teachers by parents

Figure 4.13 shows that majority, 72.03% of the parents felt that ECE teacher job was insecure, 12.71% cited the job as secure, 7.62% cited it as very secure and 8.47% were not sure. These results also concur with those of the ECE teachers who also felt that the job security for ECE teachers was not secure. The study then set to establish the causes of job insecurity for the ECE teachers. The findings are presented in Figure 4.14.
Figure 4.14 Causes of job insecurity among ECE teachers

Figure 4.14 shows that majority, 54.76% cited the influence of the FPE programme, followed by 30.95% that cited misappropriation of resources meant for ECE centers and (30.95%) and 14.29% cited lack of proper Act governing the running of the ECE. These findings imply the need to lay down proper structure of the ECE through enactment of a Act of parliament to government the ECE. This Act should address the terms and conditions of employment of the ECE staff. This would enhance job security for these teachers and hence a secure future of the children of Marsabit Central Sub-county. The FPE programme has meant that schooling is free for those aged below 18 years. Parents in Madera Sub-County do not see the need to pay school fees for the ECE children hampering the remuneration of the ECE teachers. Parents also gave their opinions on the causes of job security among the ECE teachers. The findings are presented in Figure 4.15.
Figure 4.15 Parents View on Causes of Job Insecurity of ECE Teachers

Figure 4.15 shows that majority, 61.86% of the parents cited that the major cause of ECE teachers’ job insecurity was FPE, 24.57% of the parents cited poor infrastructure while only 13.56% cited misappropriation of resources. The ECE teachers feared that they lose their job anytime as parents are not paying fees since the inception of FPE. These findings concur with those found by Bartum (2006). He observed that when a job does not experience growth, the workers could be laid off any time. The study also aimed at establishing the effects of job insecurity on ECE teachers. The respondents rated their feelings on a five point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The findings are presented in Figure 4.16
Figure 4.16 Rating on effects of job insecurity on ECE teachers

Figure 4.16 shows that majority, 73.81% of the respondents strongly agreed job insecurity causes stress to the ECE teachers while 26.19% only agreed it causes stress. Job insecurity causes stress to the ECE teachers since they are not about the tomorrow. With FPE threatening enrolment and retention of ECE children and consequently reduced income for ECE Centers to be able to pay teachers’ salaries, it is very likely that the teachers will not only lose their salaries but worse still, their jobs. Living with constant insecurity of losing a job can be very stressful. These findings concur with those found by Alterman et al (2010) that living with job insecurity or the fear of losing one’s job can be harmful to health.
4.6. ECE Teachers Career Development

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the influence of FPE on career development of ECE teachers. In order to address this aspect adequately, the following issues were addressed: training status of ECE teachers, level of professional qualifications of the ECE teachers, sponsoring of ECE teacher for training and the future prospects of the ECE teachers where the parents were the main respondents. The study findings are presented using figure 4.17 – 4.22. Results of training status of ECE teachers in Marsabit Central Sub-county are presented first in figure 4.17.

Figure 4.17 Training Status of ECE Teachers in Marsabit Sub-County
Figure 4.17 shows that majority, 90.84% respondents were trained in ECE while 9.52% were untrained and had only secondary school education. The study also aimed at establishing the level of ECE teachers’ professional qualifications. The findings are presented in Figure 4.18.

![Pie chart showing levels of ECE teachers' professional qualifications]

Figure 4.18 Level of ECE teachers’ professional qualification

Figure 4.18 shows that majority, 59.53% of respondents had a certificate in ECE, 30.94% had a Diploma in ECE while 9.52% were not trained at all. This shows that majority of the ECE teachers had the requisite professional qualifications needed for teaching at ECE centers. The study also sought to establish the ECE teachers’ teaching capabilities. The findings are presented in Figure 4.19.
Figure 4.19 Parents view on ECE Teachers Teaching Capabilities

Figure 4.19 shows that majority, 65.25% of the parents strongly agreed that the ECE teachers were competent in their duties, 32.20% agreed while 2.55% disagreed that the ECE teachers were competent in carrying out their duties. These findings show that majority of the teachers had the requisite skills and knowledge that are need to execute their mandate. Equally worrying is the 2.55% that the parents felt that were not competent. Urgent measures should be made to train these few incompetent ECE teachers. The study also sought to establish the teacher sponsorship to train in ECE. These findings are presented in Figure 4.20.
Figure 4.20 shows that the majority, 59.52% of the respondents were sponsored for training once a year, 23.22% were never sponsored at all, 7.14% were sponsored twice a term and 9.52% were sponsored for training once a term. Career development is instrumental in equipping the teachers with new skills and knowledge necessary for teaching in the 21st century. The study also aimed at establishing the parents’ contribution towards the ECE teachers’ refresher courses. These findings are presented in Figure 4.21.
Figure 4.21 Parents' Contribution Towards ECE Teachers' Refresher Courses

Figure 4.21 shows that majority, 73.73% of the parents contributed once a year towards teacher refresher courses, 11.86% contributed once a term while 14.41% never contributed at all. These findings show that parents' involvement in the career development of the ECE teachers is important. This calls for the need to involve all parents to contribute towards the career development of the ECE.

The introduction of FPE in Kenya has motivated many teachers to further their academic qualification. Education Quarterly report (2009), the government aims to construct new schools to meet the increasing number of students in primary schools. Many ECE teachers have therefore enrolled in primary school teacher training programmes because of the job employment opportunity unfolding and under more secure employer. As a
result, there has been a shortage of qualified teachers in ECE centers. The 70% funding which the community gives to ECE programme is hardly enough to meet the economic needs of teachers let alone sponsoring them for further training. ECE Centers in poor and marginalized areas like Marsabit Central Sub-county get even lesser funding compared to those in urban areas. FPE is thus negatively contributing to the lack of teachers who have deliberately sought to upgrade their professional qualification in order to be employed as primary school teachers. The growth and sustainability of ECE Centers is therefore affected since the wellbeing of the Centers largely depends on the presence of the teachers. The study was also designed to evaluate the future prospects for ECE teachers. The findings are presented in Figure 4.22.

![Figure 4.22 Future prospects of ECE teachers](image)

Figure 4.22 shows that majority, 64.28% of the respondents had the ambition to further their education while the rest, 35.72%) were opting for alternative job. This because can
be explained by the fact there is job insecurity for ECE teachers. There is need to tame this job turnover for ECE teachers so that these professionals can teach the pre-scholars.

4.7 Influence of FPE on the Enrolment rate of ECE children

The fifth objective of the study was to find out the influence of FPE on the enrolment rate of ECE children. To obtain this information about the approximate number of children that enrolled in the Centers since the inception of free primary education, teachers were asked to indicate the number of children that had enrolled in their Centers before and after the study in order to compare data from these two periods. A number of issues pertaining to enrolment rate are discussed in this section and the findings of the study between the two periods are compared to confirm the status of enrolment in Marsabit Central Sub-county at the time of the study. The findings are presented in Figure 4.23

![Figure 4.23 No of Pupils Enrolled in ECE Centers Before & After Inception of FPE](image)
Figure 4.23 shows that before the study, the teacher respondents reported that the number of pupils enrolled in the Early Childhood Education Centers in the sampled area in Marsabit Central Sub-county were approximately 535 in number. However, during the main study, the findings show that teachers indicated there was a total of 417 children in the Centers sampled which clearly points to a high decline in enrolment by 118 children. This implies that some parents may have pulled out their children as UNESCO (2005) revealed in the review of literature, probably because they did not understand the reason why they should pay fees for their ECE children while their other children in primary school were enjoying free education. It could also be because they were fearing compromise in standards of service delivery after the introduction of FPE. Among the reasons given for inconsistent enrolment as reported by most Early Childhood Education teachers was inadequate learning materials in the Centre and also resources. Some learners also dropped out of school because of lack of school fees and uniform. The study was also interested in finding out the influence of enrolment on ECE teachers’ payment. The findings are presented in Figure 4.24.
Figure 4.24 Influence of children’s enrolment on ECE teachers’ payment

Figure 4.24 above shows that, all the respondents agreed that the children enrolment affected the payment of teachers. The more the pupils enrolled the more the pay for the teacher.

4.8. Influence of FPE on retention of children in ECE Centers

The last objective of the study was to investigate the influence of FPE on retention of children in ECE Centers. A number of issues on retention are discussed by teachers and other stakeholders in this section. The study also aimed at establishing the factors influencing retention of ECE children. These findings are presented in Figure 4.25.
Figure 4.25 Factors affecting children’s enrolment in ECE centres

Figure 4.25 shows that majority, 54.77% of the respondents Free Primary Education (FPE) as affecting ECE enrolment while 45.23% cited parental illiteracy. The study also sought to establish the views on consistency of retention of children in Early Childhood Education Centres. The respondents feelings were rated on five point Likert Scale form strongly agreed to strongly disagree. The findings are presented in Figure 4.26.
Figure 4.26 Views on Consistency in Children’s Retention in ECE Centres

In the figure above, 47.62% strongly disagreed that there was consistency in pupil retention in ECE centers, 35.71% disagreed while only 16.67% agreed of consistency of ECE learner’s retention. The study also investigated the factors influencing the inconsistency in the enrolment and retention in ECE. The results are presented in Figure 4.27.
Figure 4.27 Factors influencing inconsistencies in children’s enrolment and retention in ECE Centres

Figure 4.27 shows that majority, 78.57% of the respondents cited Free Primary Education (78.57%) as the major factor influencing the consistencies in enrolment and retention in ECE while 21.43% cited the learning environment as the main reason. The results concur with those found by KIE (2004). Although free primary education is a noble venture by the government, a study by KIE (2004) involving challenges of implementing FPE in Kenya revealed that FPE could be linked to reduced retention of children in public early childhood centres. In North Eastern Province for instance, the implementation of FPE contributed to a negative decrease in ECE enrolment and also retention. As was the case in Lesotho, some areas, parents decided to keep their children at home to wait until their children were of age to enroll for free primary education UNESCO (2005).
In a study in Migwani by Lusiola (2011), FPE has similarly contributed to reduced retention of children in some ECE Centers in public schools due to closure in order to give more room for standard one pupils in primary school due to the influx of numbers. Parents who were able to transfer their children to private ECE Centers did so but those who were poor and could not afford to pay for private ECE had their children stay at home. FPE therefore negatively affected retention rates of children in public early childhood Centres. During the study, efforts were made to find out whether FPE has any effect on the growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education Centres in Marsabit Central Sub-county in terms of childrens’ enrollment and retention in the Centres.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter contained the summary of the thesis, implications of the findings, conclusion, recommendation and further research to fill the gaps which the researcher identified during his research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Regarding the objectives, the study found out that majority (66.67%) of pupils paid fees ranging from 200-500 per month, 21.43% paid fees of 500-1000 and 11.9% paid 1500-2000 respectively. The low fee contribution by the pupils was contributed by the fact that the primary education was free and thus many parents did not see the need to pay any fee to the ECE centers. The study further found out that majority of the children (73.81%) had only paid 25% of the fees by the mid of the term, 16.67% had paid 50% of the fees and only 9.52% of the children had paid 75% of the total school fees. majority of the children (73.81%) had only paid 25% of the fees by the mid of the term, 16.67% had paid 50% of the fees and only 9.52% of the children had paid 75% of the total school fees. This indicated that the payment of fee to the ECE centers was poor and not reliable. The major reason for late payment of fees was the illusion that ECE should be free (54.76%), low income was contributed by 19.05% and lack of commitment was 26.19% respectively.
All the Early Childhood Education teachers asserted that their salary came from the payments made by the parents to the school. Majority of the respondents (76.19%) indicated that sometimes the monthly payments were consistent, 14.29% indicated that the monthly payments was always consistent and 9.52% refuted. Majority (76.19%) of the ECE teachers earned a salary of between 3000-5000 while the rest (23.8%) earned a salary between 6000-10,000 respectively. This was way below the payments of the teachers in primary schools who also have certificate qualifications like the ECE teachers. The study also found out that majority of the respondents (54.76%) were sometimes paid on time, 30.95% were never paid on time while 14.29% were always paid on time. With regard to the parents, majority of them (72.88%) were only able to pay 25% of the school fees by the middle of the term, 17.8% only paid 50%, 5.93% of the parents paid 75% of the fees and 3.39% paid fully the fees by the mid of the term respectively. This affected the payment of teachers who solely relied on such payments.

The influence of the FPE programme was the major cause of job insecurity of the ECE teachers; other causes cited included misappropriation of resources (30.95%) and poor ECE infrastructure (14.29%). The major cause of ECE teacher insecurity according to the parents was FPE (61.86%). Majority of the parents (72.03%) asserted that the ECE teacher job was insecure, 12.71% cited the job as secure, 7.62% cited it as very secure and 8.47% were not sure. the major cause of ECE teacher insecurity according to the parents was FPE (61.86%) other causes included poor infrastructure (24.57%) and misappropriation of resources (13.56%) respectively.
Majority of the teachers (90.84%) were trained ECE teachers while 9.52% were untrained ECE teachers who had finished secondary schools. Majority of the ECE teachers (64.28%) had the ambition to further their education while the rest (35.72%) were opting for alternative job. Majority of the parents contributed once a year towards teacher refresher courses, 11.86% contributed once a term while 14.41% never contributed at all. This was a discouragement to the teachers who need such courses to improve on their teaching and learning skills. The study also found that majority of the teachers (59.52%) were sponsored for a training once a year, 23.22% were never sponsored at all, 7.14% were sponsored twice a term and 9.52% were sponsored for training once a term. Inadequate sponsorship for training demoralized the teachers thus others opting for a different career if an opportunity rose.

The study found out that Free Primary Education (FPE) affected ECE enrolment of children. The study further found out that the major factor making enrolment and retention inconsistent in the county was the Free Primary Education (78.57%). Majority of the parents (53.39%) as indicated strongly disagreed that they were happy with the pre-school fees payment, 27.97% disagreed, and only 12.71% agreed and 7.63% strongly agreed with being happy of paying pre-school fees. This was an indicator of low enrollment due to dissatisfaction with fees payments. All the Early Childhood Education teachers asserted that the ECE Centre enrolment was not consistent because of inadequate learning materials in the school and also resources. The study also determined that teachers payments was influenced by the enrollment of the children in the ECE centers some parents evaded the ECE learning and put their children straight to class one which
required none payment of fees. Majority of the classes (48.31%) had a number of pupils ranging from 11-20 which is way below the advocated class size of 25 pupils.

5.2 Implications of the Findings

ECE education is not free. Financing the physical materials/ resources in the ECE Centers go hand in hand with the constant flow and adequate financing of ECE Center programme/ activities. For example, it is the finances that the ECE Centers collect that go into provision of feeding programmes in the Centers, buying all the physical and material resources used in the institutions among other requirements. The study found out that majority (66.67%) of pupils paid fees ranging from 200-500 per month, 21.43% paid fees of 500-1000 and 11.9% paid 1500-2000 respectively. This amount in reality is little as compared to the amount of money that is channeled to finance the FPE programme in the country. The fact that majority of the parents (53.39%) were not happy with the payments of fees asserted EFA (2007) which posited that many parents were neglecting the payments of ECE centers fees. However, some parents (7.63%) were able to pay fees to the centers on time thus citing minimal influence of the FPE programme on ECE center fees. These findings therefore imply that FPE has influenced negatively the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county by contributing to non-payment of ECE center fees.

ECE or ‘Nursery’ school teachers as they are popularly known are not on the government’s payroll. Their pay therefore comes from the school fees paid by parents for their children’s education. When parents fail to meet their obligations to pay school
fees or they withdraw their children from ECE and keep them at home to evade payment, the teachers are forced to go without pay and some for long duration of time. Majority of the parents (79.66%) cited that they were not able to pay fees charged in the ECE centers. This therefore implied that many ECE teachers did not have their pay. This fact was supported by majority of the ECE teachers (54.76%) who posited that their pay was sometimes delayed and 30.95% whose pay was always never paid on time. These findings implied that FPE had influenced negatively the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county by contributing to non-payment of the ECE teacher’s salary.

FPE programme was the major cause (54.76%) of job insecurity of the ECE teachers; other causes cited included misappropriation of resources (30.95%) and poor ECE infrastructure (14.29%). The study found that 73.81% of the ECE teachers strongly agreed that living with constant job insecurity was a stressful situation. The fact that FPE was free and government sponsored offered primary school teachers more job security as opposed to the ECE teachers. Majority of the parents also agreed that FPE programme had contributed to the job security of ECE teachers as they favored primary school teachers who did not require any money to teach their children as opposed to the ECE teachers. These findings therefore implied that that FPE has influenced negatively the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county by contributing to the ECE teacher’s job insecurity.
The fact that majority of the teachers (90.84%) were trained ECE teachers implied that ECE learning was a very important aspect at the center of a child’s education. Majority of the ECE teachers (64.28%) had the ambition to further their education. This finding is consistent with Education Quarterly Report (2009) which posited that many ECE teachers have therefore enrolled in primary school teacher training programmes because of the job employment opportunity unfolding and under more secure employer. This therefore implies that FPE had influenced the growth and development of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county by aspiring career development of ECE teachers in the region in furthering their education to teach primary and secondary schools and others (35.72%) search for alternative employment.

According to the study findings, Free Primary Education (FPE) affected ECE enrolment. Indeed FPE has threatened the enrolment and retention of ECE children and consequently reduced income for ECE Centers to be able to pay teachers’ salaries. The study further found out that there was reduced number of ECE children enrolments brought about by FPE which was major blow to teachers, whose remuneration has been meager and unstable even before the introduction of FPE. This finding was backed up by parents who posited that they were not able to pay ECE center fees by 79.66% thus opting to enroll children in class one directly. The overall findings of this objective implied that FPE influenced the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county by reducing the enrolment of children to the ECE centers.
5.3 Conclusion

The study has been able to provide almost all the required information as it was expected in its intended outcomes. From the findings of the study, a number of conclusions can be drawn concerning effects of FPE on growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education centres. FPE programme had contributed to the decrease of Early Childhood Education Centres in Marsabit Central Sub-county and hindering career development of ECE teachers who are now opting to teaching primary and teachers colleges. Some parents are unable or unwilling to pay ECE centre fees and therefore, let their children skip ECE until they attain the age to enroll for FPE. ECE teachers not being paid on time coupled with poor pay has contributed to the decrease of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county. There was an acute shortage of salary increment for ECE teachers in almost all the centres. The unavailability of funds made the meager teachers’ salary not to progress which greatly hampered effective development of children in the learning centres. It should therefore, noted that early childhood education is the cornerstone of education in Kenyan education system and it should not be neglected at the expense of Free Primary Education.

Finally, the parents and teachers suggested that to enhance growth and sustainability in Early Childhood Education Centres all the education actors and the line-ministries should collaborate for the success of the endangered sub-sector.
5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that there is need for the government to support ECE learning centers across the country to enhance proper education growth of the pupils through working closely to the stakeholders and line ministries. Parents should be sensitized on the need to pay ECE fee to the centers to motivate ECE teachers who are nurturing their children’s education. There is need to have a threshold salary for ECE teachers as the study observed that some teachers could take as low as 4,000 per month despite having better academic qualifications. It is important for parents to contribute to teacher refresher courses in the ECE programme so as to improve the skills of the ECE teachers.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The study identified three gaps which the researcher recommends for further review by other scholars

i. A similar study can be done in other parts of the country for comparison

ii. A study of social-economic challenges influencing the growth and sustainability of ECE centers should be carried out

iii. A study of the importance of ECE learning on the academic performance of pupils should be done so as to arm the parents on the importance of enrolling their children on ECE centers.
REFERENCES


Report of the 2013 ECDE Summit held on 13th to 14th June 2013


Hallo,

I am a Master of Education student in the Early Childhood Studies Department in Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a research titled “An Assessment of the Effects of FPE on the Growth and Sustainability of ECE Centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county.” The questionnaire attached is aimed at gathering relevant information about the effects of FPE on pre-school education in order to come up with valuable recommendations for policy makers. Your response will be confidential.

I hope the findings will be valuable to you in your work when the study is finalized. Please complete all the sections of the questionnaire as objectively as you can. Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,
Dominic Galma
Kenyatta University
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ECE TEACHERS

This questionnaire is purely meant for academic purposes in Kenyatta University. The aim of this exercise is to assess the effects of FPE programme on the growth and sustainability of ECD Centres in Marsabit central sub-county. Kindly put a tick in the box ( ) appropriately.

Form Number............................................

a. ECE Centre Finances

i. Do ECE Centres charge fees?

Yes [ ]

Sometimes [ ]

No [ ]

ii. If yes, how much fees is charged per month?

Ksh. 200-500 [ ]

Ksh 500-1000 [ ]

Ksh 1500-2000 [ ]

Above ksh 3000 [ ]

iii. By the middle of the month about how many of the children have been paid for the expected fees?

100% [ ]

75% [ ]

50% [ ]

25% [ ]
iv. What could be the reason why their fees is not paid in time?

- Illusion ECE should be free [ ]
- Low income [ ]
- Lack of commitment [ ]
- No good reason [ ]

b. Payment of teachers

i. Who pays teachers’ salary?

- Parents [ ]
- County government [ ]
- National government [ ]
- None of the above [ ]

ii. Is teachers’ salary consistently paid every month?

- Yes [ ]
- Sometimes [ ]
- No [ ]
- I don’t know [ ]

iii. In which salary bracket per month do you fall in?

- Less than ksh. 2000 [ ]
- Ksh. 3000-5000 [ ]
- Ksh. 6000-10000 [ ]
- Ksh. 10,000+ [ ]
c. Job security

i. How secure can you say your job is?

- Very secure [ ]
- Secure [ ]
- Insecure [ ]
- Very insecure [ ]

ii. What makes it to be secure or insecure

- Influence of FPE [ ]
- Poor ECE infrastructure [ ]
- Children’s indiscipline [ ]
- Misappropriation of resources [ ]

iii. How frequently are you paid your salary in time?

- Always [ ]
- Sometimes [ ]
- Never [ ]

iv. To what extent do you agree that living with constant insecurity of loosing a job can be very stressful?

- Strongly agree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Strongly disagree [ ]
d. Teachers' development

i. Are you trained?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]

ii. What is your training qualification?
   PI [ ]
   Certificate (ECE) [ ]
   Diploma in ECE [ ]
   Un trained [ ]

iii. How often are you sponsored for in-services courses by your employer?
   Once in a term [ ]
   Twice in a term [ ]
   Once in a year [ ]
   None of the above [ ]

iv. What are your future prospect if given a chance
   Teach in primary school [ ]
   Further my education [ ]
   Change job [ ]
   I don’t know [ ]
e. Children’s Enrolment
i. How many children do you have in your class and approximately how many children did you have last year a time like this? Please indicate the approximate number

Previous year [ ]
Currently [ ]

ii. Is the enrolment of the children consistent?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

iii. If no, what could be causing the inconsistency?

Lack of teachers [ ]
Lack of textbooks [ ]

iv. Does enrolment of children affect your payment as a teacher?

Yes [ ]
Sometimes [ ]
No [ ]

f. Children’s Retention

i. What contributes to increased or decreased enrolment of children?

FPE [ ]
Parents’ illiteracy [ ]
Family planning [ ]
ii. Retention is consistent in the three school terms

Agree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Not sure [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

iii. In your opinion what makes enrolment and retention to be inconsistent.

Learning atmosphere [ ]
FPE [ ]
Teachers qualification [ ]
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS OF ECE CHILDREN

This questionnaire is purely meant for academic purposes in Kenyatta University. The aim of this exercise is to assess the effects of FPE programme on the growth and sustainability of ECE centers in Marsabit Central Sub-county. Kindly put a tick in the box showing your most preferred answer.

Form Number..........................

a. ECE Finances

i. Are you able to pay your child’s school fees consistently every month/term?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]

ii. By the middle of the term, approximately how much have you paid?
   100% [ ]
   75% [ ]
   50% [ ]
   25% [ ]

iii. If you are not able to pay in time, what make you unable to clear payment?
   Forget to pay [ ]
   Fees is too high [ ]
   I do not see the reason why ECE is charged [ ]

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iv. Please rate your ability to pay school fees

Very able [ ]
Able [ ]
Not able [ ]

v. As a parent, I am happy with school fees payment

Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

b. Payment of teachers

i. To what extent do you agree that parents respond positively when called by teachers for non payment of their children school fees?

Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

c. Job security

i. How do you rate the job security of the teachers in your school

Very secure [ ]
Secure [ ]
Insecure [ ]
Not sure [ ]
ii. What makes it to be secure or insecure

Influence of FPE [ ]
Poor ECE infrastructure [ ]
Children's indiscipline [ ]
Misappropriation of resources [ ]

d. Teachers development

i. A teacher handling my child in the school is capable of his/her duties

Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly disagree [ ]

ii. How often do you contribute towards refresher courses for your teachers

Once in a term [ ]
Once in a year [ ]
Thrice in a time [ ]
Not at all [ ]

e. Enrolment

i. How many children are in the class where your child is enrolled?

5-10 [ ]
11-20 [ ]
21-30 [ ]
Above 30 [ ]
APPENDIX D

MAP OF MARSABIT CENTRAL SUB-COUNTY

Source: Marsabit county office
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Ref: No

NACOST/EP/15/28074/8727

Dominic Dibu Galna
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "Assessment of effect of free primary education on growth and sustainability of Early Childhood Education Centers in Marsabit Sub County, Kenya," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Marsabit County for a period ending 17th December, 2016.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Marsabit County before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTU, PhD, MSc.
DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Marsabit County.

The County Director of Education
Marsabit County.
CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.

2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.

3. No questionnaires will be used unless it has been approved.

4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.

5. You are required to submit (at least one 2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.

6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No. A 7516

CONDITIONS: see back page