

# IMPACT OF PROMPT DISBURSEMENT OF FREE SECONDARY EDUCATION TUITION FUND AND THE QUALITY OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAKUENI COUNTY

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## ABSTRACT

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*The prompt delivery of teaching and learning resources commonly known as curriculum support materials may either directly or indirectly affect the curriculum implementation process. The study sought to establish whether there is a correlation between the timely disbursement of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund and the curriculum implementation in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The study employed a mixed methods research design. The study used a sample of 31 principals, 307 Form 4 students and 164 For 4 class teachers. Three research instruments were used to collect data; questionnaires, interview and observations schedules. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analysis data. The study found out that timely supply of curriculum support materials to public secondary schools was significantly related to the quality of curriculum implementation process in public secondary schools in Makueni County. Therefore, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education should put in place proper strategies the ensure that all secondary schools receive the Curriculum support materials early enough in order to promote quality in the curriculum implementation process.*

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**Key words:** Curriculum, implementation, quality and supply

## **1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, almost all nations are striving to achieve SDGs-Goal 4 which focuses on the provision of quality education. In the developing countries, nations have taken different path ways in attempt to provide quality of education. In Kenya, the government opted to subsidize the curriculum support materials; text books and other teaching aids. According to the government policy the Free Secondary Education Fund meant for purchasing other curriculum support materials are released on termly bases as per the school calendar. However, continued delays by the government hinders proper acquisition of the necessary resources hence a negative effect on curriculum implementation.

Magak (2013) in a study on investigate the challenges faced by secondary principals in financial management in public secondary schools; a case study of Kisumu East sub-County Kenya noted that sometimes school do not receive the government grants on time. Consequently such delay in disbursement of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund has significantly hindered the achievement of the desired goals. This therefore calls for acquisition of curriculum support materials at the right time for effective curriculum implementation.

According Kinanu (2012), lack of textbooks and other curriculum support materials affect the quality of curriculum implementation. Delay in disbursing these funds may lead to delay in purchasing the curriculum support materials. Delays in disbursing Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund are experienced thus causing stress to school stakeholders (Wafula, 2012). Similarly, lack of relevant curriculum support materials also post low academic performance among students (Laurillard, 2013). Use of Curriculum Support Materials and academic performance are very closely related in that the resources enable learners to master the content well hence improvement in learner's performance.

## **2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROMPT DELIVERY OF CURRICULUM SUPPORT MATERIALS PROCURED THROUGH FSETF AND THE QUALITY OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION**

Maronga and Kengere (2013) did a study on investigation on influence of government financial management on Kenyan public secondary in Sameta division. The objectives of this study included principals' management of school cash and problems faced by these principals when applying financial management practices. They used questionnaires and interviews as tools for data collections. From the findings, one of the common problems faced by principals was late

disbursement of funds. In addition, lack of skills on financial management complicated procurement of curriculum support materials. According to Watkins and Alelemayehu (2012) slow or delayed disbursement of finances to secondary schools has frustrated the efforts of improving curriculum implementation.

Momoh (2010) alleges that there is a positive relationship between curriculum support materials and academic performance. The more a school is supplied with curriculum support materials the better their grades. From this statement it can be concluded that these resources; finances meant to purchase the teaching resources should be availed at the right time. Similarly teachers should also issue out the resources to the learners at the right time in order to help them perform well. Lyons (2012) argues that learners' performance is highly influenced by the quality and quantity of curriculum support materials. His argument therefore calls for timely supply of high quality curriculum support materials.

Various studies on curriculum support materials and their influence on student's grades had been done in some counties in Kenya, but limited in Makueni County. There was therefore need for this study to establish the relationship between prompt provision of curriculum support materials acquired through Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund and its effect on quality of curriculum implementation, which could be measured through academic performance in public secondary schools in Makueni County.

Nkoroi (2017) while assessing the relationship between principals' instructional leadership and students' academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Meru and Tharaka-Nithi Counties found that the principals who depended largely on funding by the Ministry of Education for the Free Day Secondary Education Programme (FSE) were sometimes unable to plan because funds were insufficient to cater for adequate resources due to financial constraints experienced by the government and in many instances the funds were not remitted to schools at the right time. To mitigate on this, principals mobilized funds to procure instructional resources through fundraising from parents, sourcing for donations from individuals and corporates and sometimes borrowed money from other school vote heads.

### **3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research applied a mixed methods research design where both qualitative and quantitative methods. This design was chosen since it the relationship between the quality of curriculum

support materials and the curriculum implementation process is best established by both descriptive and quantitative methods of analysis.

### **3.1 TARGET POPULATION**

The target population for the study was 381 public secondary schools in Makueni County (MOE Makueni County, 2018). The subjects included principals, class teachers and Form 4 students. The three categories of respondents were chosen because they were well informed about the variables being investigated in this study. In addition, the school principals were in charge of procuring other curriculum support materials apart from textbooks which were supplied by the government through the Ministry of Education

### **3.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Stratified random sampling was used to select the schools for the study from all sub-counties. The principals who participated in the interviews were sampled purposively. The form four class teachers and form four students who filled the questionnaires were selected using simple random sampling. The study was carried out in 31 schools from which 31 principals, 164 teachers and 307 students were selected yielding a total of 502 respondents.

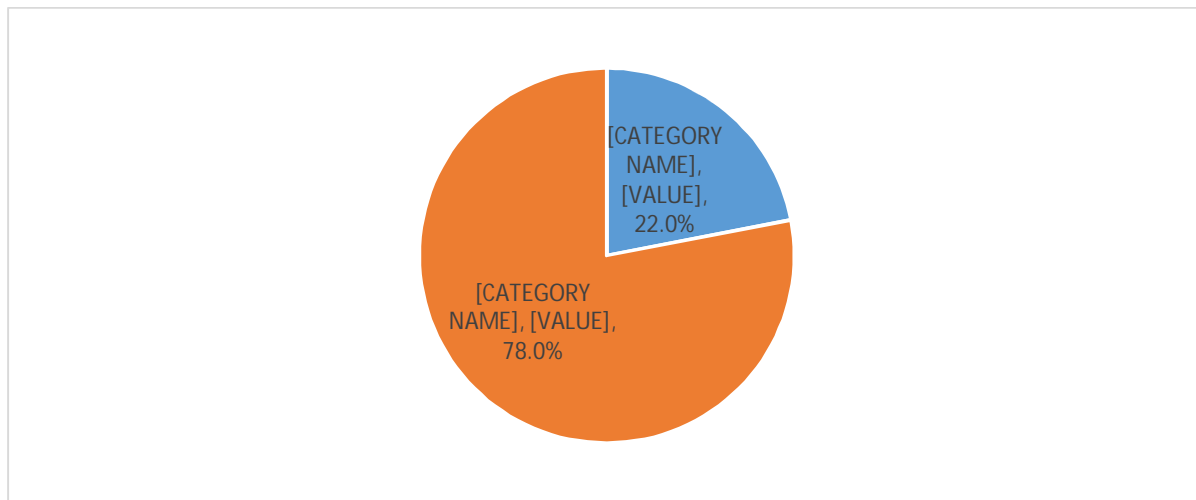
### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

The study used three research instruments; questionnaires, interview and observation schedules. The questionnaires consisted of both open and closed ended questions. The questionnaires were administered to class teacher and student respondents respectively

### **4.0 RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

The summary of the study findings as presented in figure 1 shows the responses of various subjects on the promptness in release of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund on the quality of curriculum implementation process. As showed in figure 1, majority of the class teachers, 128 (78.0%) revealed that the time for disbursing FSETF funds was not well defined while 36 (22.0%) noted that the funds were received in the beginning of each term. The findings also suggest that most public secondary schools were not able to adequately plan for the use of the tuition funds channeled to the schools and consequently this triggered a delayed in purchase of curriculum support materials. Furthermore, these findings implied that teachers were not able to plan their classroom activities which further impacted their efficiency in teaching due to delayed purchase of teaching materials. These consequently affected the rate of syllabus coverage and the entire

curriculum implementation process in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The findings agreed with studies by Magak (2013) and, Maronga and Kengere (2013) which showed that many schools were affected by delayed disbursement of finances to the schools by the government. The results of this study are also in agreement with that of Nkoroi (2017) who found that the principals who depended largely on funding by the Ministry of Education from the Free Day Secondary Education Programme were sometimes unable to plan because funds in many instances the funds were not remitted to schools at the right time. The study also supported the findings by Muhindi (2012) who while assessing the challenges facing the implementation of free day secondary education found out that the funds given were inadequate and were not disbursed in time. The findings of this research supported the recommendation by this study that disbursements should be made in good time such that schools do not experience lack of purchasing power throughout the year and hence reduce the increase of prices by suppliers due to the delayed payments. Hence, it can be inferred that delays in the disbursement of the FSETF was a hurdle in the achievement of quality curriculum implementation by derailing the acquisition of crucial resources that were required by students and teachers in enhancing effective learning and teaching processes.



**Figure 1: Class teachers' Responses on Promptness in Disbursement of FSETF**

The principal interviewees also noted that the FSET funds were disbursed timely though there were many delays which affected students' learning. The study findings were supported by those of students as shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Time when Students Received Curriculum Support Materials**

<b>Time of supply.</b>	<b>Students</b>
Beginning of the term	134 (43.6)
Anytime	173 (56.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>307 (100)</b>

**NB: Number parentheses are Percentages**

It was found that slightly more than half of the students, 173 (56.4%), indicated that they received these materials anytime while 134 (43.6%) stated that they received the materials in the beginning of the term. The students' responses were supported by that of the class teachers where slightly more than half of the teachers 91 (55.5%), noted that students received curriculum support materials in the beginning of the term whereas the rest of the class teachers 73 (44.5%) indicated that the materials were received any time. The findings suggested that many students in public secondary schools in Makueni received curriculum support materials anytime depending on when they were procured since their purchase was determined by time when funds were disbursed by the government. The findings of the current agree to the views by Kinanu (2012) that suggested the delay in disbursement Free Secondary Education Tuition funds led to delay in purchasing curriculum support materials.

The findings also concurred with those results of a study by Cohen, Raudenbush and Ball (2003) when noted that even with the availability of educational resources in schools, they were of no use if those resources were not provided at the right time and allocated to teachers and students for effective teaching and learning. The findings also supported that of a study by Heilig and Williams (2010) which cautioned that student achievement could not only be improved solely by the availability of the resources but rather how they were used and when they were disbursed for use. The results were also in congruence with that of Pansiri (2008) who while focusing on schools in Botswana found that the performance of the students was enhanced when principals made textbooks available in time for the start of the school year and provided teacher guides. Hence, the timely dispatch of curriculum support materials was crucial in quality implementation of the curriculum.

In order to establish the relationship between prompt disbursement of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund and the quality of curriculum implementation in public secondary schools in Makueni County, a Chi-square test was conducted. The chi-square results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis between promptness of disbursement of FSETF and Quality of Curriculum Implementation**

Disbursement of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund	Student Performance			$\chi^2$	p-value
	Not Improved	Improved	Total		
	n; (%)	n; (%)	n; (%)		
<b>Time of Supply</b> Beginning of each term Time not defined (n=164)	0; 0.00 28; 21.90	36; 100.0 100; 78.10	36; 22.0 128; 78.0	9.496a	0.002
<b>Time of Issuing textbooks to students</b> Beginning of the term Anytime Total (n=164)	5; 6.80 24; 26.40	68; 93.20 67; 73.60	73; 44.5 91; 55.5	10.608	0.001

The chi-square computations as presented in Table 2 showed that the percentage of class teachers whose students had attained improved performance was higher where schools received the Free Secondary Education Tuition in the beginning of each term at 100.0% compared to when the time for receiving the tuition was undefined at 78.10%. The study established that the time when FSET fund was received by schools from the government was significantly associated with the quality of curriculum implementation among public schools in Makueni County given ( $\chi^2= 9.496$ ,  $p= 0.002$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This finding implied that the quality of curriculum implementation as exemplified by student performance was adversely affected by late disbursements of the FSETF to schools. These findings were in line with that of Kinanu (2012) who found that delay in disbursing FSETF might lead to delay in purchasing the curriculum support materials and that the lack of textbooks and other curriculum support materials due to these delays affected the quality of curriculum implementation.

On the other hand, the time of the year when students were issued with curriculum support materials purchased through FSET was also tabulated with the quality of curriculum implementation among the schools under research. It was found that the percentage of class teachers who observed improved performance among their students was higher at 93.20% where the students received the

curriculum support materials in the beginning of the term compared to when these materials were received by the students any time at 73.60%. The chi square results revealed that there was a significant association between the time of the year when students received curriculum support materials purchased through FSET and the quality of curriculum implementation among public secondary schools in Makueni County as shown by ( $\chi^2= 10.608, p= 0.001, p<0.05$ ). These findings implied that when curriculum support materials were dispatched to students on time, they were able to attain improved performance which depicted the quality of curriculum implementation in these schools.

Based on these results the null hypothesis;

*H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between disbursement of FSETF and the quality of curriculum implementation in public secondary schools in Makueni County*

was rejected, which meant that is a significant relationship between disbursement of FSETF and the quality of curriculum implementation

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

In view of the results presented and discussed in the preceding section, it was concluded that there were delays in the disbursement of Free Secondary Education Tuition Fund to the public secondary schools in Makueni County and hence a delay in issuance of curriculum support materials to students. The study also concluded that that the quality of curriculum implementation was significantly enhanced when the schools the FSET fund was disbursed on time; in the beginning of each term.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study findings, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education should endeavour to aim at prompt disbursement of FSET fund on time. The study also recommended that immediately after receiving the FSETF, the school principals must also try to issue the materials within the shortest time possible.



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