



Evaluation of Fee-Free Primary Education Policy in Tanzania: The Case of Morogoro Municipality-Tanzania

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Abstract: In Tanzania, there has several education policies since independence of which the reform has been subject to political, socio-economic and technological demands. The Fee Free Education Policy implementation aimed at sparing parents from paying primary school fees and other contributions. However, parents remained responsible for their children's school needs like school uniforms, school shoes, stationary and the like. This study evaluates the implementation of fee-free primary education policy focusing on success and challenges in Tanzania. The study used a mixed approach and case study research design. In data collection methods; semi-structured interviews, observations and documentary review were used. The quantitative data were analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), while the qualitative data were analyzed by Free Qualitative Content Analysis (FreeQDA). Findings shows that the implementation of this policy has successfully increased the enrollment in public primary schools. Also, there is strict adherence to school capitation grants guidelines as provided by the government. The policy implementation was found to be facing several challenges, such as insufficient funds, lack of teaching and learning materials and lack of transparency. The study recommends involvement of educational stakeholders, particular teachers before formulating, revising or reforming educational policies as teachers are a the grassroot of policy implementation.

Keywords: Fee-Free Education Policy, Capitation Grants, Evaluation

1. Introduction

After gaining independence in 1961, the Tanzanian government initially resorted to fight three identified enemies; disease, poverty and ignorance as noted by Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere during his international conference on the Arusha Declaration [3]. Since then, several education reforms have been implemented to address the challenges affecting the education sector as per presidential regimes. To start with, in 1967, shortly after gaining independence, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere introduced Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) with the aim of gaining autonomy, responsibility and democratic engagement to establish educational ideologies that would serve as a new impetus for the creation of the new social society [22]. In 1971, the Ministry of National Education established the Directorate for Adult Education, Institute of Adult Education (IAE) which marked the beginning of adult literacy courses,

particularly in rural areas. In 1977, another initiative to promote access to education known as Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced [22]. In all these educational initiatives, education was provided free in the sense that students did not have to pay school fees nor any form of contributions. When Mwinyi came into power in 1985 at the general election [2], to rescue the economic crises, in 1986, he signed a treaty with the IMF in order to obtain a \$78 million loan, which was Tanzania's first foreign loan in over six years [25]. Because of this, school fees were reintroduced into the education system, but at reasonable amounts to help those from poor economic backgrounds afford them [19].

In 2000, the United Republic of Tanzania like all other member states of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), agreed on the implementation of the educational goals to be achieved by the year 2015. The main goal was to meet the learning needs of all school-age children, youth and adults by 2015. In

response to the agenda, in April 2000, during Benjamin William Mkapa's reign, Tanzania participated in the Dakar Framework at the World Education Forum in Senegal, to ensure that all school-aged children received primary education by 2015. In an attempt to achieve the above goals, His Excellence President Benjamin William Mkapa banned primary school fees [4]. The abolition of primary school fees resulted in an enormous enrollment from 4,370,500 in 2000 to 8,419,305, a 52% increase by 2010 [29].

Despite these impressive achievements in primary education, there were numerous gaps in the broader movement to achieve the EFA goals, particularly regarding teacher-student ratios, school infrastructure and education. Hence, to reduce the gap, those challenges were overcome during president Jakaya Kikwete through the adaptation of BIG RESULTS NOW in Education (BRNEd) and government's subsidization of tuition fee. Therefore, tuition fee at secondary level was reduced from 50000/- Tshs (21.9 \$) to 25000/- Tshs (10.9 \$) per student while at primary level remained tuition fee-free (as the previous reign) but with several contributions such as security, reparations, constructions which mounted high than tuition fee [24]. Despite these efforts done by the government on fee free education policy implementation, still challenges were noted to persist. It was for this reason, H. E. John Magufuli campaigned on a reduction to zero (fee-free) in primary and secondary schools during the 2014 national election campaign (CCM manifesto, 2015). The implementation of this policy (particularly at the primary level) effectively started in 2015, supported by the Education Circular No 5 [28]. and Education Circular No. 3 of 2016 [9]. With this circular, all contributions coordinated by school committees during Kikwete's regime were highly prohibited by Magufuli's administration [24]. Experiences from various studies show that the implementation of this policy, particularly at primary level, caused friction and misunderstandings between school heads and parents and other education stakeholders [24, 30]. This was caused by a lack of knowledge about so-called free education. Many community members had misunderstood it as free education, implying that they should not contribute any penny for their children's schooling [24].

Although the government of the United Republic of Tanzania introduced a fee-free basic education policy for public primary and secondary schools in 2016, the success and challenges of providing free primary and secondary education in Tanzania is still an issue of debate [9]. This debate circulates on major questions such as, whether the government provides the capitation grants according to established guidelines and regulations [20] or provides sufficient capitation grants throughout all primary schools [5]. Despite these debates, the researcher felt the need to evaluate this policy. This was because the implementation itself, is context-based, dependent on the efficiency of implementers and support from relevant government agencies and other education stakeholders [9]. Many recent studies on fee-free education policy focused on the negative

effects [10, 21] This indicate that researchers have not treated this aspect in much detail in conjunction with clear put guidelines. Thus, the real practice of the policy implementation in conjunction with stipulated guidelines remain unknown. Therefore, this study intended to fill the existed gap by focusing on the positive outcomes (successes) and challenges of the implementation of a fee-free primary education policy with clear guidelines as stipulated by Education Circular No 5 [25]. (released on November 2015) and Education Circular No. 3 of 2016 [24]. (released on May 2016) based in Morogoro Municipality. The objective of this study was: to evaluate the fee-free education policy in primary schools in Tanzania by focusing on success and challenges in conjunction with stipulated guidelines, particularly in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania.

2. Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods approach and case study research design to evaluate the Fee-Free primary education policy in Tanzania focusing on success and challenges, Morogoro Municipality in particular. In case of data collection methods; semi-structured interviews, observations and documentary review were used. The collected quantitative data were analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), while the qualitative data were analyzed by Free Qualitative Content Analysis (FreeQDA). Then purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the sample of the study. The sample size involved thirty-six (36) head teachers, thirty-six (36) school finance and project teachers, and one (1) District Academic Officer as indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Distribution of the Study Sample.

No	Participants	Number
1	Head Teachers	36
2	School Financial and Project Teachers	36
3	District Academic Officer	1
	TOTAL	73

3. Data Analysis and Presentation

The interest of this study was to evaluate the implementation of fee-free primary education policy focusing on success and challenges in Tanzania, Morogoro municipality in particular. The presentation of findings was guided by the following questions:

- 1) Is there any success achieved through the implementation of the fee-free primary education policy in Tanzania particularly in Morogoro Municipality?
- 2) What are the challenges encountered from implementing fee-free primary education policy in Tanzania particularly in Morogoro Municipality?

3.1. Question on Success of Fee-Free Education Policy Implementation

The researcher distributed 36 questionnaires to head of

schools and school financial and project teacher to determining the success of fee-free primary education policy in Tanzania public primary schools, Morogoro Municipal in particular. The respondents were asked to put a tick on the

rated responses that satisfied their views: SA-Strong Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strong Disagree. Their responses are detailed on the Table 2 below:

Table 2. Head Teachers' Responses on the Success of Fee Free Education Policy Implementation.

S/n	Statement	Responses					Total	Weight (Mean of Responses)	Remarks
		SA	A	N	D	SD			
1	The government provides schools with enough capitation grants.	1	11	8	13	3	36	2.83	Neutral
2	A capitation grant provided by the government covers all necessities in my school.	0	3	9	18	6	36	2.25	Disagree
3	Capitation grants provided by the government are received on time at my school.	11	16	1	6	2	36	3.78	Agree
4	The capitation grants expenditure analysis sent by the government is clear.	8	13	7	7	1	36	3.55	Agree
5	The school has full authority in allocating the capitation sent by the government.	9	7	6	10	4	36	3.19	Neutral
6	Capitation grants can be misallocated and become difficult to trace back in my school.	1	6	5	12	12	36	2.22	Disagree
7	The allocated capitation can be misused due to lack of clear instructions from the government.	2	8	7	9	10	36	2.52	Disagree
8	The reallocation of capitations received is done by the school committee.	16	9	2	7	2	36	3.83	Agree
9	Capitation grants provided by the government do fit the fee-free education policy.	4	13	5	10	4	36	3.08	Neutral
10	Capitation grants provided by the government are the ones that were previously allocated.	5	12	11	7	1	36	3.38	Neutral
11	I utilize the provided capitation grants on time.	9	16	6	5	0	36	3.80	Agree
12	The capitation grants allocated in my school are used to buy enough teaching materials.	1	8	9	13	5	36	2.26	Disagree
13	I use the capitation grants to buy enough learning materials.	3	8	9	11	5	36	2.80	Neutral
14	I use capitation grants allocated by the government to repair and maintain school infrastructures.	12	14	5	4	1	36	3.88	Agree
15	I use capitation grants allocated in my school to repair and maintain school facilities.	10	15	7	4	0	36	3.86	Agree
16	I use the capitation grants provided by the government to manage and maintain sports and games in my school.	8	11	7	8	2	36	3.41	Agree
Average responses of the heads of schools								3.17	Neutral

To analyze this axis, the researcher calculated the weight, or mean average, of the responses to determine the direction of each response; from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The results show that the weighted average of the Head Teachers' responses ranges from 2.22 to 3.88. In case of weighted average (mean) responses to statements or sentences 3, 4, 8, 11, 14, 15, and 16 are 3.78, 3.55, 3.83, 3.80, 3.88, 3.86 and 3.41, respectively; this shows that most school leaders agree with positive success of the policy. Likewise, the observation from the same table shows that sets 1, 5, 9, 10, and 13 had the calculated mean of 2.83, 3.19, 3.08, 3.38, and 2.80, respectively, meaning that some Head Teachers reacted neutrally to the sentences listed. Finally, the table shows that in sentences 2, 6, 7, and 12 the calculated mean of the answers is 2.25, 2.22, 2.52, and 2.26, respectively;

this also shows that some school leaders disagree with the sentences listed above.

In addition, the researcher averaged all responses using weighted averages to gain insight into Head Teachers' overall responses about their overall perception of the success of the fee-free primary school policy implementation, and the average calculated was (3.17) over 3.00 (the tested value or criterion mean or the mean on the Likert scale of five responses) and this showed that the general perception of Head Teachers' responses to the success of the free primary school policy was neutral. To strengthen the study analysis and findings, the researcher also decided to compute a sample t-test to assess school Heads' overall perceptions of the success of the fee-free primary school policy, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. T-Test General Perceptions of School Head Teachers about the Success of the Fee-Free Primary Education Policy Implementation.

The tested variable	The test value (mean)	The calculated mean value of responses	Standard deviation	The calculated T-value	Sign. Value
The success of the fee-free primary education policy	3.00	3.17	0.616	1.072	0.301 (not statistically significant)

A one-sample t-test was calculated by the researcher to compare the calculated mean of the head teachers' responses to the test mean (3.00) of the five-point Likert scale to assess

the overall perception of the school to determine head teachers' response on the success of the implementation of the free primary education policy in Tanzania, particularly in

Morogoro Municipality. The mean of Head Teachers' responses ($M = [3.17]$, $SD = [0.616]$) was not significantly higher than the test mean $[3.00]$; $t(15) = [1.072]$, $p = [0.301]$. This shows that school Head Teachers' general perceptions of the fee-free primary school policy tend to disagree with the statement tested; this means that based on the responses from the school Head Teachers, there have been no successes or achievements in the implementation of the free primary education policy in Tanzania, particularly in Morogoro Municipality.

3.2. Question on the Challenges Encountered from Implementing Fee-Free Primary Education Policy

To answer the second question on the challenges of fee-free primary education policy, the researcher distributed 36 questionnaires to Head Teachers of selected public primary schools. Head teachers responded the distributed questionnaire by putting a tick on the rated responses that satisfy their views: SA-Strong Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree, SD-Strong Disagree as it indicated in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Head Teachers' Responses on the Challenges Encountered from the Implementation of Fee-Free Primary Education Policy.

S/n	Statement	Responses					Total	Weight (Mean of Responses)	Remarks
		SA	A	N	D	SD			
1	I sometimes receive capitation grants too late hence difficult to cope with needs.	7	14	3	7	5	36	3.30	Neutral
2	Capitation grants are sometimes miss-allocated.	2	10	4	11	9	36	2.58	Disagree
3	Lacks of clear policy to guide schools make it very difficult to allocate capitation grants correctly.	5	8	7	11	5	36	2.91	Neutral
4	Miss-understanding among beneficiaries of capitation grants makes it difficult to distribute it.	4	10	3	14	5	36	2.83	Neutral
5	Capitation grants provided by the government do not match the number of students I have in my school.	15	7	8	5	1	36	3.83	Agree
6	Capitation grants I receive in my school are deficient to cover all necessities.	9	14	5	6	2	36	3.61	Agree
7	Capitation grants received in my school are used on educational programs that pre-existed.	4	14	10	4	4	36	3.21	Neutral
8	Capitation grants received do not cover every basic necessity in my school.	13	17	3	0	3	36	4.02	Agree
Total Average responses								3.29	

To analyze this axis on the challenges of a free primary education policy as responded to by School Head Teachers, the researcher calculated the mean average of their responses to establish the direction of each response (See Table 4). In addition, the table showed that the mean of the Head Teachers' responses ranged from 2.58 to 4.02. However, it was shown that responses such as "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" were not among the Head Teachers' answers. Furthermore, in this axis examining the challenges of a fee-free primary school policy implementation, most Head Teachers' responses were neutral, as in sentences 1, 3, 4, and 7 with their mean responses of 3.30, 2.91, 2.83 and 3.21 can be seen respectively. This showed that statements such as whether the time of receiving the capitation grants meets school needs; whether the lack of a clear policy affects the reallocation of grants; whether misunderstandings between grant recipients led to difficulties in grant distribution, and finally whether the capitation grants received were used for pre-existing school projects. Most of the responses from school Heads were neutral.

Otherwise in three (3) sentences; 5, 6, and 8 with mean responses of 3.83, 3.61, and 4.02, respectively, Head Teachers agreed with the statements or sentences; which means that the capitation provided by the government does not correspond to the number of students; the per capita provided is not sufficient to cover all the needs and finally the per capita provided by the government does not cover all the basic needs of the particular school. However, the Table 3 also shows that only in Set 2 (with an average mean of 2.58) did school Head Teachers disagree with the statement, suggesting that the headgear received was not misattributed.

To strengthen the study analysis and findings, the researcher distributed 36 questionnaires on challenges encountered from the implementation of fee-free primary education policy to school finance and project teachers. School finance and project teachers responded to the distributed questionnaires by putting a tick on the rated responses that satisfy their views: SA - Strong Agree, A - Agree, N - Neutral, D - Disagree, SD - Strong Disagree. The responses are in Table 5 below.

Table 5. School Finance and Project Teachers' Responses on the Challenges Encountered from the Implementation of Fee-Free Primary Education Policy.

S/n	Statement	Responses					Total	Weight (Mean of Responses)	Remarks
		SA	A	N	D	SD			
1.	School financial and project teacher is the main supervisor of the capitation grants received from the central government.	10	17	2	5	2	36	3.77	Agree
2.	School financial and project teacher involve the school committee in the expenditure of the capitation grants received from the central government.	17	14	3	2	0	36	4.27	Strong Agree
3.	Capitation grants received at school are enough for implementation of school programs.	1	1	6	18	10	36	2.02	Disagree

S/n	Statement	Responses					Total	Weight (Mean of Responses)	Remarks
		SA	A	N	D	SD			
4.	School financial and project teacher is involved in preparing the budget of the capitation grants received from the central government	9	13	4	7	3	36	3.50	Agree
5.	School financial and project teacher is involved in the reallocation of the capitation grants received from the central government.	2	20	3	3	2	36	3.80	Agree
6.	Parents are involved by the school financial and project teacher in allocation of the capitation grants received from the central government.	9	14	4	5	4	36	3.52	Agree
Total Average								3.48	

To analyze this aspect about the challenges of fee-free primary school policy as answered by primary school finance and project teachers, the researcher calculated the mean average of their responses to establish the direction of each response it was pointed out that the median mean of the responses from the primary school finance and project teachers ranged from 3.52 to 4.27.

However, the results shows that Set 2, with the mean of 4.57, of the primary school finance and project teachers strongly agreed with the statement that the school finance and project teacher includes the school board in the expenditure of the capitation allowance received from the central government, while into sentences 1, 4, 5, and 6, with weights of 3.77, 3.50, 3.80, and 3.52, respectively, the primary school finance and project teachers responded positively or agreed with the listed statements; Additionally, the table shows that project finance and project teachers disagreed with the statement that bounty grants received at school are sufficient to run school programs. Again, the table shows that in sentence 3, with an average of 2.02, the primary school finance and project teachers disagree with the statement that capitation grants received at school are sufficient to carry out school programs.

To have more information about the success and challenges from the implementation of FFPEP in Morogoro municipality, the researcher conducted an interview with the District Academic Officer (DAO). The interview was conducted under the prepared interview guide questions basing on the success and challenges on FFPEP in Morogoro municipality. Analysis of the data obtained indicated that the exemption of tuition-fee payment in primary school was there even before the implementation of FFPEP. However, the current is different from the previous one particularly in terms of operations. Similarly, the interviewee reveals that the current FFPEP is provided with guidelines that are followed at implementation stage. Also, the implementation of FFPEP is effective because it avoids parents from paying any contribution to a particular school unless it has the consultation and blessing from the DC of a given locality. Again, responses from the interviewee indicate that under this FFPEP head teachers are provided with a monthly responsibility allowance to administer and manage their schools. Again, it has increased the pupils' academic performance rate particularly in standard four and seven as well as the increased enrollment rate.

In addition to that, the interviewee revealed that the FFPEP had success as well as challenges. It also shows that capitation grants are disbursed every month and are utilized

according to the stipulated guidelines and stipulated division, namely; Administration (10%), Maintenance (30%), Sports (10%), Examination (20%), and Materials (30%). The FFPEP has increased enrollment in Morogoro municipal public primary schools as indicated previously. However, there are challenges such as inadequate number of classes, teaching staff, desks, latrines that emanate from the increased enrollment rate.

Likewise, the analysis of the data revealed that there were coping strategies to the identified challenges, namely: currently, schools are constructing classes depending on a particular school's scarcity. These classes are constructed under UVIKO initiatives and international organizations like USAID in Morogoro municipality.

The data extracted through observation exposed that nearly in all six sampled public primary schools, a high deficit of physical facilities and school infrastructures was revealed in schools A, B, D, E, and F. The deficit was largely on classrooms, water facilities, toilets, desks, sport facilities, photocopy machines and computer. However, in school C, it was revealed to have no deficit of desks and classes.

4. Discussion of the Findings

4.1. Success of Fee-Free Primary Education Policy Implementation

4.1.1. Strict Adherence to School Capitation Grants Guidelines

The findings of this study revealed that there was strict adherence to school capitation grant guidelines as per policy. There are strict state guidelines about how capitation grants received by certain public primary schools should be used. These guidelines were issued in conjunction with Education Circular No 5 [28] (released on November 2015) and Education Circular No. 3 of 2016 [29] (released on May 2016).

Table 6. Utilization Distribution of Capitation Grants transferred to Public Primary Schools (in percentage).

Utilities	Percentage
Administration	10%
Maintenance	30%
Materials	30%
Sports	10%
Examinations	20%

Head Teachers stated that they used the funds rigorously according to the guidelines and they acknowledged that there was no room for adjustment. School Head Teachers were

found to be instructed to use funds only on specific points as corresponding circulars.

Table 7. Capitation Grants Breakdown.

Capitation Items	Allocations (Tshs)
Textbooks, teaching guides, supplementary reading materials	4,000
Chalk, exercise books, pens, pencils	2,000
Facility repairs	2,000
Examination paper, purchase and printing	1,000
Administration materials	1,000
Capitation Grant per each Pupil	10,000

Similarly, the findings are in line with what was found by Shukia, R [24]. His study found that there are stern government guiding principles issued alongside with Ministry's Education Circular No. 6 of 2015 on how the capitation grants received by schools should be used. The study revealed that Head Teachers were instructed and guided by those guidelines to spend funds on specified items only. These circulars restricted school Head Teachers from adjusting the use of funds for the benefit of schools and students without the approval of the school board. According to Shukia, R [24], these restrictions were dangerous as they might lead to confrontation, neglect and pro forma obedience. For example, schools with income-generating projects such as farms faced challenges on how to implement them because there was no room for acquiring finance to buy farm implements such as seeds, manure and the like.

However, the observation in sets 1, 5, 9, 10, and 13 with mean average of 2.83, 3.19, 3.08, 3.38, and 2.80 indicated that Head Teachers of the selected public primary schools remained neutral. Their neutrality had great implications in terms lack of transparency and accountability in policy implementation. This creates doubts on whether; the government provides schools with enough capitation grants, the school had full authority in allocating the capitation sent by the government, capitation grants provided by the government fitted the fee-free education policy, capitation grants provided by the government were the ones that were previously allocated or Head teachers used the capitation grants to buy enough learning materials. Understanding the above statements related to policy implementation needed Head Teachers to be open on their practicability without remaining neutral because they were at the center of policy implementation. These results provide further support for the

hypothesis that Head Teachers remained neutral because they were intimidated by their seniors not to disclose pivotal information in relation to fee-free primary education policy implementation in their particular schools. The implication would be that there were some sorts of bureaucracy in the policy implementation.

Although, these results differ from published studies [13, 6] they are consistent with those of Mbawala, M [15] in her study "An Assessment of the Implementation of Fee Free Basic Education in Tanzania: A Case of Ruangwa District Council, Lindi Region". In her study, it was revealed that Heads of schools in Ruangwa district were involved in the implementation of FFPEP in different ways, namely educating pupils, parents and guardians concerning fee-free education policy particularly helping them to know their position in this policy and their limitation using different settings such as school and village/community meetings, observing school financial expenditure according to the government regulations and directives. Other ways were the distribution of the government circulars and guides on FFPEP to the people, to identify and stop any kind of illegal contributions from the parents and pupils as well as join in teaching load and enabling implementation of interschool examinations for pupils.

4.1.2. The Increase in Enrollment Rate

The findings from the interview reveal that FFPEP has led to increased enrollment rate in the area of study. This has been caused by the exemption of parents from paying school fees which acted as a barrier to education access more especially to school-aged children from poor families. Findings indicate that the payment of school fees was a burden to parents with poor economic background which acted as a barrier to sending their children to school [8]. In addition to that, the payment of school fees had led to the increased rate in truancy and dropout in public primary schools. This is because the on-going pupils who failed to pay contributions to particular schools were forced by parents to remain at home while those at school had to escape from the iron-hand of teachers who were contribution collectors (Finance and Project Teachers). For example, below table indicates the increase in enrollment rate in Morogoro municipality from 2019 to 2020. The below data were compared and the researcher found an increase of enrollment of about 2437 pupils in Morogoro municipal public primary schools.

Table 8. Enrolment of Standard I - VII Pupils in Morogoro Municipality Public Primary Schools by 2019.

STD - I		STD - II		STD - III		STD - IV		STD - V		STD - VI		STD - VII		GRAND TOTAL		
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
4454	4247	4283	4461	4648	4505	4647	4551	3648	3567	3460	3584	3297	3409	28437	28324	56761

Key: M-Male, F-Female, T-Total, STD-Standard

Table 9. Enrolment of Standard I-VII Pupils in Morogoro Municipality Public Primary Schools by 2020.

STD - I		STD - II		STD - III		STD - IV		STD - V		STD - VI		STD - VII		GRAND TOTAL		
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
4680	4841	4478	4183	4199	4378	4751	4459	4521	4513	3648	3572	3394	3581	29671	29527	59198

Key: M-Male, F-Female, T-Total, STD-Standard

These findings are similar to the report from URT [30] which reveal that the enrolment in Primary schools amplified by 4.9% from 10,111,255 pupils in 2018 to 10,601,616 pupils in 2019 country wise. Also, the findings conform to what was found by Shukia, R [24] who revealed the enrolment increase in the studied public primary schools by 41 percent, from 3,278 in 2015 to 4,989 in 2016. This indicated that the implementation of FFPEP went hand in hand with the increased enrollment rate in particular public primary school.

Furthermore, the national data indicate that enrolment in Public Primary Schools increased by 13.8% from 10,111,671 pupils in 2018 to 10,605,430 pupils in 2019 [30]. This upsurge was ascribed to the implementation of compulsory and fee-free basic (primary in this regard) education. Furthermore, the study found that fee-free primary education increased access to education among children from poor-economic families and children with special needs.

4.2. Challenges of Fee-Free Primary Education Policy

4.2.1. Inadequacy of Funds

The results of this study revealed that the amount of funds the central government allocates to each student does not match the needs of the students and the number of students in each primary school in terms of monthly disbursement. The study showed that the central government allocated a very small amount of money to each student (600/-Tshs). Therefore, it became difficult for school Head Teachers and finance and project teachers (who are policy implementers) to implement and achieve positive outcomes in their respective primary schools. Because of this scarcity, the study found that some Head Teachers had confessed that they sometimes offered part of their salaries to ensure some planned goals were met in order to retain their positions.

Likewise, these findings were consistent to the study on the implementation of a free basic education policy in Tanzania conducted by HakiElimu [8] in eight districts of Tanzania. The study revealed that central government funding for free education in Tanzania was ineffective. In general, these capitation grants were not sufficient to cover all basic school needs. Still, there were school expenses such as utility bills, water, and school guardians that were not specified in the capitation grants guidelines received from the government. This went hand in hand with the research of Ngowi, F [17] who observed that in the community of Kinondoni the capitation grants received from the government to public schools were insufficient.

4.2.2. Shortage of Teaching and Learning Materials

Teaching and learning materials for teachers and students are indispensable during the teaching and learning process as they make the lessons meaningful and well-organized. These materials included, among others; Teacher's Guides, Student Textbooks, Chemicals, Index Cards, Chalks, Overhead Projectors, Laboratory Instruments, chalkboards and Posters to name a few. All mentioned materials aside, student textbooks seem to be of central importance in delivering

what was written in the syllabus for the exact grade or level of education. This view was supported by the World Bank [33] which showed that the intended curriculum cannot be readily achieved without the provision and use of teaching and learning materials. The lack of these materials implies that teachers have to work in an under-resourced environment [11]. The current study revealed that there is a lack of teaching and learning materials, especially textbooks, at the public primary schools examined in Morogoro Municipality. The government-required book-student ratio is 1:1 as suggested by URT [27]. However, the study found that, for example, the ratio of Maarifa ya Jamii textbooks in School A was 1:38, School B was 1:42, and School C was 1:36. This fact led to a high degree of students' dependency on teacher notes. This implies that the teachers had to work hard to prepare the summaries of the notes on the board. This process hindered students' learning as it turned the teacher as the source of everything related to pupils' learning during the teaching and learning process.

These results were also consistent with Abdullahi, A [1] study in Kenya, where he found that the impact of implementing FFPEP was nearly the same in many countries, particularly in Africa. This was because the tuition exemption has circumvented the obstacles that have prevented poor families from sending their children to school. For example, referring to the April 2012 Policy Framework for Education Paper (PFEP), Abdullahi admitted that the national gross enrollment rate (GER) at the primary level increased in 2010 from 91.2% in 1999 to 109.8%. Consequently, primary schools faced excessive challenges on pupil-classroom ratio, pupil-teacher ratio, pupil-toilet ratio and pupil-textbook ratio and other teaching and learning materials due to constant increase in enrollment of pupils that did not observe teaching and learning materials, a number of teachers, as well as school infrastructure.

As a coping strategy, it was found that teachers preferred the use of teacher-centered approach during the teaching and learning process. In this method, a teacher is brought to the center of learning and as an ocean of knowledge [23]. This contradicts the current Competence-Based Teaching (CBT), which is updated by the government through the responsible ministry. CBT builds students' confidence because it puts the learner at the center of the learning process. This is supported by Nkya, H [18] who state that this approach aims at preparing students with inquisitive minds and creative and employable skills and can take on diverse responsibilities. Therefore, given the scarcity of teaching and learning materials, achieving CBT remained a dream that can never come true. Therefore, it became difficult to achieve quality education. In addition, to cope with the lack of teaching and learning materials, especially textbooks, teachers were reported to be photocopying the few textbooks they had. During the field research, the researcher observed that a teacher who taught standard three class providing photocopies of textbooks that she intended to teach. This is not allowed, but teachers used this avenue to achieve lesson

goals.

4.2.3. Lack of Transparency in Implementing FFPEP

The results of the study showed that school leaders were terrified of disclosing information related to the implementation of FFPEP in Morogoro Municipality. In the past chapter, the researcher pointed out that in phrases 1, 3, 4, and 7, that aimed at tracing if the time of receiving the capitation grants had the negative implications in coping with the school needs; or if the lack of clear policy had effects on grants reallocation; or if misunderstanding between beneficiaries of grants caused difficulties in grants distribution and finally if the capitation grants received were used on pre-existing school projects. With these, most of the responses among the heads of schools were neutral. The head teachers' neutrality implied that they had been instigated with fear by their seniors not to disclose such information related to implementation of the policy. This jeopardized the effective implementation of the policy.

These findings were opposed to what was found when the researcher analyzed the data from the school head teachers' questionnaire whereby the findings indicated that there was transparency since those teachers were involved in setting the budget, reallocation of the capitation grants and they were the main supervisors of the capitation grants in the primary schools. Again, it indicated that parents were being involved in supervision of capitation grants through school committees and parents' meeting whereby the researcher was told that such meetings were held once in every term.

This result contrasts with that of Luvanga, I., and Mhagama, M [12] on challenges in implementing free basic education in public secondary schools in Karatu District. In their study, they found that the government insisted on accountability and transparency in the use of disbursed funds to operate free basic education, including presenting a budget to school boards. Accordingly, finance and project teachers ought to provide researchers with the necessary information to implement FFPEP.

4.2.4. Scarcity of School Physical Facilities

The observation results showed that although the implementation of the FFPEP led to an increase in the number of students, the increase in school facilities to accommodate this population group was not achieved. Almost all six sampled public primary schools in Morogoro Municipality were found to have high deficit in physical facilities and school infrastructure. The deficit mainly related to classrooms, water supply, toilets, desks, sports facilities, photocopiers and computers. Surprisingly, however, as shown above, school C was not found to be in deficit of desks and classrooms, but the remaining facilities as mentioned in the observation checklist remained scarce. Interestingly, the researcher was informed that the respective school received donors from Mzinga Holding Company Ltd.

School physical facilities are placed at the center of our education system simply because it is where teaching and learning activities take place. Since to some extent the evaluation of curriculum outcome is done in classroom, the

classroom environment is therefore a vital area towards achieving effective teaching and learning [7]. Further, most classrooms in schools under this study were found to be overcrowded, with no spaces to allow teachers' movement and pupils' interaction. The scarcity of these facilities was mainly caused by the increase on pupils' enrollment as it has been revealed previously. The scarcity of physical facilities hinders the effective teaching and learning. Thus, it is not possible to attain quality education if physical facilities in particular public primary schools are not adequate. This remains a burden to teachers who find themselves in a position of being forced by the situation to overwork by introducing some coping strategies which in one way or another take more time.

These findings agree with the study of Wambui J. [31] on "The factors affecting the implementation of free primary education (FPE) in rural primary schools in Kenya". Wambui emphasizes that, the implementation of FPE, has led to an immediate surge in pupils' enrollment; consequently, the majority of classes (77.6%) had exceeded the set standard as a class size of 40 pupils per class. This implied that pupils were congested in classes more than the recommended average. Hence destabilized the effective teaching and learning environment.

Again, observation results showed that all schools examined had this deficit of safe and clean water and toilets. The recommended student-toilet ratio is 1:30 for boys and 1:25 for girls [26]. According to WHO [32], the provision of clean and adequate water, sanitation and shelter are central to a healthy physical learning environment. Conversely, it was observed that more than 70 students share a water pipe in the school. Again, the safety of the drinking water was not guaranteed as they drank straight from the tap. This contradicts the WHO report, which recommends ensuring safe and adequate water and sanitation for school children while teaching them basic hygiene.

These findings also agree with those of Nemes, J [16]. She conducted a study in three rural public primary schools in Dodoma region. In her study, it was found that pit latrines in a number of schools surveyed were insufficient to provide hygienic conditions for students in those particular primary schools. The researcher reported that the ratio was between 114:25 and 59:5 for boys and between 70 and 55:25 for girls. This contradicted the aspirations of PEDP II, which recommended a pit-latrines-pupil ratio of 1:20 for girls and 1:25 for boys.

Furthermore, the findings correspond with the findings of Mege, C [14] who conducted his study in Kenya. In his study, it was found that toilets in several schools were inadequate and were in poor condition, some pit latrines were poorly drained. It was observed that the poor toilet facilities affected pupils' learning because they tended to abscond from school particularly during the rainy season because of missing places to relieve themselves. Consistent to that, Imbova, M [9] revealed that 16% of public primary schools had sufficient latrines while the rest 84% of public primary schools had insufficient latrines.

In general, the debate about the availability of physical facilities and infrastructure, leads the researcher to state that the implementation of FFPEP had undesirable effects on what was said. This implies that the implementation of FFPEP has resulted in a lack of physical facilities and school infrastructure in the public primary schools of Morogoro Municipality, as well as other schools in Tanzania.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study have shown that the implementation of the Free Primary Education Policy (FFPEP) faces numerous challenges, such as insufficient funds, overcrowded classrooms and lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of transparency, and lack of school physical facilities. This prevents students from getting a quality education. Equally, the government makes numerous efforts to avoid poor implementation of the fee-free primary education policy. These include providing teaching and learning materials, building classrooms, providing capitation grants, as well as hiring new teachers, but the problem persists. Despite these challenges, school leaders and other education administrators have articulated their coping strategies, such as community involvement, articulation of remedial classes, articulation of morning and evening sessions, and engagement of educational stakeholders to achieve intended policy goals, among others. Therefore, policymakers need to identify, acknowledge and assess the effectiveness of these coping strategies in place.

6. General Recommendations

School projects should be set up as a strategy to generate income so they can cover some running costs like running regular tests and exams, covering school security costs, covering school electricity bills and the like. This will help promote teaching and learning development in particular public primary schools; thus, paving a way to achieving quality education.

Donors should evenly distribute their donations according to the needs of a particular school, rather than setting up infrastructures in places where there is no need. Instead, resources can be misused.

In addition, parents need to be educated about what is free in this fee-free primary education policy. This is of paramount importance as it provides clarity on how the policy will be implemented.

The increased number of students should be accompanied by the increased number of teachers, physical facilities, teaching and learning materials at the same time in particular primary schools. Hence realizing the usual teacher-student ratio for the current teaching and learning environment, and thus achieve quality education.

7. Policy Recommendation

Basing on the revealed findings of the study and

conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

- 1) Responsible authorities should inform educational stakeholders about their role in implementing and maintaining this policy, particularly in public primary schools.
- 2) A balance is needed between enrolled students and the physical facilities available in specific schools. This can easily be achieved through joint action between the relevant government agencies and other educational stakeholders by building and repairing needs-based physical facilities.
- 3) Education circulars subject to the introduction of fee-free primary education policy should be reviewed and amended. There should be increased amount of money to support pupils because the current amount of fund is insufficient to run the school and has not been contextualized due to the price elasticity of demand for education, which varies from context to context.

8. Recommendations for Further Research

To get more knowledge about the policy of free primary education, the following are recommended.

- 1) The current study was limited to 36 public primary schools in Morogoro Municipality. So, the data obtained does not give a complete picture of the situation in the country. Therefore, a similar study should be carried out in other parts of the country at primary school level. This could help to paint an overall picture regarding the assessment of FFPEP in terms of success and challenges arising from its implementation in conjunction with stipulated guidelines.
- 2) This study focused on the urban context, namely the Municipality of Morogoro. This opens a space for similar research in the rural context to provide a balanced assessment of the FFPEP in terms of its success and the challenges arising from its implementation in conjunction with stipulated guidelines.
- 3) Since this study was conducted in government primary schools, the same study can be conducted in government secondary schools where this policy is also being implemented to provide a comprehensive picture of the assessment of FFPEP on its success and the challenges arising from its implementation in conjunction with stipulated guidelines.

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