



FEE-FREE EDUCATION POLICY AND SCHOOL SUPERVISION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF ILALA CITY COUNCIL, TANZANIA

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Abstract

This study examines the Fee-Free Education (FFE) policy and its effects on school supervision in public secondary schools within Ilala City Council, Tanzania. Employing a mixed-methods approach and a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 148 participants, including head teachers, teachers, education officers, students, and parents, using interviews, questionnaires, and document reviews. Findings indicate that while the FFE policy has successfully increased student enrollment and reduced dropout rates, it has also introduced significant challenges affecting school supervision and educational quality. Schools face shortages of physical infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, and qualified teachers, alongside delayed and inadequate funding. These issues have strained supervision mechanisms, limiting the effective monitoring of teaching and learning processes. Despite these challenges, parental involvement in education has improved, and financial barriers to schooling have been reduced. Stakeholders emphasized the need for increased financial resources, improved teacher motivation, enhanced parental engagement, and stronger governance mechanisms to ensure effective policy implementation. The study recommends timely fund disbursement, investment in school infrastructure, and strategic policy reforms to address the identified gaps. Strengthening school supervision is crucial to maintaining educational quality under the FFE policy framework.

Keywords: Fee-Free Education, School Supervision, Educational Quality, Policy Implementation, Public Secondary Schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

The provision of fee-free education has become a key strategy in addressing educational inequality and promoting social and economic development globally. This approach gained traction with international commitments such as the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien and the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action. These initiatives called for the universal provision of education as a fundamental human right, emphasizing the importance of ensuring access to quality education for all, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups (UNESCO, 2000). In alignment with these global goals, many countries, including Tanzania, have worked to remove financial barriers to

education, aiming to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) and beyond, as part of their national development strategies.

Tanzania has made significant strides toward implementing free education policies, most notably through the Education and Training Policy 2014 and the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, which aim to make primary and lower secondary education fee-free. The government has also issued Circular Number 5 (2015), which eliminated school fees in public secondary schools, in an effort to ensure that all children, especially those from poor backgrounds, have

access to education. These policies align with international initiatives, such as the EFA and the Sustainable Development Goals, which underscore the critical role of education in reducing poverty, promoting equality, and driving socio-economic development (Godha, 2018). The Tanzanian government's strong commitment to education has been reinforced under the leadership of President John Magufuli, who placed education at the forefront of the country's national development agenda (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016).

Despite the progress made in expanding access to education, the implementation of fee-free education has raised several challenges, particularly concerning the quality of education. In many countries, including Tanzania, the rapid increase in enrollment due to the removal of school fees has placed significant pressure on educational resources, leading to overcrowded classrooms, a shortage of teachers, and insufficient teaching materials (Aluko & Adan, 2015; Oyaro, 2008). Similar challenges have been observed in other Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, where although enrollment rates improved, educational quality declined due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained teachers, and limited resources (Mutisya & Lutomia, 2021; Abubakar & Mensah, 2022). These challenges highlight the need for effective school management, resource allocation, and investment in teacher training to ensure that the benefits of fee-free education are fully realized.

The experience of fee-free education policies in Tanzania and other Sub-Saharan African nations underscores the importance of balancing access with quality. While these policies have been successful in increasing enrollment and expanding access to education, they have also revealed significant challenges in educational management, infrastructure, and teacher capacity. Effective school supervision and governance are crucial in addressing these issues and ensuring that fee-free education leads to meaningful improvements in educational outcomes. For Tanzania, achieving the goals of Education for All and the Sustainable Development Goals requires continued investments in educational resources, infrastructure, and teacher professional development, alongside strong political will and effective management strategies. This study explores the impacts of fee-free education in Tanzania, focusing on enrollment rates, resource availability, and school supervision to better understand the successes and challenges of these policies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Education Policy of Tanzania

Tanzania's education system has evolved through various phases influenced by both internal ideologies and

external factors, with each phase shaping the country's educational policies. Pre-colonial education in Tanzania was informal, focusing on socialization within the clan or tribe, with elders and community members acting as teachers (Omary, 2002). The introduction of formal education came with the arrival of missionaries in the 1860s and 1870s, and the first government school was established in 1893 (Mushi, 2009). However, it was during the colonial period that the educational system began to take shape, serving the interests of colonial powers and focusing primarily on basic literacy and agricultural skills (Knutsson, 2005).

After World War I, when Britain took control of Tanzania, the "Education for Adaptation" policy was introduced in 1925, aimed at providing basic education mainly for agricultural purposes. This policy was further refined after World War II with the "education for modernization" approach, which, however, benefited only a small elite, leaving the majority of the population under the adaptation system (Colclough et al., 2003). The independence of Tanzania in 1961 marked a significant shift in educational policy, as President Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy advocated for "Education for Self-Reliance," focusing on practical education for development, self-sufficiency, and national unity (Nyerere, 1967). This period saw the implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE), which became central to the country's development agenda.

The 1980s brought significant economic challenges to Tanzania, prompting the adoption of market-oriented policies and the reintroduction of school fees in 1984 as part of a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). This shift marked a move away from the earlier ideals of free education and created a barrier to access for many students, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds (Al-Samaral & Tessa, 1992). In response, the government launched the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) in 2002, which abolished primary school fees and introduced grants to support schools. This was followed by the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP) in 2004, aimed at improving access to secondary education and building upon the successes of the PEDP (Mbele & Katabaro, 2003).

Despite these efforts, challenges remain in ensuring equitable access to quality education. Rapid increases in enrollment, while beneficial in expanding access, have strained educational resources and diminished teaching effectiveness (Knutsson, 2005). Socioeconomic barriers, such as the inability to afford uniforms or other school-related costs, continue to hinder full participation in education, particularly among street children and those from poor families (Mkombozi, 2003). Nonetheless, the government, with support from international donors, remains committed to the goal of Universal Primary Education and continues to focus on improving quality, retention, and school infrastructure, making education compulsory up to age 15 as part of its

ongoing efforts to meet international development goals (World Bank, 2011).

The Concept of Free Education in Tanzania

The concept of free education in Tanzania is deeply influenced by both international commitments and national policy frameworks, aligning with global education movements such as the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien and the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar. These events emphasized the need for nations to treat basic education as a fundamental human right. Signatory countries were urged to commit politically and financially to the goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015 (UNESCO, 2002). For Tanzania, the introduction of free education at the primary and lower secondary levels marked a response to these international calls, reflecting a global shift toward inclusive education.

At the national level, the decision to implement free education aligns with Tanzania's broader educational and developmental goals, as outlined in key policies such as the Education and Training Policy of 2014 and the Tanzania Development Vision 2025. The 2014 Education Policy significantly expanded the scope of basic education to include both primary and lower secondary levels, covering Standard One to Form Four. This policy aims to ensure that education is accessible, free, and of high quality, with a single textbook system for all schools (Godda, 2018). The Vision 2025 emphasizes the role of education as a means of fostering national development and driving socio-economic growth, recognizing that investment in education is key to achieving sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The commitment to free education is further reinforced by the priorities set by President John Magufuli's administration, which placed education at the forefront of its development agenda. The government's decision to provide free education at both primary and secondary levels is part of its broader strategy to reduce inequality and ensure equal educational opportunities, especially for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016). This policy shift aims to eliminate financial barriers to education, increasing enrollment rates among children from low-income families. A notable result of this policy was observed in 2002 when primary education was made free, leading to a sharp increase in the primary net enrollment rate from 59% in 2000 to 94% in 2011 (Hakielimu, 2017).

Despite these positive enrollment outcomes, challenges persist, particularly regarding the quality of education. While access to education has improved, the surge in enrollment has often outpaced the government's ability to provide adequate resources, including teachers, infrastructure, and learning materials. This has led to overcrowded classrooms and limited individual attention for students, especially in rural areas (Chimwaza, 2020). Additionally, ensuring the

sustainability of free education remains a significant concern. The Tanzanian government must balance the cost of providing free education with other national priorities such as healthcare and infrastructure development. To address these challenges, innovative financing mechanisms, including increased donor funding and public-private partnerships, will be crucial to ensuring the continued success and sustainability of free education policies (Komba, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to assess the effects of the FFP on the supervision of ordinary public secondary schools in Tanzania. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Ilala City, which is one of the five districts in the Dar es Salaam region. It employed a mixed approach and a cross-sectional survey design. The cross-sectional design was used because it permits the collection of data in a particular place at one point in time. The sample of this study consisted of 148 participants, of whom 4 were head teachers, 40 were teachers, 3 were education officers, 80 were students and 21 were parents. Participants were obtained through simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Primary data were collected using a combination of questionnaires and an observation checklist. Secondary data were collected from record documents of public secondary schools (documentary review) using data abstraction tools. Data were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative statistical techniques.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Assessment of the effects of fee-free education on school supervision in public secondary schools in Ilala City was the main objective of this research, and a detailed analysis of the specific objectives is discussed in this chapter. The first research objective aimed at assessing the positive impact of fee-free education policy on public sector schools. The second objective aimed to assess the effect of fee-free secondary education on the availability of teaching and learning materials, while the third objective was to assess the effect of fee-free secondary education on school supervision at different levels.

The positive impact of fee-free education policy on public sector schools.

The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents said that students' enrollment had been increasing since the introduction of FFPSE. Head teachers were asked to provide data on students' enrollment from 2016 to 2020. The purpose was to see if enrollment had been increasing, decreasing or fluctuating. The data provided by head teachers indicated that the number of students enrolled in secondary schools since the introduction of the policy has increased yearly. After the introduction of FFPSE, the enrolment of students continued to increase each year, with

17.3% in 2016, 18.7% in 2017, and 18.9% in 2018, and the number of students enrolled continued to increase to 21.1% in 2019 and 24% in 2020. Moreover, it was revealed that girls were more frequently enrolled than boys. Furthermore, the findings indicated that every year, the enrollment of students increased in all sampled schools after the introduction of FFPSE. It was also revealed that even those students who could not afford fee payments now were able to go to school to obtain secondary education qualifications. Some of the effects emerged after the introduction of this policy, which is discussed in detail within the next objective of this study.

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the FFPSE policy has given the chance for more students to enroll in secondary schools despite its challenges in its implementation. One head teacher from school "C" stated during an interview: "There are currently many pupils enrolled in school, and this number continues to grow every year. The availability of a school-free education is what accounts for the enormous enrollment of students." The response from the head teacher emphasizes the significant increase in student enrollment due to the FFSE policy. The removal of financial barriers has led to a surge in enrollment, aligning with the positive impacts of free education policies in various contexts. This sentiment resonates with previous studies, such as the findings of Kang et al. (2022) in the United States, who demonstrated that the availability of school-free education positively influences enrollment rates.

Supporting the same view, the head teacher from school "E" stated the following during an interview:

Before the fee-free education policy was implemented in secondary schools, many students were prevented from enrolling because of the cost of their school fees. Because of their poverty, many parents struggled to pay for various educational expenses. However, since education is now free, more children are attending secondary schools, and this number has been sharply rising each year. The fact that even the impoverished may access secondary school, in my opinion, is a positive result of this policy's implementation.

The head teacher's response highlights the policy's transformative impact on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The policy has enabled economically challenged students to access secondary education without financial constraints, resulting in a notable increase in enrollment. This positive outcome aligns with the findings of Iyer et al. (2021), who studied affirmative action policies in Vietnam, indicating that such policies can effectively address educational inequalities.

In addition, during the interview, an education officer said:

After the implementation of FFSE, student enrollment in regular secondary schools increased significantly. The inability of parents to pay school fees is no longer a valid

justification for not bringing their children to school. The fact that parents today risk being arrested if they do not send their children to school has prompted them to make sure their children are in school and obtain an education.

The education officer's response reaffirms the positive outcomes of FFSE in terms of enrollment enhancement. The policy has removed the excuse of financial inability for parents to send their children to school, leading to a surge in attendance rates. This observation correlates with the findings of Asante (2022) in Sub-Saharan Africa, where cost elimination positively impacted upper secondary school enrollment.

The increase in the enrollment of students in secondary schools after the introduction of the FFE has been indicated as a positive effect of the policy of fee-free education. This means that more students leaving primary schools are now gaining access to secondary education. However, at the same time, the policy of free secondary education has given the poor the chance to continue with further education. This statement argument reflects the overall trend observed in the quotations, underlining the positive impact of FFSE on enrollment. The policy facilitates a seamless transition from primary to secondary education while also benefiting the economically disadvantaged by enabling them to pursue further education. These outcomes parallel the findings of previous studies, such as Asante and Agbee (2021), which show that free education policies can improve access to secondary education.

Reduction of the Cost of Education to Parents

Prior to the implementation of FFSE, the government and parents split the cost of education. Parents contributed through school fees and other charges for donations. According to the survey, roughly the majority of parents claimed that FFSE had helped them by lightening the financial burden on their children's education. They stated that, in contrast to the previous situation, in which other children were remaining at home due to their parent's inability to bear the costs of education, they were now able to send their children to school without facing discrimination. This highlights the positive impact of FFSE on reducing the financial burden on parents. The policy has eliminated the divide between those who could afford education and those who could not, resulting in increased access for EDS. This aligns with the findings of Matey (2020) in Ghana, where the introduction of a free senior high school policy relieved parents from the financial strain of education-related expenses.

One parent from school "D" stated, Our children's educational expenses are now less of a burden thanks to FFSE, which was a blessing for us as parents. We are no longer concerned about not sending our kids to school because we cannot afford the school fees. I do not have to

worry about the teachers sending my kids home because they did not pay their school fees. Even while we still have certain expenses, they are not as high as they were before.

The parent's statement underscores the alleviation of financial burdens due to FFSE. The reduction in educational expenses has relieved parents of the fear of their children being denied education due to the nonpayment of fees. This resonates with the positive impacts of FFSE on parental engagement and investment in their children's education. The parent's viewpoint aligns with the findings of Herbert (2022) in Tanzania, emphasizing that fee-free education policies lead to increased enrollment and attendance, albeit with remaining challenges related to financial contributions.

Another parent from school "A" stated the following during an interview:

We still need to pay money to purchase items needed for school, such as uniforms, textbooks, shoes, and socks. However, occasionally, we do not have enough money to purchase these necessities. We also need to care for a lot of children. Additionally, schools continue to contribute by paying for remedial programs and meals. Only if the government took care of everything could it be advantageous.

The parent's perspective highlights that while FFSE has lessened the financial burden, it has not eliminated all associated costs, leading to mixed outcomes. This viewpoint resonates with Olang'o et al. (2021) in Kenya, who noted that fee-free policies might lead to some improvement in enrollment but may not fully address all challenges, particularly in regions with significant poverty. The parent's statement reinforces the complexity of educational financing and suggests the importance of addressing complementary expenses to ensure equitable access to quality education.

In general, the fee-free education policy in regular public secondary schools appears to be advantageous for many people, particularly the poor. Due to the expansion of educational options brought about by the rise in student enrollment, many more children can now acquire basic education up to the secondary level. This argument encapsulates the overall positive impact of FFSE on educational access for economically disadvantaged individuals. This mirrors the findings of Metta (2021) in Tanzania, where the policy's implementation was deemed highly positive and beneficial. The quotation supports the notion that FFSE serves as a mechanism to increase enrollment and educational attainment, particularly among the underprivileged, ultimately contributing to improved access to basic education up to the secondary level.

Increased parental involvement in education

The study also intended to determine whether parental involvement in their children's education changed as a result of the introduction of FFSE, and the results showed that 65%

of the teachers believed that parental involvement changed for the better. The head teachers acknowledged that it was difficult to get parents to contribute when the policy of free education first came into effect because of their misunderstandings about it. However, they had begun to see the limitations of the policy as a result of education and parent meetings. More information was uncovered, including the fact that parents were paying for remedial sessions and feeding the young people. In response, the head of school "F" said the following in an interview:

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was created in our school to encourage parental involvement in subjects pertaining to their children's education. As a result, parents are now actively helping to facilitate their children's teaching and learning. As agreed upon, the school's administration and teachers pay for remedial classes.

Fee-free secondary education and availability of teaching and learning materials

The second objective of this study was to determine the effect of fee-free secondary education on the availability of teaching and learning materials. Data to answer this question were obtained from the interviews, as summarized in the subsequent sections.

Shortage of Classrooms

During the collection of data, it was revealed from a large number of respondent schools that since the introduction of FFPSE, the outbreak of a high number of enrolled students in those schools resulted in a shortage of classrooms since the schools obtained few buildings to accommodate the enrolled number, which is increasing yearly. According to the particular education policy, the ratio of students per class is 40:1, which means that each single classroom should accommodate no more than 40 students. However, due to the shortage that came as a result of the FFPSE, the school supervisor finds themselves in a difficult situation of violating the policy by exceeding the number of students per class. A single classroom is subjected to accommodate 55 to 60 students. Hence, the situation is difficult for teachers.

One teacher from school "A" stated during the interview:

Hear how my voice is getting winded due to the big and loud energy and voice I use to communicate and teach that crowd of students in a single class, but I have no means to escape since my family needs to eat also. The government has established FFSPEs, but the ones who suffocate with such a policy are teachers.

The teacher's statement vividly portrays the challenges that educators are facing due to the increased student enrollment resulting from the implementation of the fee-free secondary education (FFSPE) policy. The teacher describes the difficulty of teaching a large number of students in a single overcrowded classroom, highlighting the strain it places on their voice and energy. Despite these challenges, the teacher

acknowledges their responsibility to provide for their family's needs and underscores the disparity between the policy's intentions and its impact on teachers. This statement reflects the immense pressure that teachers are under and raises concerns about the sustainability and effectiveness of FFSPE.

The teacher's response captures the consequences of overcrowded classrooms and the toll it takes on educators. The teacher's observation that the ones "suffocating" with the policy are the teachers indicates that the policy's implementation has put significant strain on teachers due to the large class sizes. This aligns with the findings of Adan and Orodha (2019), who identified challenges in the management capacity of principals and the timing of fund disbursement as constraints to implementing free secondary education policies in Kenya. The teacher's statement provides a personal account of the adverse effects of these challenges on the teaching and learning environment.

The teacher's account echoes the concerns of previous studies such as Adan and Orodha (2019) and Chaula (2023) about resource constraints and management challenges affecting the quality of education. Teachers' experiences of teaching in overcrowded classrooms and struggling to manage large numbers of students are consistent with findings from different educational contexts. This alignment underscores the need to address the challenges arising from increased enrolment and resource shortages to ensure the effective implementation of free education policies.

The teacher's statement highlights a significant consequence of the FFSPE policy – the overcrowding of classrooms and its impact on teaching quality. Overcrowded classrooms can hinder teachers' ability to provide personalized attention, engage students effectively, and maintain a conducive learning environment. This adverse effect on teaching quality can ultimately compromise the intended positive outcomes of fee-free education policy. Therefore, addressing issues related to classroom overcrowding and providing adequate teaching and learning resources are crucial steps to mitigate the negative effects of the policy on teaching quality and overall education outcomes.

Supporting the same view, the head teacher from school "D" stated the following: interview:

Imagine you enrol more than 600 form one student, and you only have 8 classes to accommodate form one student, what was you do? This means at this school I should at least have more than 15 classrooms for form one, and the number of classrooms should increase yearly since form one of this year are the form two of next year and so on.

The head teacher's statement emphasizes the practical challenges that arise due to the increased enrolment resulting from the fee-free secondary education (FFSPE) policy. The head teacher calculates the ideal number of classrooms

needed to accommodate the student population effectively, pointing out that the current number of classrooms is insufficient. The head teacher's argument highlights the need for the continuous expansion of infrastructure to meet the growing demands of the student population as they progress through different grade levels.

The head teacher's response reflects the practical implications of the policy's impact on infrastructure and resource allocation. The statement suggests that the policy has led to an unexpected increase in enrollment, resulting in a shortage of classrooms. The head teacher's calculation that at least 15 classrooms would be needed for the current enrollment emphasizes the discrepancy between the policy's intent and the actual capacity of the school to accommodate the growing number of students. This echoes the findings of Luvanga and Mhagama (2022), who highlighted challenges related to resource management and accountability in implementing fee-free education in Tanzanian secondary schools.

The head teacher's statement aligns with the findings of Luvanga and Mhagama (2022), emphasizing the difficulties schools face in managing increased enrollment without sufficient infrastructure and resources. The challenges of inadequate classrooms and the need for continuous expansion are consistent with the constraints identified in Adan and Orodha (2019), where the management capacity of school principals was found to be a challenge in implementing free education policies.

Shortage of Tables and Chairs

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the FFSPE policy has caused a shortage of tables and chairs to accommodate the high number of students who are enrolled due to the policy. This requires the school supervisors to force a single chair and table to accommodate two students concurrently.

One teacher from school "E" stated during the interview:

We all know it is not allowed or advised for two students to share a single chair and table simultaneously, but then should we let the standing students out of the class, or should we let the standing students keep standing for the whole class sessions during the whole day? of course no, they were have to share the sit.

This teacher's statement highlights the resource shortage faced by schools due to the increased enrolment brought about by the fee-free secondary education (FFSPE) policy. The teacher acknowledges the impracticality of having two students share a single chair and table but also emphasizes the necessity of accommodating all students in the classroom, even if it means compromising seating arrangements. The statement underscores the trade-offs that educators are forced to make in the face of resource constraints. The teacher's response reflects the challenging reality of managing a

classroom with limited furniture resources. The teacher acknowledges the policy's intention to provide free education, but the shortage of tables and chairs forces them to make difficult choices between adhering to the ideal learning environment and ensuring that all students have a place to sit. This demonstrates the disconnection between policy aspirations and the practical challenges schools encounter during implementation.

The teacher's statement resonates with the findings of Luvanga and Mhagama (2022), who identified challenges related to the implementation of fee-free education, including issues with financial management and resource allocation. The shortage of teaching materials and classroom furniture aligns with the resource-related constraints highlighted by Adan and Orodha (2019) in their study on the implementation of free secondary education policies.

Shortage of Teaching and Learning Staff/Materials

The data collected from the fields reveal that the introduction of FFPSE has resulted in a shortage of teaching and learning staff/materials. Teaching and learning staff/materials in this study represent specific books, libraries and laboratories. A school is said not to be competent enough if it has got no they showed above teaching and learning staff/materials. This makes the work of teaching harder. For example, you find a school having a single small laboratory room that cannot accommodate more than 40 students. Therefore, this needed a teacher to teach the students per shift, which may take even a whole week for a single lesson or session to accommodate all students in a certain class. One teacher from school "B" stated during the interview:

Sometimes I find myself stranded with nothing to do since I gave out the assignment to read a certain book to both students for a single day, but when the deadline reach, you find 60% of students have not read the book since they were unable to access it due to the large queue in waiting, since you may find the ratio 1:12, by means of one book to be shared by 12 students.

This teacher's statement sheds light on the shortage of teaching and learning materials caused by the FFPSE policy. The teacher describes the challenge of assigning reading assignments to students when there is insufficient access to necessary resources such as books. The resulting large queue to access limited resources affects students' ability to complete assignments in a timely manner. The teacher's response underscores the impact of resource shortages on students' ability to fully engage with their education. The teacher's frustration with the discrepancy between the assignment and the availability of materials highlights how the policy's goals of providing a quality education might be compromised by insufficient resources.

The teacher's account aligns with the findings of studies such as Ntwima (2022) that identify challenges related to the

implementation of fee-free education, including the shortage of teaching and learning materials. Adan and Orodha's (2019) study also noted constraints such as the timing of fund disbursement that can hinder the policy's effectiveness. The teacher's statement emphasizes the importance of not only providing free education but also ensuring that schools are adequately equipped to support learning. The lack of teaching materials and resources can hinder students' ability to engage effectively with their education and complete assignments, potentially undermining the educational quality the policy aims to provide.

Shortage of Play Grounds

The analysis of the collected data revealed that a shortage of playing grounds at school premises is an impact of the establishment of the FFPSE policy. As part of a better education system, sports and games play an important role in maintaining the health of students' bodies and minds/mentles. Active body and mind are significant factors for students to understand what they are being taught by. Seventy percent of the sample school the researcher attended did not have enough or satisfactory playing fields or grounds to accommodate the whole number of schools they enrolled. Remember that Ilala municipality is almost 80% urban.

One parent, during the interview with the researcher, stated the following:

As you see, my house is near this school (School F), look at the front ground of my house, it is no longer attractive since all flowers and trees that I rooted for decoration purposes have been destroyed and removed by the large number of students during break time. In addition, this is because their school's playing field is not cohering with their number; hence, some of them decide to come and play in this field near my house.

The parent's statement sheds light on the practical implications of the shortage of playing grounds caused by the FFPSE policy. The destruction of the parent's landscaping and the increased presence of students outside the school premises during breaks reflect the impact of limited outdoor space. The parent's response highlights the adverse effects of inadequate playing grounds on the surrounding environment and the community. The fact that students resort to playing near the parent's house due to the insufficient space available at the school indicates the mismatch between the school's resources and its student population.

This statement aligns with the challenges highlighted in the study by Luvanga and Mhagama (2022), which emphasized issues related to poor budget review and inadequate financial management. The destruction of the parent's landscaping also underscores the need for a better allocation of resources to accommodate students' needs during breaks. The parent's observation suggests that the shortage of playgrounds not only impacts the students' physical activity but also extends to

the local community. The visible degradation of the environment due to increased student activities outside the school premises indicates the challenges posed by the lack of adequate space for recreational and physical activities.

Collectively, the responses from educators, administrators, and parents highlight the multifaceted effects of the FFPSE policy on schools' resources and infrastructure. The challenges related to teaching materials, infrastructure, and playgrounds resonate with findings from studies such as Adan and Orodha (2019), Ntwima (2022), and Luvanga and Mhagama (2022). These studies emphasize the importance of addressing resource constraints and effective management strategies to ensure the successful implementation of fee-free education policies.

Fee-Free Secondary Education and School Supervision at Different Levels

The third objective of this study was to identify the effect of fee-free secondary education on school supervision at different levels. Therefore, during the study, it was revealed that the number of teachers does not correlate with the number of students in a certain school. The data collected for this objective highlight a number of effects, as described in the subsequent sections.

Deficiency of Teachers

The head of school from school "B" stated during an interview:

There were 36 sessions per week, but due to the large number of students, which resulted in the outbreak of many streams in a single class, a single class reached the 16th stream (Form one A to P). Here, the responsible subject teacher was needed to attend a maximum of 72 sessions per week.

The head teacher's statement highlights a significant challenge arising from the implementation of fee-free secondary education, which is the deficiency of teachers. This challenge is due to the overwhelming number of students in some schools, leading to large class sizes and numerous streams. As a result, teachers are forced to handle an excessive number of sessions per week, far beyond the recommended limits. This indicates a severe imbalance between teacher availability and student demand. The implications of this shortage are far-reaching, affecting the quality of education delivery, personalized attention, and students' overall learning experience. The quoted statement emphasizes the practical difficulties faced by teachers, mirroring the broader findings of the study related to teacher deficiency and its impact on education quality.

The response from the head teacher from school "B" illustrates a significant consequence of the implementation of fee-free secondary education – the deficiency of teachers, particularly in the context of overcrowded classrooms and multiple streams. This finding aligns with the broader

observation of the study, which identifies this challenge as affecting approximately 90% of schools and their supervisory activities. The difficulty of maintaining a manageable workload for teachers due to an excessive number of sessions highlights the strain on teachers, resources and challenges in delivering quality education. The shortage of teachers has been recognized as a common concern in various studies, including Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021), Atieno (2019), and Sanga et al. (2022), where increased enrollment rates and classroom congestion have led to teacher shortages and compromised education quality.

The identified challenge of teacher deficiency resonates with the findings from various previous studies, revealing the impact of insufficient teaching resources on the effectiveness of education policies. For example, Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) explored the challenges in Ghana's public senior high schools due to the surge in enrolment rates following the implementation of free secondary education. The study emphasized that overcrowding and a shortage of teachers contributed to the compromised quality of education. Similarly, Atieno (2019) in Kenya and Sanga et al. (2022) in Tanzania found that inadequate teaching and learning resources, including teachers, have hindered the smooth implementation of education policies.

One parent, during an interview with the researcher, said:

Sometimes the particular subject teacher does not reach in some streams, including her (stream F); therefore, the teacher orders them to get and copy notes from other streams the teacher managed to reach and tells them to ask for clarification and explanation from the students from the reached streams. This means that due to the large number of streams, some teachers are unable to attend and deliver the same subject to both streams equally and satisfactorily.

The parent's responses shed light on a crucial consequence of the deficiency of teachers resulting from the implementation of fee-free secondary education. The parent's observation illustrates that due to the scarcity of subject teachers, some students are unable to receive direct instruction from their designated teachers. As a consequence, they are instructed to copy notes from students in streams that received direct instruction, essentially leading to a form of peer-to-peer teaching. This situation not only highlights the challenge of teacher shortages but also underscores the impact it has on the equitable distribution of quality education across all streams. Students who are unable to directly access their subject teachers may face difficulties in understanding and clarifying concepts, leading to potential gaps in their learning. This finding is aligned with the broader study's observation that the deficiency of teachers affects schools and supervisory activities across various levels.

The parent's insight resonates with the response from the head teacher and aligns with previous studies, such as Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) and Nyir and ikubwimana (2019),

which highlight the challenges posed by teacher shortages in the context of free education policies. Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) demonstrated how increased enrollment rates and limited teacher availability can lead to challenges in classroom management, learning quality, and discipline. Similarly, Nyirandikubwimana (2019) identified that the implementation of a free education policy resulted in larger class sizes, teacher shortages, and compromised education quality. The combination of the parent's statement and these studies emphasizes the need to address teacher shortages to ensure an equitable and effective education system.

Lack of Motivation for Teachers

All teachers argued that motivation among teachers helps deliver better education. They found that if instructors are not sufficiently motivated, for instance, if their rights are not promptly granted, this can lower their working efficiency and demotivate them from performing their jobs effectively. Additionally, they claimed that teachers should be encouraged in a variety of ways, including by providing them with housing and transportation stipends, adequate pay, medical stipends, and chances to pursue higher education. Through a survey, one educator from school "A" disclosed:

In terms of their rights, the government has abandoned teachers. Our entitlements, such as housing, vacation, and medical payments, are not made on schedule. For many years, we have been on the same pay bracket. There are so many arrears that receiving early payment is impossible. Most of the time, we consider various things we could do to make extra money to meet our fundamental needs. I request that the government respect teachers' rights and grant them on time so that they are motivated to put in more effort and deliver high-quality instruction.

The statement from the educator highlights the importance of teacher motivation in delivering quality education. The educator points out that teachers' motivation is closely tied to their working conditions, including timely access to their entitlements such as housing, vacation, and medical payments. When teachers do not receive these benefits on schedule, it can lead to a demotivated workforce that struggles to perform effectively. The educator's request for timely respect for teachers' rights underscores the need for proper compensation and recognition to maintain their motivation and dedication to delivering high-quality instruction. This sentiment indicates that inadequate motivation due to unmet entitlements can significantly impact the quality of education provided by teachers.

These responses align with the responses from other teachers and students in the study, all of whom emphasize the importance of teacher motivation and the potential negative consequences of demotivation. This sentiment is supported by various previous studies, including Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021), Sanga et al. (2022), and Shang'wet (2021).

Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) highlighted the challenges faced by teachers due to increased workload and lack of proper remuneration, which can lead to demotivation and compromised teaching quality. Sanga et al. (2022) focused on the availability of teaching and learning materials, pointing out that teachers' motivation contributes to the effective implementation of fee-free education policies. Shang'wet (2021) examined the impacts of fee-free education policy and highlighted challenges such as a lack of resources and delayed payments, which can impact teachers' motivation and their ability to deliver quality education.

Similarly, one student from school "G" said the following during an interview:

Since we depend on our teachers for the entirety of the learning process, they should be motivated. To lessen the lengthy commute to work, residences ought to be made available to them. To increase their income, they focus more on their enterprises than on giving us students much of their time. As a result, the government should raise teacher wages and take other motivational elements into account. This increased teachers' motivation to carry out their responsibilities as they should and ensure high-quality instruction.

The students' responses emphasize the significance of teacher motivation in the learning process and how it directly impacts students' education. The student recognizes the pivotal role teachers play in education and expresses the need for motivated educators to deliver effective instruction. The student also highlights the practical challenges teachers face, such as lengthy commutes to work, which can impact their dedication and the time available for teaching. By suggesting the provision of residences and higher teacher wages, the student advocates for measures to improve teachers' working conditions and financial incentives. This, in turn, is expected to enhance teacher motivation, leading to better instructional quality and ultimately benefiting the students' learning outcomes.

The student's viewpoint is consistent with the responses from other students and teachers in the study, all of whom stress the importance of teacher motivation in providing quality education. This sentiment aligns with the findings of various previous studies, including Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021), Ogunode et al. (2022), and Munisi et al. (2021). Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) highlighted the challenges resulting from teacher shortages and increased workloads due to the implementation of free secondary education policies. Ogunode et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of adequate funding for various aspects of basic education, including teacher motivation and professional development. Munisi et al. (2021) assessed the effects of fee-free education policy on the quality of secondary education and identified challenges

such as teacher shortages and overcrowded classrooms, which impact instructional quality.

Delay of the Financial Resources Disbursement

Teachers and head teachers complained that money from the school was not being distributed on schedule. They disclosed that several school activities were being hindered by the delay in the distribution of school funding. During the interview, the head teacher from school "B" said,

There is a delay in the disbursement of funds." Some of the scheduled activities have been delayed as a result. They recommended that monies be provided promptly so that educational activities may be completed with ease.

The head teacher's statement highlights a significant challenge faced by schools in the implementation of the fee-free education policy – the delay in the disbursement of funds. The head teacher from school "B" specifically notes that the delay in receiving funds has led to postponement of various scheduled activities. This delay in funding distribution has a direct impact on the smooth operation of schools and the timely execution of educational initiatives. The head teacher's recommendation underscores the importance of providing funds promptly to ensure that educational activities can be carried out without disruptions. The head teacher's statement reflects the frustrations and operational challenges schools face when funds are not disbursed on time.

The head teacher's response highlights the practical implications of delayed funds on schools' functioning and educational activities. The head teacher's recommendation to provide funds promptly aligns with the findings of previous studies that address funding challenges and their impact on education. For instance, Chanimbe and Dankwah (2021) identified the delayed supply of funds as a challenge that hindered the effective implementation of free secondary education policies in Ghana. Similarly, Shindano and Babune (2023) found that the delay in the supply of funds exacerbated challenges in schools and affected policy implementation in Zanzibar. These studies collectively support the idea that timely and adequate disbursement of funds is crucial for the successful execution of free education policies.

The head teacher's observation and the support from previous studies underline the importance of addressing funding delays in the context of free education policies. The delayed disbursement of funds hampers schools' ability to carry out essential activities, affects the quality of education delivery, and can lead to increased operational challenges. This finding aligns with the concerns raised by Essuman (2021) about potential strain on government resources and challenges in education delivery due to the implementation of fee-free education policies. By examining the experiences of different schools and regions, previous studies such as Chanimbe and

Dankwah (2021) and Shindano and Babune (2023) also emphasize the critical role of timely funding in ensuring the effective implementation of free education policies.

The responses from the head teacher and the alignment with previous studies underscore the importance of addressing funding delays to mitigate the negative effects of free education policies on schools' operations. Timely provision of funds is essential to avoid disruptions, facilitate smooth educational activities, and maintain the quality of instruction. If funding delays are not resolved, they could exacerbate the existing challenges faced by schools, as mentioned by the head teacher, and potentially compromise the overall effectiveness of the fee-free education policy in achieving its intended goals.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Fee-free education has significantly improved access to secondary education, particularly for students from low-income families. While the policy has led to increased enrollment, the challenges stemming from its implementation seem to outweigh the benefits. The surge in student numbers has resulted in overcrowded classrooms, leading to a lack of space and poor learning conditions. This situation threatens the quality of education, potentially producing underprepared graduates who could become a burden on the government and the country as a whole. Therefore, providing education opportunities without addressing the quality of the learning environment undermines the policy's success in delivering quality education.

To improve the situation, the government must enhance education funding, ensuring that it is sufficient and timely. This would allow schools to carry out necessary activities without disruptions. Additionally, ongoing projects such as school infrastructure development, including the construction of laboratories, should be adequately funded to ensure their completion. Proper funding will help address the growing demands of the education sector and ensure that schools can function effectively.

In addition to funding, schools must be equipped with adequate teaching and learning resources, such as textbooks and laboratory equipment. This would reduce the high student-to-textbook ratio, allowing for more effective learning. With sufficient resources, students would be able to complete their assignments more efficiently and engage in independent study, improving their overall academic performance.

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