INFLUENCE OF FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION POLICY ON PUPIL PARTICIPATION BY GENDER IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN RONGO SUB COUNTY, KENYA

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN PLANNING AND ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Countries world over have endeavored to achieve gender equality in education given that it is central in propelling national growth and development. Kenyan Government, in its efforts to attain gender parity and increased access in 2003 implemented the Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy which narrowed gender gap nationally; public primary school Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) in 2010 was 119.8% (119.2% girls; 120.4% boys) with a disparity of 1.2%. However, Rongo lags behind with a GER of 105% (95.4% girls; 114.6%) in the same year which is a wide disparity of 19.2%. This raises the study's concern on why this big disparity exists. The purpose of this study was therefore to establish the influence of FPE policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub County, Kenya. Objectives of the study were to: determine influence of FPE policy on; access by gender; survival rates by gender; graduation rates by gender. A conceptual framework was adopted for this study. Ex Post- facto and descriptive survey research designs were used. The study population comprised of 42 schools, 1 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (SQASO), 966 and 624 Class 7 and 8 pupils respectively. A simply random sampling was used to select 20 schools, all 20 head teachers as the main informant and 40 class teachers of class seven and class eight of the selected schools were purposively used. Saturated sampling technique was used to select SQASO and Glen Israel formula was used to select 320 pupils from 1590 pupils of class seven and eight. Questionnaire, interview schedules, document analysis guide and focus group discussion were used to collect data. The instruments were validated by experts in the Department of Education, reliability established through test-re-test method using 4(9.5%) of schools and data obtained correlated using Pearson r at an alpha level 0.05. The coefficients of head teachers' and class teachers' questionnaires were 0.82 and 0.79 respectively since they were higher than 0.70, the instruments were considered to be reliable. Quantitative data were collected via closed items of the questionnaires and document analysis guide and analyzed using cohort analysis and descriptive statistics. Qualitative data from interviews and open ended items of the questionnaires were collected, transcribed and analyzed using emergent themes. The study revealed that, FPE had a positive influence on access, survival and graduation rates though girls still lagged behind boys. There were cases of class congestion, overcrowding, shortage of teachers and transfers of girls to private schools. The study concluded that though girl's enrolment in public primary was low compared to boys it was notice that a good number had transferred to private primary schools thus need for reformulation of FPE policy to enhance access, survival and graduation of girls. The study suggested further research on causes of continued expansion of private primary schools even with introduction of FPE policy in Kenya. The findings are significant to government in improving FPE Policy to enhance gender parity.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The United Nations Declaration on human rights 1948, the 1990 Jomtien Declaration and Kenya children's rights Act 2001, all state that every child is entitled to basic rights including education (Republic of Kenya, 2005). In contrast to the universal policies adopted by African governments, some Latin American countries have employed targeted demand side policies aimed at boosting enrollments. Barrera-Osorio (2007) found that the targeted fee reductions in Bogotá, Colombia significantly increased primary school enrollment equally for both genders. Schultz (2004) estimates that the Progresa program of conditional cash transfers in Mexico led to an increase in the attendance of those who were targeted, with larger increases for girls.From these studies it is clear fee reduction led to increase in enrolment for both gender in Colombia and notably for girls in Mexico. The reasons for access to education differ from one pupil to another and from one region to another as no single factor can explain the phenomenon (Rumberger & Lim, 2008). And this was the motivation behind this study to establish the influence of free primary education policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, in Kenya. To find why in Rongo even with the introduction of FPE Policy girls enrolment still remains low as compared to boys in public primary schools.

The study by Holmes (2003) found out that overall; females receive less education than males, and they tend to dropout, or are withdrawn earlier for both economic and social-cultural reasons. The study furthers argues that the opportunity cost of sending female

children to school in rural areas, where girls are married quite early, is high because benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household. Similarly (Kasente, & Kakuru, 2003) explain how early marriages influence children's dropping out of school especially as regards the girl child as it is perceived by parents that marrying off the girl child is an escape route from poverty. In Holmes (2003) , the study investigated the causes of students drop out at primary level in Pakistan by use of only questionnaires, and questionnaires measures always require validation to confirm the findings, the current study uses four instruments questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion and document analysis guide.These were used to supplement,validate and ascertain the responses in the questionnaires. Mwiria and Wamahiu (1995) assert thatdocument analysis is the best method of accessing the valid information since it cannot create, waver orwithhold information required by the researcherof data collections that ensure validation and triangulation of the findings.

Studies have found a positive relation between education or human capital and economic growth (Stevens &Weale, 2004). Empirical literatureshave also quantified private and social rates of return for different levels of education in many countries (Psacharopoulos, Patrinos&McMahon, 2004).These studies highlight the point that the social rate of return from primary education is higher than that from secondary and tertiary levels of education. The public and merit good aspects of education, especially in primary education, call for government intervention. The launching of Free Primary Education (FPE) Programme in January 2003 was a land mark policy decision by a new government of Kenya. Seen by donors as a key step towards school fee abolition, it opened the door to new level of donor support, and it has subsequently taken the bulk of Government and

donor development funding for education. The World Bank gave a grant of Ksh 3.7 billion in June 2003, while British government through DFID had earlier given a grant of Ksh 1.6 billion to boost the Programme (Aduda, 2003). It is with this concern of the social rates of returns in primary education and heavy public investment behind the motivation of this study on the influence of FPE Policy on pupil participation by gender at primary level in Rongo Sub-county, Kenya.

There are several compelling benefits associated with girls' education, which include reduction of child and maternal mortality, improvement of child nutrition and health, lower fertility rates, enhancement of women's domestic role and their political participation, improvement of economic productivity and growth and protection of girls from HIV/AIDS, abuse and protection (World Bank, 2002). Girl-child's education yields some of the highest returns of all development investments yielding both private and social benefits that accrue in individual families and societies (World Bank, 2002). Girls' education and promotion of gender equity in education are vital to development and policies that do not address gender disparities miss content in development opportunities. As education is central in propelling country's economic development. This is the motivation behind this study in analyzing the participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county after noticing the gender disparity trends in the initial data at the Sub-county.

As depicted in Table 1.1 it is clear that Rongo Sub-county is faced with problem of attaining gender equity. Following the 2011 KCPE result, it is notable that gender target in schools is almost met nationally, of the 776,214 candidates 51.6% were boys and 48.4% were girls. "That is very close "said the Education minister (Hon. Mutula Kilonzo)

when releasing results (Hudson, 2011). Even with this increase, Rongo lagged behind the same year with more boys sitting examination 58.6% boys against 41.4% girls. This clearly shows that while the gender disparity is at 3.2% nationally, the Rongo Sub-county has 17.2% gender disparity (Rongo Sub-county Statistics Office, 2012).Despite this progress, data from the World Bank show that girls still accounted for approximately 55 percent of the out of school children in 2006. As a result, the Millennium Development Goal target of gender equality in primary school by 2005 was not achieved and there is uncertainty surrounding the possibility of achieving this target by 2015 (Aduda, 2003).

Table 1.1

Public Primary School Completion rates by Gender of Rongo Sub-county, Nyanza Province and Kenya from the period 2000-2010

Year	Rongo		Nyanza		Kenya	
	Boys	**Girls**	Boys	**Girls**	Boys	**Girls**
2000	57.6	**44.5**	63.8	**58.2**	63.1	**57.4**
2001	68.9	**53.8**	72.2	**59.4**	66.6	**57.9**
2002	67.7	**52.6**	73.6	**59.3**	72.4	**58.6**
2003	78.3	**50.8**	80.2	**63.7**	74.7	**65.3**
2004	78.6	**50.7**	88.0	**69.8**	77.3	**67.2**
2005	78.5	**51.7**	89.3	**69.7**	79.6	**70.9**
2006	79.8	**57.9**	86.7	**68.0**	80.4	**76.3**
2007	80.6	**62.0**	89.9	**72.0**	83.7	**79.3**
2008	81.7	**66.6**	89.4	**72.1**	84.3	**82.9**
2009	81.3	**61.7**	88.6	**69.5**	86.0	**80.7**
2010	83.9	**64.1**	89.3	**70.2**	84.7	**81.8**

Source: Ministry of Education, Statistics Section 2000-2010

Public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, between 2003 and 2010, the girls have lagged behind in primary school participation. From Table 1.2 it is clear in 2003, the enrolment of girls was 23,640 (44.3%) against boys' enrolment of 29,710 (55.7%). In 2005, girls' enrolment was 25,110 (43.6%) against boys' enrolment of 32,450 (56.4%). In 2010, the girls' enrolment trend for girls in Rongo Sub-county remained the same, girls 25,056 (42.0%) against boys' enrolment of 34,559(58.0%).

Despite the introduction of FPE Policy in January 2003, the NER of female pupils in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county is intermittently low as shown in Table 1.2; therefore, the need to conduct a study on influence of Free Primary Education Policy on participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The introduction of FPE Policy by government had some objectives to accomplish that is; reverse the declining enrolment, to enhance access, survival and graduation rates, to implement sector policy goals i.e. EFA, MDGs which Kenya is a signatory, relieve parents from burden of cost of primary education, streamline and rationalize utilization of educational resources in schools, implement provision of child rights Act 2001 and to improve learning. From the initial data at Rongo Sub-county even after the introduction of FPE policy it shows girls participation is still wanting even when the population census of 2009 shows as per Table 1.3 that girls of school going age are more than boys and this is what prompted the study on the influence of FPE policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, Kenya.

Table 1.2

Enrolments of Pupils by Gender in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county from the period 2000-2010

Year	Gender	No. of pupils	Percentage (%)
2000	**F**	**15,416**	**39.9**
	M	23,240	60.1
2001	**F**	**17,113**	**40.4**
	M	25,211	59.6
2002	**F**	**19,840**	**41.2**
	M	28,340	58.8
2003	**F**	**23,640**	**44.3**
	M	29,710	55.7
2004	**F**	**21,210**	**44.9**
	M	26,075	55.1
2005	**F**	**25,110**	**43.6**
	M	32,450	56.4
2006	**F**	**21,274**	**40.2**
	M	31,640	59.8
2007	**F**	**20,601**	**38.7**
	M	32,582	61.3
2008	**F**	**21,903**	**42.5**
	M	29,613	57.5
2009	**F**	**21,556**	**44.0**
	M	27,391	56.0
2010	**F**	**25,056**	**42.0**
	M	34,559	58.0

Source: DEO's office, Rongo Sub-county, 2011

Table 1.3

Population of Primary School going age of pupils by Gender in Sub-counties in Migori County as per 2009 population census

Sub-county	Deviation%	Percentage (%) M	Percentage (%) F
Migori	-2	51.0	49.0
Awendo	-4.8	52.4	47.6
Rongo	**12.6**	**43.7**	**56.3**
Uriri	-1.8	50.9	49.1
Kuria East	-1.2	50.6	49.4
Kuria West	-2.4	51.2	48.8

Source: 2010Migori County Statistics Department

Table 1.3 shows the population of primary school going age as per 2009 population census by gender. From the above information Rongo Sub-county seems to have a higher percentage of female of primary school going age yet this is not reflected in enrolment at primary level in Table 1.2 with Rongo having a positive deviation of 12.6% compared to other sub-counties in Migori. According to data from Rongo Sub-county education office there were more boys than girls in 2003-2010 in Rongo Sub-county compared to other Sub-counties in Migori County. This is despite the fact that the population census of 2009 showed that there were more girls of primary school age than boys in the Sub-county as shown in Table 1.3. This is the motivation behind the choice of Rongo Sub-county as the area of study in analyzing the influence of FPE on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in the sub-county.

It is assumed that by introducing FPE Policy, parents in public primary schools would be relieved of the burden of paying large sums of school levies. Likewise, the FPE Policy fund would be used by head teachers to purchase teaching/learning materials among others, required by the teachers and pupils in the teaching/learning process. This will consequently enable the girl-child gain access, learn continuously without interruptions and finally complete the eight year primary cycle. However, initial data indicates that the girl participation in Rongo Sub-county is still wanting. Therefore this study seeks to establish the influence of FPE policy on access, survival and graduation rates by gender of pupils in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to Sifuna (2005) enrolments in public primary schools increased significantly resulting in a 17 percent increase; representing a Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of 99% (102% girls; 97% boys) in the year 2004 , while Nyanza Province had a GER of 125.3% (122.8% girls; 127.8% boys) which was immediately after the introduction of FPE policy. But according to data from Rongo Sub-county education office in 2003 recorded GER of 106% (89% girls; 123% boys) which is below both the national and province GER with a wide gender disparity of 34% when the population census of 2009 showed there were 39,121 (56.7%) girls of primary school age compared to 30,366 (43.7%) boys in Rongo Sub-county. Given the importance of education to the country and commitment of funds to FPE programme, children not enrolled in school are a drawback to the country move towards Education For All (EFA) by 2015. The study thus investigates the influence of FPE Policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of Free Primary Education Policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

i) Determine the influence of FPE policy on access by gender to education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

ii) Determine the influence of FPE Policy on survival rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

iii) Determine the influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

i) What is the influence FPE Policy on access by gender to education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county?

ii) What is the influence of FPE Policy on survival rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county?

iii) What is the influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study may provide information on the factors influencing gender participation, in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The information could help the ministry of

education, Head teachers, Quality Assurance Officers and Educational planners in designing strategies for improving efficiency of schools especially to eliminate gender disparities. It may also contribute to a body of knowledge in the area of educational planning and economics of education by shading more light on the concept of internal efficiency and factors influencing it, in public primary schools in a developing country like Kenya.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was confined to public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The study analyzed cohort data for the period 1995-2002 and 2003-2010 by gender. The study was focused on influence of free primary education policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher was not able to use all the schools in the country due to financial constraints and time but this was covered by taking a representative fraction of schools in Rongo sub-county, thus the findings can be applied in other Sub-counties in Kenya.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

i) Educational stakeholders value education of girl-child and boy-child education to the society.

ii) Head teachers are responsible in ensuring that gender balance in public primary schools.

iii) FPE policy has made public primary education more accessible to both gender.

iv) Parents of children in public primary schools understand the importance of education.

v) Data for Nyanza Province was used to reflect regional education statistics despite current county system.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this study was adopted from IPAR (1997) which is an input-output model propagated by Psacharopoulos (1985). The model states that there is a relationship between the inputs and outputs into the education system. Inputs include school facilities, teachers, time, and curriculum among others to facilitate access, retention and completion of education cycle. The output is the school leavers. For this study, the input was FPE Policy while the output was pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in relation to their access, survival and graduation rates.

It is expected that pupils who enroll in the primary level of education will remain in school to learn and complete primary school level of education. When pupils drop out of school prematurely there are underlying causes that need to be identified in order to be addressed. The factors are interrelated in the sense that each category of factors can influence a pupil to make a decision either drop out of school completely or complete his or her primary education. Figure 1 shows this relationship.

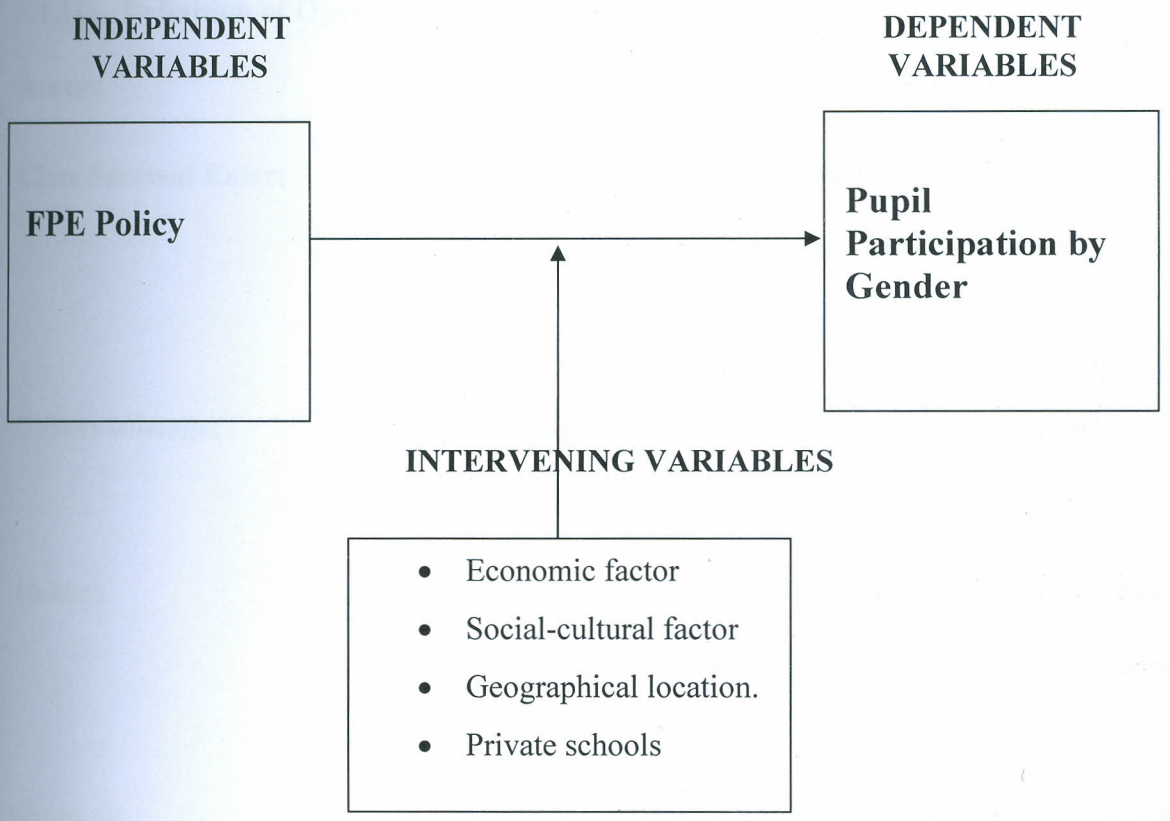

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the influence of FPE Policy on pupil Participation by gender in Education

1.11 Definition of Operational Terms

Access: Enrolment of pupils in Public Primary Schools

Class Survival Rates: Is the number of pupils who move into subsequent class the subsequent year divided by the total enrolment in the previous class in the previous year.

Cohort wastage: Are those who start class one but cannot be accounted for in the last class.

Cohort: A group of pupil who enrolls in the first class at the same time and remains together until they complete the education cycle.

Dropout: Is a pupil who withdraws from school before the completion of the school cycle.

Efficiency: Is the relationship between inputs and outputs in an education system.

Flow of pupils: Refers to a simplified presentation of movement of pupils from entry point to exit point.

Gender Disparity: The unequal participation between male and female pupils in a population.

Grade: A class or a standard within a school.

Graduates: Pupils who successfully complete the final class in their final year in school.

Graduation Rates: The number of pupils who successfully sit for the Kenya certificate of primary education examination divided by the total number enrolled in class one of the same cohort.

Influence: Is the change brought by free primary education policy in relation to access, survival and graduation in public primary schools.

Internal Efficiency: The outcomes within the education system and training system e.g. enrolment, completion rate and average duration of study.

Participation: Is the Access, Survival and Graduation of pupils in public primary schools.

Policy: This is the intervention measure put by government to increase access, survival and graduation rates through fee subsidy in public primary schools.

Repeaters: Are those pupils who stay longer than normal period in the same class.

Survivors: Pupils who move into the subsequent class in subsequent year.

Survival Rate: Is the number of pupils in the subsequent class divided by the initial enrolment in the previous class.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This section reviewed related literature on gender participation in public primary education under the following subheadings; Influence of Free Primary Education Policy in relation to access to public primary schools by gender; Influence of Free Primary Policy on Survival rates by gender to public primary schools and Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on Graduation rates by Gender in public primary schools.

2.2 Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on Access by Gender to Public Primary Schools

Considerable amount of research has been done on the issue of school wastage in developed countries. In Asia, private costs other than tuition are still impediments for many pupils to continue schooling (Tsang & Kidchanapanish, 1992; Tsang, 2004). In Latin America, access to primary education supported by heavy public investment does not seem to lead to smooth promotion in school (Bedi & Marshall, 2002; Marshall, 2003). The reasons for access differ from one pupil to another and from one region to another as no single factor can explain the phenomenon (Rumberger & Lim, 2008). This was the motivation behind this study to establish the influence of free primary education policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, in Kenya. To find why in Rongo Sub-county even with the introduction of FPE Policy girls enrolment still remains low as compared to boys in public primary schools.

There is a potential conflict between access and equity of education as long as the available resources vary tremendously among families (Tsang, 2002). For instance, by analyzing the private resources of primary education in Thailand, (Tsang &Kidchanapanish, 1992) found that the private financing of education contributes significantly to inequalities in resources for pupils from different family backgrounds or regions, leading to inequality and inequity in access and the quality of education. Another study on China also found disparities in direct private costs on primary and primary education between urban and rural areas (Chen, 1992 quoted in Tsang, 1994). Furthermore, some studies reveal that the unit costs of schooling at a given quality for marginalized populations can be quite different from those for non-marginalized groups in SSA (Tsang, 1994; Kitaev, 2001).The two studies were not based on fee reduction but was based on a comparative study between urban and rural areas, the marginalized population and the non-marginalized population as oppose to the current study that seek to establish influence of FPE policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

In Africa, the issue of pupil: class ratio has attracted much concern with the emergence of FPE. For example Oumer (2008), study in Ethiopia on FPE showed that primary education measured in GER was less than 30% before 1995/1196 which then double from 1997/1998 and 2005/2006. The physical facilities equally expand with the help of government funding, donor and community contributions which led to low dropouts and greater transition rate to secondary level. Oumer (2008), collected data from policy documents, education statistics, annual abstracts and reports were assessed. The study relied on administering closed and open ended survey questionnaires at schools for head

teachers to obtain in-depth information regarding effects of free schooling. While Ouma (2008), only used questionnaires, the current study used same questionnaires with same questions for both the head teachers and class teachers as questionnaires measures always requires validation and thus same research questions allowed for comparability of common measures across research population for triangulation, a further interview to both head teacher and SQASO for corroboration which was considered to have more strength in confirming the findings of the study as oppose to Oumer's (2008).

The World Bank estimates that the number of out of school children declined from 100 million to 75 million between 1999 and 2006. Despite this progress, data from the World Bank show that girls still accounted for approximately 55 percent of the out of school children in 2006. As a result, the Millennium Development Goal target of gender equality in primary school by 2005 was not achieved and there is uncertainty surrounding the possibility of achieving this target by 2015. Education is a central factor in social, cultural, political and economic development of any nation (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985). It is for this reason that one of Kenya's guiding philosophies of education is the concern that every Kenyan has an inalienable right, no matter his or her socio-economic status to basic education (Kibwana & Wambua, 2010).Equal access of girls and boys to primary education has been identified by the international community as a key measure of progress towards gender equality. The Kenya government being a signatory to major international conventions and agreement on Human rights and gender equality is expected to pursue policies that lead to the realization of this goal. These conventions include Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All class of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Elimination of the worst

Class of Child labour, the Conventions of the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Plat class of Action, the Dakar World Conference on Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Kenya has therefore committed herself to pursuing gender equality in all spheres of development and putting in place measures to redress the existing inequalities (Republic of Kenya, 2007a). Following the importance of education to a country and analysis of initial data from Rongo Sub-county doesn't show a trend towards attainment of gender equality in the sub-county thus the motivation behind this study to establish the influence of FPE policy on access by gender in public primary schools.

In Kenya, several government documents refer to the government's commitments to meeting the EFA and MDGs targets (Republic of Kenya, 2002, Republic, 2005). In particular the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 by the then MOEST underscores those costs of primary education are the main reasons for the low transition rate to primary education. The report MOEST, 2004 proposes that the government should address transition rates. In response, the government developed the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) 2005-2010, which clearly states their intention to integrate primary education as part of basic education (Republic of Kenya, 2005a).This policy framework became the backbone for implementing FPE Policy. In order to implement the policy, it was essential for the government to get the support of the Kenyan people. In elections, education has almost always become a strategy for candidates to gain popular votes (Sifuna, 2005, Oketch & Rolleston, 2007).

Prior studies have shown that FPE interventions have the potential to boost enrollment, however they generally do not examine primary school completion or achievement. Deininiger (2003) and Nishimura et al. (2005) found that the Ugandan FPE program lead to an increase in enrollment with a larger effect for girls, while Grogan (2010) found that the Uganda program decreased the probability of delayed school entry, especially for girls. Deininiger (2003), Nishimura (2005) and Grogan (2010) studies have shown that FPE program led to increase in enrolment in the primary schools in Uganda, these studies shows that girls were favoured and their school entry was increased. This is not, in agreement with the Rongo Sub-county initial data after the introduction of FPE policy according to MOE, statistics section, 2000-2010, public primary schools' GER for Rongo Sub County fluctuated between 102.5% in 2003 to 106.0% in 2011 and not going beyond 106.1% against GER of 124.6% in 2004 and131.2% in 2005 for Nyanza while the national GER was 107.1% and 115.0% during the same period respectively; Nyanza's GER for girls which was 120.7% is still higher than the girls' national GER of 114.9% (MOE, statistics section, 2005). These figures suggest that even after FPE Policy, Rongo Sub County experience low enrolments for the girl-child which are both below the provincial and the national figures. Even as Nyanza Province remain to have high enrolment of girls than the national GER. This is the motivation behind the study to investigate the influence of FPE policy on pupil access by gender in Rongo Sub-county as other studies have shown FPE has always led to increase in girl's access to education in other countries which is not reflected in Rongo Sub-county which too is benefiting from FPE policy since 2003.

2.3 Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on the Survival Rates by Gender in Public Primary Schools

In rural Ghana, for example, grade repetition and teacher unavailability as well as the attractive pull of seasonal economic activities have been identified as key factors contributing to dropout (Ananga, 2010). In other countries, such as Malawi where free primary education policy was introduced in 1994, it is reported that the enrollment dropped after some years due to the low quality of education and private costs other than tuition (Avenstrup, 2004). Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) established that inadequate incomes among low class families hindered the provision of tuition fee, school books and other learning materials necessary to ensure good academic performance and continuation in school. In the case of Rongo Sub-county the poverty level stands at 43.02% (Republic of Kenya, 2004) and this means that less than half of the Sub-county's population is in some state of poverty. Since more than half live above poverty level, it expected that most parents will not find it difficult to take their children to public primary schools (low opportunity cost). It is noted that from economic point of view, the survival in school decision is taken based on the private price of schooling and also the opportunity cost of attending school (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985).

Further, UNESCO (1990), established that low class income families had low aspirations for their children than upper class families in India. The causes were identified as poverty and child employment in agriculture, unfavorable attitudes to female education; lack of religious education in schools; migration of parents; unsatisfactory methods of teaching; lack of means of communication and due to failure in school. In Botswana, Kann and Mugabe (1998) established that girls participation in primary schooling were higher than

boys. This was because boys spent their time away from school herding cattle. However, pregnancy was found to be the main factor leading to dropout and repetition among girls. In the past, universal primary education policies had been introduced soon after independence in many African countries, such as Kenya and Nigeria. The introduction of a cost sharing policy in the 1980s and the subsequent reduced public expenditures into the education sector, however, have resulted in a detrimental decline in the enrollment rate (Obasi, 2000). This historical experience suggests that the cost and benefit of primary education is stringent whereby any additional cost and decreased benefit can inevitably lead to decreased enrollment (Mukudi, 2004). Survival in this sense contributes to the decline of educational quality in classrooms as it exacerbates crowding in primary schools, increases the burden placed on teachers, and reduces the quality of education provided for all pupils (Marshall, 2003). Since most of developing countries vary in their educational policies, studies from them cannot be applied generally to all developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Thus need for a study to investigate the influence of FPE policy on pupil survival by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

In Kenya, Lucas and Mbiti (2010) found that free primary education increased the number of pupils completing primary school, led to increased socio-economic stratification, and resulted in modest achievement declines. However, they did not examine differential effects by gender which this study seeks to determine. Lucas and Mbiti use correlation method of data analysis in their study. A correlation coefficient is an index and therefore any two variables will always show relationship even when it is common knowledge that they are not related. The current study uses cohort analysis in

the analysis of data that gives high accuracy as it keeps groups completely independent from one another, it gives clear distinction which enhance easy identification of issues in question and effectiveness in dealing with them, it enables effectiveness in comparing data between cohorts and more so facilitates speedy decision making.

Sang (2007) while focusing on factors that influence repetition and dropout in secondary schools in Nandi District found out that 80.7% of the students repeated due to failure in examination while 51.7% due to lack of fees. Examination is yet another factor that affects efficiency of education in Kenya. Nyamesa (2008) in his study confirmed that lack of mastery of content and poor performance was largely occasioned by absenteeism and lack of exam fees. The importance attached to certificate regardless of what is stipulated in the curriculum has made most schools to concentrate on examination and ignore what they think will not be examined. Barasa (2003) found out that due to pressure of ranking of schools, students were made to repeat by parents and teachers in order to improve their grades even when there is no statistical evidence that repetition improves students grades. Nyae (2012) confirmed that 95% of the Head teachers, 80% of class teachers and 30.38% of the pupils were alive to the fact that poor academic performance influence repetition. The above mentioned studies look at survival at secondary level of education as oppose to the current study that is concern with survival of pupils at the primary level of education as a result of introduction of FPE policy in Kenya.

A recent Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa ascertained that fewer than 25% of grade 6 pupils reached a desirable level of reading in four countries and only 10% in six others

(UNESCO, 2009a). In a report by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) it was indicated that teachers' inadequate coverage of the syllabus contributed to poor performance in KCPE. As a result of this candidates could not tackle questions that required higher thinking abilities (Otieno, 2009). To make decision on who repeats, a research by Owiye (2005) asserts that 50.7% of such decisions were made by parents while the pupils made 29.3% and Head teachers 20%, parents and teachers were reported to base their decision on the academic performance of the pupil. The above studies concentrated on examination as a major determinant in establishing survival rate of pupils at the primary school level, they therefore did not establish how survival is influenced by FPE policy which this study is based on.

2.4 Influence of Free Primary Education on Graduation Rates by Gender in Public Primary Schools

The study by Holmes (2003) found out that overall; females receive less education than males, and they tend to dropout, or are withdrawn earlier for both economic and social-cultural reasons. The study furthers argues that the opportunity cost of sending female children to school in rural areas, where girls are married quite early, is high because benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household. Similarly (Kasente, & Kakuru, 2003) explain how early marriages influence children's dropping out of school especially as regards the girl child as it is perceived by parents that marrying off the girl child is an escape route from poverty. In Holmes (2003) , the study investigated the causes of students drop out at primary level in Pakistan by use of only questionnaires, and questionnaires measures always require validation to confirm the findings, the current study uses four instruments questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion and document analysis guide. These were used to supplement,

validate and ascertain the responses in the questionnaires. Mwiria and Wamahiu (1995) assert that document analysis is the best method of accessing the valid information since it cannot create, waver or withhold information required by the researcher of data collections that ensure validation and triangulation of the findings

A number of studies on school wastage have been undertaken in Kenya both at national and local levels. At national level, Republic of Kenya (1998) established that physical resources in schools, quality of teachers, availability of textbooks and other learning support materials were related to educational achievement. Sang (2007), while dealing with issues on factors influencing repetition and dropout in primary schools in Nandi Sub-county, he found that wastage in the class of repetition and dropout was influenced by failure in examination, inability to pay fees and early pregnancies among girls.

The quality of the head teachers was identified as an important factor on pupils' achievement in school by Psacharopoulos and Wood Hall (1985). Todaro (1992) identified high opportunity cost of labour to poor families as a limiting factor in school enrolment. If children are needed to work on the family farms and at the same time required to be at school, this creates conflict of interest. And if the child cannot work because he/she is at school, the family will suffer a loss of valuable subsistence output. Therefore, school attendance and performance are much lower for children of poor families than those from relatively higher income backgrounds (Todaro, 1992). Psacharopoulos and Wood hall (1985) revealed that class size had an effect on pupils' academic performance. Pupils in smaller classes acquire more learning relative to those in large classes. KNEC (2002) asserted that there are high school dropout rates and increased child labour as a result of the deadly HIV/AIDS scourage. The HIV/AIDS

scourage has greatly affected the education sector by reducing the enrolments and limiting completion rates. Locally in Kenya, study by Juma (2003), Vihiga, revealed that the HIV/AIDS incidences had led to many children being orphaned. There is no one to pay their fees, they eventually dropout. The reviewed studies were carried out before the introduction of FPE policy and therefore survival of pupil was pegged on the ability of their parents to pay school fees as oppose to the current study that analyses the full cycle of FPE policy on two cohorts.

A study by Abel (2008), Nandi North, revealed that parents and teachers continued to play a leading role in deciding whether pupils repeated or not. Other factors include lack of exam fees, absenteeism, teenage pregnancy, early marriages and lack of guidance and counseling services in schools. While a study by Nyawara (2007), Homabay Sub-county, found out that dropout was higher for boys than girls at lower primary as oppose to upper primary and that early pregnancies, early marriages, lack of interest in schooling and poverty in households contributed most to the problem of dropout. Girl's high dropout was experienced mostly in upper primary. Abel, 2008 and Nyawara, 2007 both used only questionnaires for the head teacher and interview schedule with the SQASO while the current study as opposed use two questionnaires for the head teachers and class teacher with same questions thus ensuring validation of the result and further interview of SQASO and focus group discussion which facilitates corroboration of the research findings through comparability.

The literature and studies reviewed above shows that there is a considerable level of internal efficiency in our schools. Pupils repeat and some dropout of school before completing a given education cycle. However, most of the reviewed literature addresses

factors affecting internal efficiency in public primary schools in parts of the country, we realize that the factors responsible for wastage vary with gender, geographical location, country and school, Gware (1994) and they do not then consider the full cycle of the FPE cohort as the current study. So there is need to carry out a study that can establish the factors influencing graduation rates by gender in public primary schools even with the introduction of FPE policy in Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, study area, study population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments of data collection, validity and reliability of instruments for data collection procedures and analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This research was conducted through a combination of an Ex-post facto and descriptive survey research designs. Ex-post-facto is a systematic inquiry where the researcher does not have direct control of the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred and cannot be changed (Borg & Gall, 1996). In this study, Ex-post facto research design allowed the researcher to get data for the 1995 and 2003 cohort which could not be manipulated since the enrolment and repetition data were already available at the time of data collection. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), the main aim of Ex-post facto research design is to determine reasons or causes for the current status of the phenomenon under study.

Descriptive survey research is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003). It involves obtaining information or data collection by getting responses from persons in a wide geographical area through questions and interview schedules in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions of a given study (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). In this study, descriptive survey research design allowed for data collection, use of frequencies, means and analysis of cohort from the data collected from the respondents.

3.3 Area of Study

This study was conducted in Rongo Sub County, is one of the Sub-counties in Migori County. It is bordered by Gucha South to the West, Awendo Sub-county to the North West and Ndhiwa Sub-county to the North East. The time zone in Rongo is Sunrise 06:21 and Sunset at 18:29. It is located at a Latitude of -0.7667^0 and a Longitude of 34.6000^0. It drives most of its livelihood from primary production sector activities, which includes small-scale agricultural farming, which involves food crop such as maize, beans, groundnuts and vegetables while main cash crop is sugarcane for industrial activities (Sony-Sugar factory). The poverty level stands at 43.02% (Republic of Kenya, 2004) and this means that less than half of the Sub-county's population is in some state of poverty. Since more than half live above poverty level, it expected that most parents will not find it difficult to take their children to public primary schools (low opportunity cost). However, we see the reverse especially on girl child; and this is why the researcher sought to establish the influence of FPE Policy on gender participation in education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub County. The Sub County population is 325, 211 according to 2009 census result (Economic Survey, 2012).

3.4 Study Population

The target population was 42 public primary schools established by 1995, where the 1995 cohort data could be found out of the 58 public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The study therefore considered 42 head teachers, 84 class teachers, 1 SQASO, 966 Class seven (7), 624 Class eight (8) in the 42 public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county (Rongo Sub-county Education office, 2011).

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A simply random sampling was used to select 20 schools from the 42 schools that were established by 1995. A simple random sample (SRS) of size n consists of n individuals from the population chosen in such a way that every set of n individuals has an equal chance to be the sample actually selected (Moore, David & McCabe, 2006). All the 20 head teachers as the unit of analysis and 40 class teachers of class seven and class eight of the selected schools were purposively used. Saturated sampling was used to select SQASO .Saturated sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure in which all members of a target population are selected because they are too few to make a sample out of them (Cohen, 2000).

Glen Israel formula was used to select 320 pupils from a total of 1,590 pupils of class seven and eight of the sampled schools. The Glen Israel formula 1992 used was applied as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \times (e)^2}$$

n -the sample size

N -the population size

e -the acceptable sampling error

* 95% confidence level

$$n = \frac{1590}{1 + 1590(0.05)^2}$$

$$= 319.598 \approx 320 \, pupils$$

Then proportionate random sampling was used to select 195 and 125 pupils from the pupils total sample size of 320 Class Seven and Class Eight respectively as shown on (Table 3) (Kothari, 2004). Proportionate random sampling involves dividing the

population in the accessible population into sub-groups and then taking a simple random sample in each sub-group (Kombo & Tromp, 2006), which represented at least 20.2% of the population. Gay (1992) asserted that at least 20% is a good representation when dealing with a small population.The sample frame gives the category of respondents used in the study, the sample size and the corresponding percentages (Table 3).

Table 3

Sample Frame

Category of Respondents	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Percent (%)
Head teachers	42	20	47.6
Class teachers	84	40	47.6
Class Seven Pupils	966	195	20.2
Class Eight Pupils	624	125	20.0
SQASO	1	1	100

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaires, interview, focus group discussions and document analysis guide were used to collect data. The questionnaires consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Two types of questionnaires were used namely head teacher's questionnaire (HTQ) and Class Teacher's Questionnaire (CTQ).

3.6.1 Head Teacher's Questionnaire (HTQ)

This questionnaire comprised of two sections; Section A required information about the background of the head teacher; Section B required specific information on access, survival rates and graduation rates by gender and head teacher's position on access,

survival rates and graduation rates by gender in public primary school. Rating scale ranged from "very high" to "very low" (5 = Very High, 4=High, 3= Moderate, 2=Low 1=Very Low). The HTQ was attached as Appendix A.

3.6.2 Class Teacher's Questionnaire (CTQ)

This questionnaire comprised of two sections; Section A required information about the background of the teacher; Section B required information on teacher's level of attitude on influence of FPE Policy on access to education, survival rates and graduation rates by gender in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub County. Rating scale ranged from "very high" to "very low" (5 = Very High, 4=High, 3= Moderate, 2=Low 1=Very Low).The CTQ was attached as Appendix B.

3.6.3 Pupils' Focus Group Discussion (PFGD)

The focus group discussion guides consisted of questions relating to access, survival and graduation rates of pupils in Public Primary Schools. The pupils of class seven and eight in the sample study discussed in groups of nine and seven respectively in each school. The PFGD for the class seven and eight were chosen because they are less time consuming than conducting numerous individual interviews and they facilitate the collection of a large amount of data from many respondents simultaneously (Beyea & Nicoll, 2000). This helped in gathering more information on the influence of FPE Policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The PFGD was attached as Appendix C.

3.6.4 Head teacher's Interview Schedule (HTIS)

The Head teacher in the study were interviewed by the researcher to obtain in depth information about the trend in enrolment, survival and graduation rates by gender before and after introduction of FPE Policy, and their ratings on the same. The researcher also explored from the head teacher the challenges faced by different gender in education. HTIS was attached as Appendix D.

3.6.5 SQASO's Interview Schedule (SQIS)

The SQASO was interviewed by the researcher to obtain in depth information about the trend in enrolment, survival and graduation rates by gender before and after the introduction of FPE Policy in the Sub-county, his perception on the same. The researcher also explored from the SQASO the challenges faced by the girl-child in primary education. SQIS was attached as Appendix E.

3.6.6 Document Analysis Guide (DAG)

The document analysis guide was used to get the enrolment and repeaters of the 1995 and 2003 cohort boys and girls in different classes which helped in calculation of survival, access and graduation rates. Document analysis such as class registers at school level and enrolment documents at the division level was also used to gather data for the study. These were used to supplement, validate and ascertain the responses in the questionnaires. Mwiria and Wamahiu (1995) assert that document analysis is the best method of accessing the valid information since it cannot create, waver or withhold information required by the researcher.The DAG was attached as Appendix F.

3.6.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity is the degree to which the empirical measures of several measures of concepts accurately measure the concepts. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) asserts that validity of an instrument is based on how an instrument fulfills the function it is supposed to performance. Face and content validity of instruments was determined by experts in the Department of Educational Management and Foundations, Maseno University. Face validity is the extent to which a test is subjectively viewed as covering the concept it purports to measure while Content validity is a non-statistical type of validity that involves "the systematic examination of the test content to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the behavior domain to be measured" (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

3.6.8 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability measures the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials (Orodho, 2004). Questionnaires were piloted in 4(9.5%) of the schools and exclusive of the sample study. The instruments were administered through test-retest method. Data obtained were correlated using Pearson r at an alpha level of 0.05.

The Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) formula used is:

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - \left(\sum x\right)\left(\sum y\right)}{\sqrt{\left[N\sum x^2 - \left(\sum x\right)^2\right]\left[N\sum y^2 - \left(\sum y\right)^2\right]}}$$

The Pearson r coefficient of head teachers' and class teachers' questionnaires obtained after calculation were 0.82 and 0.79 respectively. Since the coefficient were higher than 0.70 which is conventional acceptable reliability, the instruments were considered reliable.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Permission was sought through Maseno University Ethics Review Committee to allow for data collection. The researcher then proceeded to Sub-County Education Office (SCEO) for familiarization after which introduction to the public primary schools in the Sub-county was done before the actual date for data collection. Arrangements were made on how to administer the two types of questionnaires, namely Head teacher's questionnaires and Class teacher's questionnaires. Document analysis guide assisted the researcher in getting the enrolment, repeaters and drop outs for the 1995 and 2003 cohorts' male and female pupils from the schools and SCEO's office which were later used by the researcher in calculating their Actual Grade Survival Rates (AGSR) and Graduation Rates (GR). Arrangements were also made and dates set on when to interview and have focus group discussion with the respondent. These helped in obtaining in depth information about their views on the influence of FPE Policy on pupil participation by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The expression "basic ethical principles" refers to those general judgments that serve as a basic justification for the many particular ethical prescriptions and evaluations of human actions. Three basic principles, among those generally accepted in our cultural tradition, are particularly relevant to the ethics of research involving human subjects: the principles of respect of persons, beneficence and justice

Section A: Protection of Human Subject

The principle of respect for persons thus divides into two separate moral requirements: the requirement to acknowledge autonomy and the requirement to protect those with

diminished autonomy. As the study involved primary schools pupils, that is class seven (7) and class eight (8). The research treated them as autonomous person in that their opinions and choices were not influence in any way by refraining from obstructing their actions unless they are clearly detrimental. The participants were well informed of the purpose of the study and explanations of both benefits and demerits provided to ensure they were not denied the freedom to act on those considered judgments, or to withhold information necessary to make a considered judgment.

The principle of beneficence was considered in that, the researcher maximized the possible benefits and minimize the possible harm to the participants. This was done by ensuring that the information treated confidentially and only for the purpose of the study. Justice was in sampling, the study involve pupils participation by gender in public primary schools. To ensure fairness, proportionate random sampling was used to ensure equal opportunities for both girls and boys in focus group discussion.

Section B: Participants Consent and Data Processing

The researcher first grouped the participants in groups, and explained to study participants the purpose of the study in simple language that they could easily understand. In order to assess their comprehension of the study subject matter, a set of five basic questions was prepared and administered to the participants and discussed to see if they were conversant with the discussion. If they got the answers correctly, it showed they were conversant with the subject of research. A consent form was issued to class seven and eight in the selected schools, who presented the forms to their parents and guardians for signing and approval to participate. The pupils also signed the forms of assent to

allow them participate in the study. Being that the research was free and voluntary, even if the parent/guardian sign and the pupil did not vizaviz the pupil was exempted from the research. Even after signing the pupil could walk out freely without victimization.

Data was coded and bore no names of the participant to protect their identity. The raw data from the field was kept under lock and key where only the investigator could access. The processed data was stored in computer encrypted by password accessible to only the principle investigator. The information was then disseminated to the participants through the school administration channels so as to ensure feedback of the findings reached the study participants. At this point, benefits of the study was communicated and potentially implemented in an effort to maximize the benefits to the participants, other non-participating pupils and community at large.

3.9 Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative data based on closed-ended items in the questionnaires and document analysis guide based on enrolment, repeaters and drop outs were collected and analyzed using combination of descriptive statistics in the form of percentages, frequency counts and means; Cohort analysis to find out Actual Grade Survival Rates (AGSR) and Graduation Rates (GR) of the male and female pupils based on grade and cohort.

i) To calculate AGSR for male and female pupils based on grade to grade , the following formula by Chesswas (1969) was used:

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

ii) To calculate AGSR of the male and female pupils based on cohort, the following formula was used:

$$AGSR=\frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7}-R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{Nt^{k}}$$ where;

N=Total enrolment; k=First/Initial Class; t= Year; and R=Repeaters

AGSR are the net survivors (those moving to the next grade after deducing the total numbers of repeaters in the subsequent grade in the preceding year) divided by the total enrolment in the previous grade in the previous year. The AGSR is an important index, for it shows the degree of internal efficiency of an educational system, the problem area of each level and the appropriate measures to take in order to improve on the problem.

iii) The Graduation Rates (GR) of male and female pupils based on grade to grade was calculated using the formula:

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_{t+7}^{k+7}}$$

iv) To calculate GR based on 1995 and 2003 cohort male and female pupils, the following formula was used:

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_{t+7}^{k+7}}$$

G=Graduates in the grade shown and N=Total enrolment in the grade shown.

Qualitative data from interviews, open-ended items of the questionnaires and focus group discussions were organized into themes and sub-theme as they emerged from the content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents demographic characteristics of respondents in the study. The findings were presented according to the objectives of the study under the following themes:

a) Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on Access by gender to Education in Public Primary Schools.

b) Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on Survival rates by gender to Education in Public Primary Schools.

c) Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on Graduation rates by gender to Education in Public Primary Schools.

The returns for questionnaires was 100%

4.2 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

This section gives the characteristics of respondents in relation to gender, professional qualification and experience.

4.2.1 Head teachers

This is presented in form of a table and it gives the characteristics of head teachers in relation to gender, highest professional qualification and experience in leadership (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Demographic Characteristics as indicated by the Head teachers (n=20)

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	19	95.0
Female	1	5.0
Total	**20**	**100**
Highest Professional Qualification		
PhD	0	0
M.ED	0	0
B.Ed.	4	20
Diploma	6	30.0
PI	10	50.0
Total	**20**	**100**
Headship experience in current school		
Below 5 years	6	30.0
5-7 years	3	15.0
7-9 years	8	40.0
Over 9 years	3	15.0
Total	**20**	**100**

Key: PhD=Doctor of Philosophy, M.ED= Master of Education, B.ED=Bachelor of Education, P1= Primary Teacher Certificate.

Table 4.1 shows that 19(95.0%) of head teachers involved in the study were males while 1(5.0%) was a female. The findings in this table indicate that there is inadequacy of female role models who hold leadership positions in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county whom the girls can emulate to motivate them to participate in primary education. According to Gibson (2004), female teachers and other role models play a variety of important roles. He asserts that their presence particularly in rural areas has

been credited with making parents and girls perceive school as a safe environment and providing role models for young girls and hence encourage them to enrol and remain in school.

Concerning highest professional qualification for the head teachers, 4 (20.0%) of them holds degree in Bachelors of Education, while 6 (30.0%) holds Diploma in Education and 10 (50.0%) holds Primary teacher certificate in education. This indicates that most of the head teachers are well qualified to handle educational issues in relation to gender participation in education in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county. Qualification of head teachers in school management is another factor that could influence pupil's participation by gender because they are expected to come up with effective strategies to promote pupils participation by gender in education. Implementation of FPE Policy requires adequate skills especially for management. School administrators and teachers need various skills in order to cope with demands of the management and teaching tasks. Such skills can be attained through training and it is encouraging to note that most of the head teachers and class teachers had the recommended qualifications for teaching at primary school level. Robbins (2003) notes that the skills needed effective management can be grouped into three categories, namely technical skills, human skills and concept skills. Technical skills refer to those skills which enable the manager to use resources and scientific knowledge to apply techniques in order to accomplish the objectives of the organization. Human skills refer to the ability to work well with other people to achieve results through them. Conceptual skills on the other hand, refer to the cognitive capacity to perceive the organization in its totality and the relationship between parts thereof. These skills manifest themselves in education administrators being able to analyze and

diagnose relatively complicated situations whilst at the same time being able to visualize the inter relationships of various units of organizations (Robbins, 2003). Training of administrators is essential in enabling them to acquire these skills and thereby implement educational programmes competently.

Concerning the head teachers' years of experience in headship, 3(15.0%) had been in their current schools for less than five years, while 3 (15.0%) head teacher had been in their current schools for five to seven years, 8 (40.0%) head teachers had been in the current stations for seven to nine years and 6 (30.0%) had stayed for over nine years in their current stations. From the findings in Table 4.1, 70% of the head teachers had enough experience in leadership as they had served in their current schools for five years and above. This experience gained in other schools indicates that they were in a better position to give useful insights into better ways of promoting pupil participation by gender in education. Because of the experience, the head teachers can come up with programmes and strategies to help curb pupils drop outs from school. MOEST (2007) recommends that schools should create enabling environment and management structures and implement affirmative strategies to benefit pupil participation in education by gender.Therefore, the inadequacy of female role models in the sub-county may be one of the contributing factors to low enrolment of the girl-child compared to boy-child in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county.

4.2.2 Class teacher

Table 4.2

Demographic Characteristics as indicated by the Class teachers (n=40)

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	28	70.0
Female	12	30.0
Total	**40**	**100**
Highest Professional Qualification		
PhD	0	0
M.ED	0	0
B.Ed	3	7.5
Diploma	18	45.0
PI Certificate	19	47.5
Total	**40**	**100**

Table 4.2 shows that 28 (70.0%) of the class teachers involved in the study were males and only 12 (30.0%) were females. Mukundi (2004) asserts that additional factors that contribute to their enrolment in schools are the presence of female teachers, availability of proper features such as latrines, daycare facilities for younger siblings and water sources and flexibility of school calendar.

Table 4.2 shows that 3 (7.5%) of the class teachers involved in the study reported to hold degree in Bachelor of Education, 18 (45.0%) held Diploma in Education and 19 (47.5%) held Primary teacher certificate in Education. This implies that the teachers are well trained and have the necessary skills required in promoting pupil participation in education by gender in relation to their access, survival and graduation in public primary schools in the Sub-county. According to Robbins (2003), the technical, human and conceptual skills gained from training will enable the class teachers together with head teachers in proper implementation of educational programmes competently.

On the other hand, the experience gained by class teachers should make them understand the challenges facing female pupils better. Besides, their experience makes them better placed to give proper guidance to enhance retention of female pupils in school (MOEST, 2001).

4.3 Influence of FPE Policy on Access to Primary Education in Public Primary Schools by Gender

The research question responded to was: What is the influence of FPE policy on access of public primary education by gender in Rongo Sub-county?

To establish the influence of FPE policy on access, the parameters factored in were the cohort analysis of the 1995 cohort which did not benefit from the FPE fund at all and the 2003 cohort which benefited from the FPE fund, other factors more or less held constant.

4.3.1 Enrolment of the 1995 and the 2003 cohort pupils by gender

To address this research question, the study sought to establish enrolments of pupils by gender of the 1995 and 2003 cohorts Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.3

Enrolment of pupils by gender of the 1995 and 2003 cohorts

1995 Cohort				2003 Cohort			% increase by gender
Year	Class	Gender	Population	Year	Class	Population	
1995	**One**	**F**	**1320**	**2003**	**One**	**2115**	**60.2**
		M	2170			3715	71.0
1996	**Two**	**F**	**1290**	**2004**	**Two**	**1900**	**47.3**
		M	2080			3567	71.0
1997	**Three**	**F**	**1121**	**2005**	**Three**	**1849**	**64.9**
		M	1989			3510	76.0
1998	**Four**	**F**	**1094**	**2006**	**Four**	**1641**	**50.0**
		M	1947			3469	78.0
1999	**Five**	**F**	**1040**	**2007**	**Five**	**1583**	**52.0**
		M	1872			3313	77.0
2000	**Six**	**F**	**978**	**2008**	**Six**	**1339**	**37.0**
		M	1818			3268	80.0
2001	**Seven**	**F**	**940**	**2009**	**Seven**	**1226**	**30.4**
		M	1762			3095	76.0
2002	**Eight**	**F**	**813**	**2010**	**Eight**	**1186**	**45.9**
		M	1640			3000	83.0

The findings in Table 4.3 shows increase in enrolment of the 2003 female pupils cohort after the introduction of FPE policy as compared to the female pupils of the 1995 cohort before its introduction; the percentages were arrived at by calculating the percentage

increase between the two cohorts class by class between genders. There was an increase in enrolment by (795) 60.2% in class one, (610) 47.3% in class two, (728) 64.9% class three, (547) 50% class four, (543) 52% class five, (361) 37% class six, (286) 30.4% class seven, and (373) 45.9% class eight as compared to the female pupils of the 1995 cohort. This means that with the introduction of FPE policy parents were relieved of paying fees and therefore an increase in the number of female pupils who were able to access primary education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. However, the gender gap still remain wide as shown in table 4.3 even with increase in enrolment for the girls in Rongo Sub-county. The Economic Survey Report (2009) revealed that the national enrolment in public primary schools rose to 1.33 million in 2003 from the previous 1.18 million in the previous year recording a positive deviation of 12.7%.

Okongo (2010), studied Socio-economic Factors affecting Promotion of Primary education in Rongo Sub-county and revealed that parents find it difficult to educate a girl-child in public primary school due to overcrowding and poor performance thus many prefer private schools for their children and this may contribute to low enrolment in public primary schools. For low income families school levies such as school uniform, examination fees, may also result in drop outs thereby leading to low survival and eventually low enrolments in public primary schools. Mukudi (2004) on the other hand asserts that there are other factors which influence enrolment of girls in schools such as presence of female teachers, availability of proper features such as latrines, daycare facilities for younger siblings and water sources and flexibility of school calendar.

The finding also shows that despite the introduction of FPE policy there was decrease in enrolment of the female pupils as they move to upper classes. There is therefore consistency in decline in enrolment in the two cohorts representing the periods before and after the introduction of FPE policy as they move to upper classes. This decline in enrolment of female pupils from the two cohorts may be an indication that there are other factors other than fee that prevent female pupils from accessing primary school education in the upper classes in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. Graham (2002) studied Conflict and Crisis of Education in Developing World. He observed that in Zimbabwe, the enrolment rates in primary schools for girls have continued to decline. The study reveals that FPE had positive influence on access and thus led to increase in enrolment by gender after its introduction. The findings reveals that there were few female teachers in the leadership position in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county thus lack of role model for girls to enhance their access to public primary schools. The study further establish that FPE policy led to increase in enrolment but enrolment drops as pupils progress to upper classes even after the introduction of FPE policy.

4.3.2 Influence of FPE Policy on access of Public Primary School by gender as rated by the head teachers (n=20) and class teachers (n=40)

To further establish the influence of FPE Policy on access of by gender to education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, the researcher rated the views of the head teachers and class teachers (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Influence of FPE Policy on Access by gender to Education as rated by the Head teacher (n=20) and the Class teacher (n=40)

Influence of FPE Policy on Access	Mean Rating (MR)	
	Head teachers	Class teachers
a) FPE Policy has enabled many girls and boys to enroll in public primary schools.	4.11	2.32
b) FPE Policy has attracted many girls and boys who had dropped out of school to join public primary schools.	4.22	2.16
c) FPE Policy has strengthened re-entry policy of adolescent mothers back to public primary schools.	3.96	2.66
d) FPE Policy has attracted many parents to take their children to public primary schools.	3.96	2.11
e) FPE Policy has enabled many girls and boys affected by HIV/AIDS to enroll in public primary schools.	3.75	2.33
f) FPE Policy has made primary schools accessible to most parents which enabled them to enroll their sons and daughters to public primary schools.	3.44	2.67
g) FPE Policy has reduced gender disparity as enrolment of girls and boys in public primary schools is almost 1:1	3.22	2.86
h) FPE Policy has reduced socio-cultural factors hindering gender access to education in public primary schools.	3.54	2.98
Overall mean rating	**3.78**	**2.51**

Key: Classification mean rating:

1.0-1.9 VL, 2.0-2.9 L, 3.0-3.9 M, 4.0-4.9 H, and 5.0 VH

Table 4.4 gives the ratings of both the head teachers and the class teachers on the influence of FPE Policy had on access by gender to education in Public Primary Schools

in Rongo Sub-county. The view that FPE has enabled many girls and boys to enroll in Public primary schools rated highly at 4.11 by head teachers unlike the class teachers who rated it lowly at 2.32. Disparity in ratings may be based on the fact that head teachers' responses were factual unlike the class a teachers' rating which could have been individual views. The head teachers deal with new admissions, so they are in a better position to know the enrollment trend before and after the introduction of FPE Policy. Another reason on the disparity in the ratings of the head teachers and the class teachers may be attributed to the fact that head teachers look at the whole picture in the school while for the class teachers some of them may not have seen much differences in enrollment as the number of the new enrollees differ from class to class. The head teachers, rating can be justified in table 4.3 and 4.4 showing enrolment of the female and male pupils respectively of the 1995 and 2003 cohorts in different classes in the Sub-county which indicates increase in enrolment after the introduction of FPE Policy.

Head teachers were asked questions on access by gender to public primary education in the interview. On access 20% of head teachers reported that fewer girls were enrolled during the period of 1995-2002 as compared to the period between 2003 to 2010. Most of the head teachers 52.1% were of the view that there was slight improvement in enrolment of girls, 19.3% of them said there was no significant difference in enrolment and 8.6% said that there was high improvement. These head teachers who said that there was increase in enrolment attributed it to the fact that FPE Policy had relieved parents of the burden of paying fees. Most important to note were the 19.3% of head teachers saw no significant differences in enrolment. When asked to explain further the reason for this, they said that there were many newly established private schools in Rongo Sub-county

and due to overcrowding and shortage of teachers many parents moved their children to private schools which they consider to perform better than public primary schools and this is why they said there was no significant difference in enrolment in public primary schools.

The SQASO on this part had this to say on the influence of FPE Policy on access of the girl-child to Education in Public primary schools; "FPE Policy has enhanced enrolment of in Public Primary Schools and expansion of schools leading to slight increase in enrolment of the girl-child in the Public Primary Schools in the Sub-county."

He further added that in spite of the increase in enrolment, the Sub-county faced a number of challenges in its implementation which were enormous, and he had this to say:

> The rise in enrolment enhanced access causing overcrowding and shortage of teachers and drop-out in public primary schools which lacked staffing and negatively compromising the quality of education and curriculum delivery, delay in remittance of fund, inflation, lack of vehicles in the Sub-county to visit schools regularly as stipulated and inadequate infrastructure among others. There are more girls enrolled in the 43 Private Primary Schools than boys as per our Sub-county data, girls enrolled in private schools 12,923 (54.3%) and boys 10,892 (45.7%).

Kipkoech and Kyalo (2010) titled "Management Challenges facing implementation of Free Primary Education in Kenya" where the challenges cited by the head teachers and the educational officers were upsurge in enrolment which stressed the availability of resources in schools such as teachers and teaching materials, delay in disbursement of funds to schools by government and lack of transport for educational officers to frequently visit the schools in the Sub-county among others. These challenges faced are likely to lead to poor quality in knowledge delivery, lack of motivation of staff and pupils hence repetition and dropouts.

The view that FPE Policy has made public primary school affordable to most parents enabling them to enroll their daughters and sons in public primary schools was highly rated at 3.44 by the head teachers but lowly rated by the class teachers at 2.67. This high rating by the head teachers on FPE Policy as a factor that had greatly influenced access in terms of affordability is because they are in a better position to know the trend both in enrolment and admissions since they have the facts, whereas the low rating by class teachers may be attributed to the fact that they are affected directly with congestion and overcrowding thus negative view of FPE and low rating. The head teachers' findings suggest that more parents take their daughters to public primary schools as compared to the period before the introduction of FPE Policy. During the Pupil Focus Group Discussion, one pupil had this to say:

> Free Primary Education has helped my parents to pay examination fees and buy us school uniform with ease. My father told me that he could not have enrolled me in class one in 2003 if at all there was no Free Primary Education because of the burden of my brothers and sister he had at that time in class eight and both needed school levies and school uniform.

While the head teachers were of the view that FPE Policy has attracted many girls who had dropped out of school to enroll back in public primary schools giving it a rating of 4.22, the class teachers disagreed with this as their rating was low at 2.16. The high rating of the head teachers may be based on the argument that they have records of the female pupils they admit in the schools and their background unlike class teachers who deals with individual classes and therefore have facts on the actual number of girls in their classes. This high rating of the head teachers is consistent with Mwansa (2004) in their study which revealed that a significant amount of new enrollees in Zambia were actually pupils who had previously left school due to inability to pay school fees, especially in

rural areas. Another study in Kenya found out that 7.5% of new enrollees in primary schools were children who had dropped out of school due to fees (UNESCO, 2007).

Another factor of FPE policy as having greatly influenced access of the girl-child to education was that FPE Policy has attracted many parents to take their children to public primary schools which was rated 3.96 by head teachers but lowly rated by the class teachers at 2.11. The high rating for the head teachers may be attributed to the fact that the head teachers as the main policy implementer may be more positive to FPE Policy than the class teachers who are usually demotivated by poor learning environment. The head teachers are therefore in a better position to know the trends that have taken place during the years of study. This may imply that FPE Policy has increased access of the girl-child to primary education in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county since a number of parents are able to afford the fees which have been subsidized. The findings are in line with the findings of Lewis and Lockheed (2006) who found out that school scholarship programmes offer girls financing and encouragement to stay in school. They compensate families for the direct and indirect costs of education. Scholarships have been highly effective in countries, notably Bangladesh, where scholarships increased girls' enrollment to twice that of the national average (Lewis & Lockheed, 2006).

With the introduction of FPE Policy, the adolescent mothers still have a chance of re-joining public primary schools as rated by the head teachers at 3.96, unlike the class teachers who rated it at only 2.66. This discrepancy in the mean rating may be due to the fact that matter is sensitive and majority of class teachers may not have such details with them unlike the head teachers who interact with parents during admissions. The head teachers also interact with other colleagues in leadership positions and are aware of the

existence of such cases. During the interview schedule, one of the female head teachers had this to say on her view of re-entry policy: "I support it to the fullest. Girls who are in public primary schools are vulnerable to sexual abuse and rape. In fact my best female pupil in class eight is an adolescent mother who has benefited from the re-entry policy."

The SQASO also supported the re-entry policy and had this to say: "Re-entry policy gives girls a second chance to pursue their education, some of who may turn out to be the future leaders of this nation."

But the female head teacher disagreed with the policy and made these sentiments: "I don't support re-entry policy of adolescent mothers unless a different conditional approach is introduced. These girls have abused this opportunity by getting pregnant a second time until I do not accept them back in the school ones they fall pregnant".

A male head teacher said he was not against it as he went ahead to admit an adolescent female pupil from a different school in class seven but went through a lot of pressure from parents who claimed that he was showing other pupils that giving birth while in school is not bad. He had the opinion that there is need to sensitize all the stakeholders and more so parents and pupils on this issue so that they are made aware of the policy. This is in consistent with Omondi (2008) in Mwansa et.al (2011) in her study of Re-entry Policy after giving birth in Zambia where she observed that head teachers from public primary schools in Nairobi were usually under pressure from parents to avoid girls who become pregnant because it is likely to send signals to other girls that is alright to birth while at school.

FPE Policy having influence on socio-cultural hindering girl-child access to education in Public Primary Schools was rated at 3.54 by head teachers and 2.98 by class teachers. These average ratings by both the head teachers and the class teachers may be attributed to the fact that, other than tuition fees which the FPE policy caters for there are other factors that affect access of the girl-child to education in public primary schools. On hindrances faced by the girl-child to access primary education, the head teachers said that a number of parents do not value education of the girl-child and would be better placed to carry out the house chores as one of them gave this sentiments: "The community around this area has not valued education of the girl-child for a long time as most of the new enrollees in class one are mostly boys. The number of the girls just started going up with this free primary education policy".

Another one concurred and had this to say:

> Thanks to the introduction of Free Primary Education Policy. It has reduced the notion which some of the parents had on the education of the girl-child that boys should be given first priority where resources are scarce. With the government giving something little for the pupils' fees at least the parents can struggle to pay the rest, more so for girls whose education is at stake.

During pupil focus group discussion a female pupil said that some parents consider the education of the girl as a second thought as boys are given first priority and gave these sentiment: "My father said that had it not been for the Free Primary Education, he could have only managed to take my brother to primary school since he had scored higher marks than me at KCPE."

This finding is in consistent with World Bank (1995) who says that, on average, girls in Africa score low marks in examination which limits their enrolment at primary schools. UNESCO (2009) also observed that many factors which inhibits access to education are

gender-based characterized by wealth, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, rural habitation and child labour, health barriers are important factors regarding attendance and access to primary education. Girls disproportionately are affected by early marriages, pregnancy, cultural norms and practices especially poverty. Similarly, FAWE (2007) asserts that socio-eco-cultural gender-biases against women and girls still pervade many Africa societies and often used to justify early marriages, gender-based violence, female circumcision and low placed on girls' education.

FPE Policy has reduced gender disparity in primary education as enrolment for boys to girls is almost 1:1 was the averagely rated by head teachers at 3.22 while class teachers rated it at only 2.86. since the ratings for both the head teachers and the class teachers are not high, it may be attributed to the fact that gender disparity still exists in public primary education despite concerted efforts to eliminate it from the education system in order to improve access to public primary education. FPE led to increase in enrolment and thus overcrowding in public primary schools, which was seen as the result of drop out and low enrolment for girls in public primary school. One of the pupils had this say: "Girls are normally few during enrolment in class one because most of them due to overcrowding lack essential facilities like toilets and even counseling that prompt their drop out.
She went on to say: "In my primary school, out of seventy three candidates in Class Eight, girls are only twenty two and out of the twenty two girls only 13 of us joined classed one in 2003. Some getting married while the rest I don't know where they went to".

The statement by this pupil shows that a number of girls who repeated or who have transferred joined their school, thus the increase of girls from thirteen to twenty two. It

also indicates that a number of girls in 2003 cohort dropped out along the way for various reasons including marriage.

Henry (2010) did an immediate assessment in rural Kenya on whether FPE policy enabled the poor to gain access to primary education. He observed that gender disparity in primary education in Kenya originates from primary schools due overstraining of learning resources. He further puts it that FPE Policy is not likely to narrow the persistent gender gap in access to primary education unless the government addresses gender gaps in relation to availing adequate learning resources in primary schools. His study reveals that although FPE Policy led to the overall increase in enrolment in primary schools, it did little to close the persistent gap in access to education due to overcrowding and shortage of teachers leading to drop outs.

The view that FPE Policy had enabled many girls affected by HIV/AIDS to enroll in public primary schools was rated by head teachers at 3.75 and the class teachers at 2.33. this rating by the head teachers may be that the head teachers have first-hand inclasson admission but may not know about the emerging issues of pupils in the course of their stay in school whereas the high rating of the class teachers may imply that they interact with them more often as their class teachers and may be privy to their personal problems that often affect their day to day learning. This finding means that pupils affected by HIV/AIDS have higher chances of accessing public primary education with the introduction of FPE Policy. UNESCO, (2005) observed that enrolment of HIV/AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children increased in Kenya and Lesotho following the removal of fees in public primary schools. HIV infections and AIDS cases are highest in Nyanza Province (21.1%) compared to other provinces in Kenya with Sub-counties in

Nyanza leading in AIDS prevalence. Rongo Sub-county's prevalence rate is 19.5% whereas all other Sub-counties outside Nyanza have a prevalence rate of below 15% (Kenya HIV/AIDS Data Booklet, 2005). This means that FPE Policy has therefore made a positive influence on children affected by HIV/AIDS in relation to their access to schooling. Asked whether FPE Policy was helpful to them as head teachers, all of them agreed giving such reasons as: It has led to re-admission of pupils who had dropped out due to school levies.

When asked what could be done to enhance girl-child access to primary education, they gave various reasons. 45% of the head teachers suggested that girls public primary schools should be introduced to allow girls to learn independently as this would curb away some of the challenges they meet at school such as intimidation from boys, boy/girl relationship among others that discourage them from coming to school. They were also of the view that role models should be called upon to talk to the girls regularly; teachers to take responsibility of encouraging the girls; sensitization to be done to the community on the importance of girl-child education to them and above all, guidance and counseling to be enforced in all school by qualified Guidance and Counseling teachers posted to schools by the Teachers Service Commission. 55% of the head teachers felt that government should provide school uniforms and increase number of teachers and streams in public primary schools to eliminate overcrowding in classes for quality learning.

In many Africa nations, rural rates of enrollment lag behind the very modest national rates, particularly for rural girls, whose rate of enrollment is less than 15% in several countries (UNESCO, 2005). To offset inequality in access, governments in developing

countries are, to varying degrees, making efforts to increase school enrollment and equity. Building new schools to increase ease of access in remote areas is one intervention used in developing countries (Filmer, 2004). Other efforts include improving infrastructure and safety and eliminating school fees. Similarly, the objectives of FPE Policy were to improve access, reduce wastages such as dropouts thereby enhancing completion rates of pupils (Republic of Kenya, 2003).

On the other hand the findings in Table 4.3 shows increase in enrolment of male pupils after the introduction of FPE in 2003 compared to 1995 cohorts. However, from Table 4.3 it is clear that there is decrease in enrolment even for boy child as they move to upper classes even with free primary education. This means that access of both boys and girls to primary education declines as they move to higher classes. UNESCO (2005) found out that as pupils annually progress to the next class, access deteriorates. Upper primary enrolment rates are well below those for lower primary education. Worldwide, UNESCO (2005) estimates that nearly one in four children at lower primary level do not go to school, and one in two children do not attend upper primary school level. On regional level, enrolment ratios for lower primary school versus upper school reveal similar trends. For instance in West Asia, the ratio goes from 69% to 40%, while in East Asia, it drops from 90% to 48% as children move from lower to upper primary school levels. In Africa, lower primary school enrolment is 85%, while upper primary enrolment drops to 70%. While the decline in enrolment as both boys and girls progressed to higher level of education before the introduction of FPE policy can be attributed to inability of parents to pay school fees, the decline in enrolment after the introduction of FPE policy means that there are other factors other than school fees. This could confirm what the SQASO said

that FPE policy led to increase in enrolment in public primary schools causing overcrowding and shortage of teachers and drop out in public primary schools which lack staffing and negatively compromising the quality of education and curriculum delivery. It is notable from the research that FPE policy had positive influence on access and thus led to class congestion, shortage of staff leading to transfer of girls to private primary schools. And that the number of girls enrolled in private schools was higher than boys. This showed that many girls than boys transferred to private schools after the introduction of FPE policy in the sub-county.Therefore the quality of education at public primary schools may have deteriorated because of the increased enrollment in public primary schools which led to girls transferring to private schools.

4.4 Influence of FPE Policy on the Survival rates by gender in Public Primary Schools

The research question responded to was: What is the influence of FPE Policy on the survival rates by gender in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county?

4.4.1 Cohort Analysis on the Survival Rates of pupils by gender based on grade

To address the research question, the study established the survivors of the 1995 and 2003 pupils' cohort from grade to grade i.e. Class Seven to Eight as indicated in Figure 4.1 in the form of flow chart.

Year	CLASSES								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Graduates
1995	1320								
1996		1290 *112							
1997			1121 *58						
1998				1094 *123					
1999					1040 *128				
2000						978 *141			
2001							940 *113		
2002								813 *96	**810**
2003	2115								
2004		1900 *18							
2005			1849 *87						
2006				1641 *53					
2007					1583 *163				
2008						1339 *141			
2009							1226 *132		
2010								1186 *152	**1183**

* Repeaters

Figure 4.1: A Flow Chart showing the flow of the 1995 and 2003 cohorts' female pupils

Year	CLASSES								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Graduates
1995	2170								
1996		2080 *16							
1997			1989 *11						
1998				1947 *9					
1999					1872 *6				
2000						1818 *9			
2001							1762 *7		
2002								1640 *12	**1638**
2003	3715								
2004		3567 *42							
2005			3510 *0						
2006				3469 *3					
2007					3313 *0				
2008						3268 *4			
2009							3095 *5		
2010								3000 *0	**2999**

* Repeaters

Figure 4.2: A Flow Chart showing the flow of the 1995 and 2003cohort male pupils

Figure 4.2 gives the enrolments for the 1995 and 2003 cohorts and the figures asterisk are the repeaters the 1995 and 2003 cohorts got in the successive grades when they moved. (They are not part of the cohort survivors and are therefore subtracted from the grade enrolments to get real survivors).

Figure 4.2 shows decrease in the number of female pupil as they move to successive grades up to the final grade both before and after the introduction of FPE Policy. Overall there was decline in enrollment as pupils moved to successive grades up to the final grade. For the 1995 and 2003 cohort female pupils, enrolment was highest at class one of 1320 and 2115 and reduced subsequently to 813 and 1186 at Class Eight representing a decrease of 38.3% and 43.9% for the 1995 and 2003 cohorts respectively. For 1995 cohort, this may mean that pupils repeat due to reasons like low grades in end year examinations, drop outs due to teenage pregnancies, early marriages, inability to pay school fees and social pressure emanating from home. UNICEF (2002) argues that household barriers such as family resources level, poverty and level of education of parents are a contributing factor. These possible drop outs from the school system greatly affect internal efficiency.

To calculate AGSR of 1995 and 2003 cohort female and male pupils based on grade, following formula by Chesswas (1969) was used:

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

N=Total enrolment

k=First/Initial Class, Class or Grade and k+1=second Class after the initial Class, Class/Grade, for instance, in the 1995 cohort k are the Class one female and male pupils

in 1995 whereas k+1 are the Class Two pupils of 1996. T=Year 1 of study, t+1=Year 2 of study and t+2=Year 3 of study, for example, for the 2003 cohort t is 2004 and t+1 is 2005.

R=Repeaters, for instance in the above formula the repeaters (R) are in their 2nd class (k+1) in Year 3 of study (t+1).

For instance, Class One to Two survival rates in 1995 and 1996 is calculated by subtracting the repeaters in Class Two from the actual enrolment in the same grade and dividing the result by the previous enrolment in class one and finally multiplying by 100% to get the survival rate in percentage as shown.

AGSR for female pupils;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\left(\frac{1290-112}{1320}\right)X100\%=89.2\%$$

AGSR for male pupils;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\left(\frac{2080-16}{2170}\right)X100\%=95.1\%$$

AGSR between 1995 and 1996 for girls was 89.1% and boys 95.1% which went down to 82.4% for girls and boys maintained at95.1% in 1996 and 1997 respectively. This reflects decrease in the survival rates before the introduction of FPE Policy. In 2001 and 2002, the AGSR for class seven and eight marginally went down to 76.5%for girls representing

a decrease of 5.9% compared to boys which went down to 92.4% representing a decrease of 2.7%. Similarly, class one to two survival in 2003 and 2004 was calculated as follows:

AGSR for female pupils;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\left(\frac{1900-18}{2115}\right)X100\%=89\%$$

AGSR for male pupils;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+1}^{k+1}-R_{t+2}^{k+1}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\left(\frac{3567-42}{3715}\right)X100\%=94.9\%$$

AGSR between 2003 and 2004 was 89% for girls and 94.9% for boys, while that of class two and three 2004 and 2005 was 92.7% for girls and 98.4% for boys. This represents an increase of 3.7% for girls and an increase of 3.5% for boys. But there was drop by girls to 76.2% and boys to96.9% respectively in class seven and eight in 2009 and 2010 representing a decrease of 16.5% and 1.5% from 2004 and 2005.

Table 4.5

AGSR of the 1995 and 2003 Cohort of female pupils based on Grade.

Grade	Years	AGSR in %	Years	AGSR in %
Class 1 & 2	1995-1996	**89.2**	2003-2004	**90.0**
Class 2 & 3	1996-1997	**82.4**	2004-2005	**92.7**
Class 3 & 4	1997-1998	**86.6**	2005-2006	**85.9**
Class 4 & 5	1998-1999	**82.2**	2006-2007	**86.5**
Class 5 & 6	1999-2000	**81.7**	2007-2008	**75.6**
Class 6 & 7	2000-2001	**84.6**	2008-2009	**81.7**
Class 7 & 8	2001-2002	**76.5**	2009-2010	**76.2**
Mean AGSR	1995-2002	**83.3**	2003-2010	**84.1**

Table 4.6

AGSR of the 1995 and 2003 Cohort of male pupils based on Grade.

Grade	Years	AGSR in %	Years	AGSR in %
Class 1 & 2	1995-1996	95.1	2003-2004	**95.7**
Class 2 & 3	1996-1997	95.1	2004-2005	**98.4**
Class 3 & 4	1997-1998	97.5	2005-2006	**98.7**
Class 4 & 5	1998-1999	95.8	2006-2007	**95.5**
Class 5 & 6	1999-2000	96.6	2007-2008	**98.6**
Class 6 & 7	2000-2001	96.5	2008-2009	**94.6**
Class 7 & 8	2001-2002	92.4	2009-2010	**96.9**
Mean AGSR	1995-2002	95.5	2003-2010	**96.9**

The findings give fluctuating trends in class to class survival rates of the girl-child and boy-child before and after the introduction of FPE Policy, with a mean AGSR of 83.3% and 84.1% for girls and 95.5% and 96.9% in the 1995 and 2003 cohort respectively. The researcher argues that although the class to class survival rates of the girl-child is relatively high, a number of cohort female pupils disappear on the way as others pupils join in the middle class keeping their rate of survival from class to class almost constant and ranging between 75 and 89 percent. It also reveals that most of the female and male pupils who manage to join primary schools survive throughout the full course which according to the researcher is not true as the number of those female pupils who drop out or transfer to other schools accumulates over the years thereby ending up with a significantly big number of wastages. During interviews with head teachers they said after the introduction of FPE Policy many girls were enrolled but later transferred to private primary schools due to what was seen as overcrowding and poor performance of public primary schools by parents. The drop outs and transfers were mentioned by the head teachers during interviews. Therefore the researcher further established the Actual Grade Survival Rates (AGSR) of the 1995 and 2003 female cohort pupils at Class Eight as this would give the actual survivors of the two cohorts under study. The findings revealed that there was minimal increase in the mean AGSR after the introduction of FPE Policy in both gender, with girls still lagging behind by a margin of 12.8%. This is attributed to transfer of girls to private schools in the sub-county due to overcrowding thus lowering their survival rates in the public primary schools.

4.4.2 AGSR of the 1995 and 2003 Cohort by Gender at Class Eight

This is calculated by dividing the Class Eight pupils minus repeaters in that particular class by the Class one pupils' enrolment for that particular cohort. For the 1995 cohort, the survival was calculated as shown below:

$$\text{AGSR}= \frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7} - R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

N=Total enrolment

k=Enrolment in Class one, k+1=Enrolment in Class two, for instance, in the 1995 cohort k are the Class one pupils in 1995 whereas k+1 are the Class Two pupils of 1996. T=Year 1 of study, t+1=Year 2 of study and t+2=Year 3 of study..... and t+7=Year 8 of study.

R=Repeaters, for instance in the above information repeaters (R) are in class eight and t+8= Year 9 of study.

Therefore, AGSR for the 1995 cohort at Class Eight was calculated as shown:

AGSR for the 1995 cohort at class eight for girls;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7} - R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{813-96}{1320} X100\% = 54.3\%$$

AGSR for the 1995 cohort at class eight for boys;

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7} - R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

$$\text{AGSR}=\frac{1640-12}{2170} X100\% = 75\%$$

Similarly, AGSR for the 2003 pupils at Class Eight was calculated as is indicated:

AGSR for the 2003 female pupils;

$$AGSR=\frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7}-R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

$$AGSR=\frac{1186-152}{2115}X100\% \quad =48.9\%$$

AGSR for the 2003 male pupils;

$$AGSR=\frac{N_{t+7}^{k+7}-R_{t+8}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

$$AGSR=\frac{3000-0}{3715}X100\%=80.8\%$$

Table 4.7

The 1995 and 2003 Cohort female pupils Actual Grade Survival Rates (AGSR) at Class Eight

Years	Class One	Class Eight	AGSR in %
1995-2002	1320	813	54.3
2003-2010	2115	1186	48.9

Table 4.8

The 1995 and 2003 Cohort male pupils Actual Grade Survival Rates (AGSR) at Class Eight

Years	Class One	Class Eight	AGSR in %
1995-2002	2170	1640	75.0
2003-2010	3715	3000	80.8

The findings in Table 4.7 show that the 1995 and 2003 cohort female pupils who survived up to class eight were 813 and 1186 girls representing AGSR at Class Eight of 54.3% and 48.9% respectively. These findings give a decline in the survival rates of the 1995 and 2003 cohort female pupils by 5.4%, meaning that FPE Policy did not have a positive influence on the survival rates of the girl-child in the Sub-county. While Table 4.8 shows that 1995 and 2003 cohort male pupils who survived up to class eight were 1640 and 3000 boys representing AGSR at Class Eight of 75% and 80.8% respectively.

4.4.3 Influence of FPE Policy on the Survival rates by gender as rated by the Head Teachers (n=20) and Class Teachers (n=40)

To further establish the influence of FPE Policy on the survival rates by gender in public primary schools in the Sub-county, the researcher rated the views of the head teachers and the class teachers (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

Influence of FPE Policy on the survival rates by gender rated by the Head teachers (n=20) and the Class Teachers (n=40) Mean Rating

Influence of FPE Policy on Survival Rates	Mean Ratings (MR)	
	Head teachers	Class teacher
a) FPE Policy has improved attendance for both boys and girls in public primary schools	4.22	2.33
b) FPE Policy has reduced challenges faced by pupils in public primary schools	2.89	2.84
c) FPE Policy has enhanced pupils' learning with minimal interruptions in public primary schools.	3.62	2.68
d) FPE Policy has reduced repetition rate of both gender in public primary schools	3.62	3.42
e) FPE Policy has reduced social pressures from home such as pregnancies, early marriages, educational costs etc. hence continuous learning	3.52	2.79
f) FPE Policy has enabled most parents to enroll their children to successive grades without interruptions.	3.22	3.10
g) FPE Policy has reduced drop outs of both girls and boys in public primary schools	3.26	3.11
Average mean rating	3.47	2.90

Table 4.9 gives the ratings of head teachers and the class teachers on the influence of FPE Policy on the survival rates by gender in Public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. This statement that FPE Policy had improved attendance of girls and boys in public primary schools was highly rated at 4.22 by the head teachers but lowly rated by the class teachers at 2.33. The low rating of the class teachers may be due to the fact that there

could be many irregularities in girls and boys attending classes as evidenced from the class registers despite the introduction of FPE Policy. The high rating by the head teachers may have been mere assumption on the part played by FPE Policy. Hidden costs of the girl-child education include sanitary towels, and transport among others. Maruko (2011) observed that girls stay out of schools for a number of days monthly due to sanitary pads and as such affirmative action had been taken to provide girls with sanitary towels to keep them in school. During the focus group discussion the female pupils most of them agreed that they attend school most of the days in the week. Asked what could at times prevent them from coming to school daily, they mentioned cases like monthly periods and one courageous female pupil had this to say: "Mwalimu I normally have heavy bleedings and for the second and third day I avoid coming to school to skip that embarrassment from my colleagues and more so my male counter parts."

The views of the pupils agree with the findings in Tables 4.8and 4.9since despite the introduction of FPE Policy, the survival rate of the girl-child of the 2003 cohort went down to 48.9% from 54.3% of the 1995 cohort representing 5.4% decline as compared to boys who increased from 75% to 80.8% of the 1995 cohort representing 5.8% increase.

Head teachers rated FPE Policy at 3.26 as a factor that had positively affected the survival rates of the girl-child in terms of reducing dropouts, but the class teachers gave it a rating of 3.11. Another reason as to why the head teachers may have a higher rating than class teachers is because he looks at the school dropouts in totality which to them may be a drop in the ocean, whereas to the class teachers one or two dropouts in a class may look significant in terms of the class ratio. However, the head teachers alluded to the fact that dropouts of female pupils still existed though at a reduced scale due to other

factors affecting the girl-child other than school fees. A number of the head teachers gave peer influence, unwanted pregnancies and early marriages as some of the reasons that led to the dropouts of the girls in their schools and one of them had this to say:

> "Fees may just be a cover up to the reasons for dropouts of the girls but the major challenges that affect the girl-child is peer pressure that in most cases leads to early marriages and unwanted pregnancies"

Another head teacher supported early marriages as a factor that leads to dropouts by saying this: "Two of female pupils in class seven dropped out after eloping with men in third term. One of the girls had fallen pregnant while the other had records of poor performance in class."

FPE Policy having enhanced pupils' learning with minimal interruptions was rated at 3.62 by the head teachers and 2.68 by class teachers. The discrepancy in the ratings of the head teachers and the class teachers may be argued from the basis that the head teachers are not in a better position to know the various interruptions affecting pupils in their day to day operations in the school. This is unlike the class teachers who mark the pupils' registers, enter their classes on daily basis and interact with them more often enabling them to know the challenges affecting them both at home and in school. During the focus discussions with pupils, they agreed that FPE Policy had enhanced promotion of girls from one class to the other as there was less interruption such as going home to look for fees leading to lack to continuity in learning. One of them had this to say: "FPE Policy has motivated my parent to struggle and get the remaining amount of money and this allows me to come to school regularly."

Another male pupil concurred by saying this:

> Free Primary Education has helped many parents buy school uniforms with less difficulties and this makes most of us to be in school and concentrate unlike without FPE Policy where most of us would keep on going home for examination fees as was the case with my elder sister in 2000 when I was in class four. In fact she dropped out of school at class eight in 2002.

According to the Ministry of Education, EMIS unit (2003) Nyanza Province recorded the highest dropouts of female pupils in primary schools of 39% against the national which was 26.9%. According to Barasa (2003), drop outs are considered as a waste because each school cycle is taken as an entity which should be attended in totality if the pupil is to reach some level of competency.

The head teachers rated FPE Policy to have reduced social pressures such as pregnancies, early marriages, educational costs among others at 3.52, whereas the class teachers gave it a rating of 2.79. this implies that the head teachers viewed FPE Policy as having positively affected the survival rates of the girl-child because the girls' education is minimally interrupted and therefore they spend most of their time in school leaving them with little chances of falling as prey to social pressures such as early marriages and pregnancies. One of the head teachers had this to say:

> To some extent FPE Policy has helped the school in quelling social pressures that was a big problem in the past as most of the female pupils do not go home frequently to look for fees which is an added risk to their survival.

UNICEF (2002) asserts that failure of pupils to survive throughout the full course of primary education is as a result of inability by parents to pay fees mainly, and social pressures such as pregnancy, poverty and house chores. Since FPE Policy has made the girl-child's education to be minimally interrupted and spends most of the time in school,

there are little chances of the girl-child falling as a prey to social pressures such as early marriage and pregnancies.

The view FPE Policy has reduced challenges faced by pupils in Public Primary Schools got almost equal rating from both the head teachers 2.89 and class teachers 2.84. The ratings may have been low for both respondents due to the fact that even though with FPE Policy, the major challenges to most parents is overcrowding in classes and shortage of teaching/learning resources that has led to search for quality education in private schools. However, this is in agreement with Okongo (2010) in his study of socio-economic factors affecting the promotion of primary education in Rongo Sub-county. His study revealed that parents with low income find it difficult to educate a child in public primary school due to other overcrowding and poor results in KCPE as compared to private primary schools which may result in drop outs thereby leading to low survival and eventually low enrolments in public primary schools due to transfers.

FPE Policy as a factor that has reduced repetition rates of both genders in Public Primary Schools was rated at 3.62 and 3.42 by the head teachers and class teachers respectively. Both rating of the head teachers and class teachers is almost at par which means that both the respondents agree that FPE Policy has reduced repetition in Public Primary schools. But this does not agree with the findings contained in figure 4.1 which gives equal number of repeaters for the two cohorts in 2000 and 2008. The findings also reveal that there were more repeaters for the same cohorts in 2000 and 2007. The female pupils said that some of the cases of repetitions by female pupils were brought about as a result of too many absenteeism from school due to being sent home to bring fees; so with the

introduction of FPE Policy there was some sort of relief to the parents and not many female pupils would have to keep on going home because of tuition fees.

Most of the girls said that repetition was not common and just a few girls repeated a class. Some of the reasons they gave for repeating included failing to attain the required grade , lack of money to pay other school levies, missing examinations because of going home to look for fees, pregnancies, parents' request for the daughters to repeat among others. A class eight pupil had to say this about repetition: "Only one girl has repeated so far since we joined class one because she did not performance well in examination."

Another pupil in class seven had this to say about those who had repeated since they joined class one:

> I cannot remember exactly the numbers that have repeated so far but what I know is that they are not many. One of the girls repeated at class four because she attained low marks and the parents requested the principal that she should repeat to improve her marks. Other girls have constantly been out of school due to fees and thereby missing lessons and even exams.

One pupil said this: "One of our colleague got pregnant in class seven and had to discontinue and only reported back this year in class seven when we were already in Class Eight."

According to Pontefract and Hardman (2005), drop outs and repetitions in Kenya public primary schools as a whole has significantly contributed to unequal access to education, decreased quality of education, but also manifested alarming aspect of wastage within the educational system (Republic of Kenya, 1998). It is also in agreement with Barasa (2003) who viewed repetition as wastage since repeaters consume more resources than otherwise

allocated to them per grade and reduce the intake capacity of the grades in which they repeat, thus preventing other pupils from getting access to primary education. Low educational attainment or inability of pupils to complete their primary education and primary education in developing world is the combined result of children who do not enroll, children who not progress and children who drop out (World Bank, 2004. Furthermore, developing nations face significant enrollment and completion disparities between segments of the population such as rich and poor, boys and girls, rural and urban dwellers and a combination of these factors (Birdsall et al, 2005). These findings give an increase in the survival rates of the 1995 and 2003 cohort male pupils by 5.8%, which means that FPE Policy have a positive influence on the survival rate of the boy-child in the Sub-county. Therefore FPE policy had a positive influence on survival rate of boy-child compared to girl-child in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county as many girls transferred to private schools as indicated by head teachers and SQASO.

4.5 Influence of FPE Policy on Graduation Rates by Gender

The research question responded to was: What is the influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county?

4.5.1Cohort Analysis on the Graduation Rates based on grade by gender

To address this research question, the study established graduation rates (GR) of the 2002 and 2010 candidates by gender; the researcher used the following formula by Chesswas (1969):

GR= $\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_{t+7}^{k+7}}$ where;

G=Graduates in the grade shown i.e k+7=8th class/grade and t+7=Year 8 of study.

N=Total enrolment in the grade shown i.e k=1st class/grade and t=Year 1 of a study.

The GR for the 2002 candidates was calculated as follows:

Girls;

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_{t+7}^{k+7}}$$

$$GR=\frac{810}{813}\times 100\% \quad =99.6\%$$

Boys

$$GR=\frac{1638}{1640}\times 100\% \quad =99.9\%$$

Whereas GR for the 2010 candidates was calculated as follows:

Girls;

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_{t+7}^{k+7}}$$

$$GR=\frac{1183}{1186}\times 100\% \quad =99.7\%$$

Boys;

$$GR=\frac{2999}{3000}\times 100\% \quad =100\%$$

The result show that the GR of the 2002 candidates was girls 99.8% , boys 100% while the GER of the 2010 candidates slightly went for girls 99.4% representing 0.4% decrease, while boys remained same at 100%.

4.5.2 Cohort Analysis on the Graduation Rates based on the 1995 and 2003 Cohort by gender

To find out the GR based on the 1995 and 2003 cohort by gender, the study looked into the flow of the pupils by gender as shown in Figure 4.2 and finally employed the following formula by Chesswas (1969):

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

The figures to calculate GR were derived from the flow chart in Figure 4.2

Year	CLASSES								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Graduates
1995	1320								
1996		1290							
1997			1121						
1998				1094					
1999					1040				
2000						978			
2001							940		
2002								813	**810**
2003	2115								
2004		1900							
2005			1849						
2006				1641					
2007					1583				
2008						1339			
2009							1226		
2010								1186	**1183**

Figure 4.3: A Flow Chart showing the flow of the 2002 *and 2010 female pupils*

Year	CLASSES								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Graduates
1995	2170								
1996		2080							
1997			1989						
1998				1947					
1999					1872				
2000						1818			
2001							1762		
2002								1640	**1638**
2003	3715								
2004		3567							
2005			3510						
2006				3469					
2007					3313				
2008						3268			
2009							3095		
2010								3000	**2999**

Figure 4.4: A Flow Chart showing the flow of the 2002 and 2010 male candidates

Figure 4.4 shows the flow of class one of the 1995 and 2003 cohort by gender as they enroll in successive grades and finally the graduates in 2002 and 2010 respectively in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. The figures represent a decline in the flow of pupils in the successive grades both before and after the introduction of FPE Policy.

GR for the 1995 Cohort pupils by gender

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

Girls;

$$=\frac{810}{1320}\times 100\% = 61.4\%$$

Boys;

$$=\frac{1638}{2170}\times 100\% = 75.5\%$$

GR for the 2003 Cohort by gender

$$GR=\frac{G_{t+7}^{k+7}}{N_t^k}$$

Girls;

$$=\frac{1183}{2115}\times 100\% = 55.9\%$$

Boys;

$$=\frac{2999}{3715}\times 100\% = 80.7\%$$

The above results were finally tabulated as shown in Tables 4.10 and 4.11.

Table 4.10

The 1995 and 2003 Cohort female pupils' enrolment and graduation rates

Years	Class One female pupils' enrolment	graduates	GR in %
1995-2002	1320	810	61.4
2003-2010	2115	1183	55.9

Table 4.11

The 1995 and 2003 Cohort male pupils' enrolment and graduation rates

Years	Class One male Pupils enrolment	Graduates	GR in %
1995-2002	2170	1638	75.5
2003-2010	3715	2999	80.9

Table 4.10 gives the population of the class one female of 1995 and 2003 cohort pupils and those who were able to finally graduate at the end of the eight years. The enrolment of class one female pupils in 1995 was1320and out of this, 810 graduated at class eight representing 61.4%. In 2003, the numbers of female pupils enrolled in class one were 2115 out of this 1183 female pupils graduated at class eight representing 55.9%. The findings show that fairly a significant number of the female cohort pupils who enrolled in class one in 1995 and 2003 did not graduate at class eight and these are represented by 38.6% and 44.1% respectively. Table 4.11 gives the population of the class one male of 1995 and 2003 and those who were able to finally graduate at the end of eight years. It is clear that the percentage of boys who graduated were more compared to girls.

The enrolment of class one male pupils in 1995 was 2170 out of this, 1638 graduated at class eight representing 75.5%. In 2003, the number of male pupils enrolled in class one were 3715 out of this 2999 male pupils graduated at class eight representing 80.7%. This

shows girls lagging behind at a wide gap of 14.1% and 24.8% respectively in 1995 and 2003 against the boys. It also shows that graduation rate of the girl-child after the introduction of FPE Policy was slightly lower than graduation rate of the girl-child before the introduction of FPE Policy in the Sub-county. This study in Rongo Sub-county does not agree with the Republic of Kenya (2000) which found out that completion rates at primary school level in Kenya are high with girls recording 97% completion rates implying low cumulative drop outs at this level of education and that high survival of pupils is assured for pupils who manage to enter the first grade of primary education. This may means that quite a big number of girls drop out before they do KCPE examination or it could mean that transfers to other schools is a common phenomenon with the establishment of Private schools in Sub-county as indicated by the head teachers during the interview. The study reveals that graduation rate of the girl-child after the introduction of FPE Policy was slightly lower than graduation rate of the girl-child before the introduction of FPE Policy in the Sub-county in public primary schools. This is may be because after introduction of FPE policy due to overcrowding and shortage of staff many girls transferred to private schools hence lowering their graduation rates.

4.5.3 Influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender as rated by the head teachers (n=20) and class teachers (n=40)

To further influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, the researcher rated the views of the head teachers and the class teachers (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12

Influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender as rated by the Head teachers (n=20) and Class teachers (n=40)

Influence of FPE Policy on Graduation Rates	Mean Ratings (MR)	
	Head teachers	Class teachers
a) FPE Policy has enhanced graduation of many girls in public primary schools.	4.11	3.61
b) FPE Policy has reduced dropouts of both girls and boys in public primary schools.	3.78	2.28
c) FPE Policy has enhanced enrolment of girls in successive grades up to the final grade	3.44	2.72
d) FPE Police has enhanced pupils learning with minimal interruptions up to class eight in public primary schools.	3.44	2.67
e) FPE Policy has reduced challenges faced by girls in public primary schools that may hinder graduation.	3.33	3.0
f) FPE Policy has reduced socio-cultural factors that may hinder girls' education up to final grade	2.89	2.17
g) FPE Policy has reduced social pressures such as pregnancies, early marriages; educational costs etc. that may hinder them from graduating at class eight.	2.86	2.16
Average Mean Rating	**3.41**	**2.66**

Key: Classification mean rating:

1.0-1.9 VL, 2.0-2.9 L, 3.0-3.9 M, 4.0-4.9 H, and 5.0 VH

Table 4.13 shows the mean rating of head teachers and class teachers on the influence of FPE Policy on graduation rates by gender in public primary schools in Rongo Sub-county. FPE Policy having enhanced graduation rates of many girls in public primary schools was highly rated by both the head teachers and the class teachers at 4.11 and 3.61 respectively. This means that both the head teachers and class teachers agree that with the

introduction of FPE Policy, many girls have been able to graduate at class eight. Head teachers agreed that there was an increase in the number of girls graduating at class eight with the introduction of FPE Policy. They also observed that most of the female pupils who make it to class eight finally do KCPE examinations as one of the had this sentiments:

> Most of the pupils who make it to class eight in this school do the KCPE examinations expect in very few cases, for instance, this year in second term, a class eight female pupil decided to leave school after discovering that she was pregnant. This was unfortunate because with much persuasion from teachers that she comes back and do the final exams the parents reported that they had failed to convince her.

Republic of Kenya (2000) which donate that graduation rates at public primary schools in Kenya are encouraging at 99% (100% for boys and 97% for girls), and agrees with the finding of the researcher for the 2000 and 2010 candidates which are 99.6% and 99.7% representing an increase of 0.1%. While boys candidates for the same cohorts was at 99.9% and 100% respectively representing 0.1% increase. However, the researcher's finding on the graduation rate of the specific cohort under the study i.e. 1995 and 2003 cohort revealed that graduation rates by gender in public primary schools in the Sub-county are relatively low at girls 61.4% and 55.9% while boys 75.5% and 80.7% respectively.

Head teachers' rating on the influence of FPE Policy on reducing dropouts of both girls and boys in public primary schools was rated at 3.78 unlike the class teachers rating of 2.28 on the same. This high rating of the head teachers may be because with the existence of FPE Policy, parents are able to pay the rest of the amount like examination and uniform with much ease and this enables these girls to move from one grade to grade up to class eight and finally graduation. One of the pupils made this sentiment: "This

government money is a big relief to my parents because my elder sister is completing class eight this year and I'll also finish next year." Another female pupil concurred with her and had this to say: "I have been able to move to these classes without problems because of this money."

FPE Policy having enhanced girls learning with minimal interruptions up to the final grade was rated at 3.44 by the head teachers and 2.72 by the class teachers. This implies that with FPE Policy, girls are able to encounter few interruptions and this enables them to successively move and finally do the KCPE examinations.

The head teachers rated at 3.44 that FPE Policy has reduced challenges faced by girls in public primary schools that may hinder graduation at class eight, which suggest that FPE Policy has a reduced challenges facing the girl-child that may hinder graduation. This is unlike the class teachers who rated FPE Policy to have a small effect on the challenges facing the girl-child that may hinder graduation at a mean rate of 2.67. The head teachers' high rating may be mere assumption on the part FPE Policy is suppose to play, while the low rating of the class teachers' may be because they are direct contact with the female pupils and interact with them more often.

FPE Policy having reduced socio-cultural factors that may hinder girls from graduating was rated at 3.33 and 3.0 by head teachers and class teachers respectively. This means that both the head teachers and the class teachers viewed FPE Policy as having quelled some of the already existing beliefs on the education of the girl-child and would be better placed to carry out the house chores as one of the head teachers gave this sentiment:

> The community around this area has not valued the education of the girl-child for a long time as most of the new enrollees in class one are mostly boys. The number of girls just started going up with this free primary education policy. But in most cases due to overcrowding, they are finally transferred to private primary schools and some drop out.

Another one concurred and had this to say:

> Thanks to the introduction of Free Primary Education Policy. It has reduced the notion which some of the parents had on the education of the girl-child that boys should be given first priority where resources are scarce. With the government eliminating school fees for the pupils' at least the parents can struggle to buy school uniform and examination fees.

A female pupil said that some parents consider the education of the girl as a second thought as boys are given first priority and gave these sentiments: "My father said that had it not been for the Free Primary Education, he could have only managed to take my brother to class eight since he had scored higher marks than me at class seven."

Both the head teachers and the class teachers rated FPE Policy as a factor that had reduced social pressures influencing graduation rates at 2.89 and 2.17 respectively. This implies that both the respondent view FPE Policy as not having done much to reduce social pressures from homes such as pregnancy, early marriages that may hinder girls from graduating. All the girls and boys involved in the PFGD agreed that FPE Policy has helped many girls in Public Primary Schools to graduate. This is because they are able to stay in school most of the time to attend classes without interruptions and this leads to reaching the final grade and finally graduation as one of the pupils made this sentiment: "Like in our class, all of us who were enrolled in class eight are all going to sit for KCPE exams, so I strongly support Free Primary Education."

They also said that the FPE Policy has relieved their parents of the burden of paying large amount of fees and this has helped them stay in school which finally leads to their

graduation. Despite the other challenges facing girls in primary education, most of the head teachers agreed that FPE Policy has positively influenced completion rates of the girl-child as the number graduating has increased as compared to the period before the introduction of the policy. However, this is different from the researcher's finding in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 which reveals that FPE Policy has not had a positive influence on the graduation rates of the girl-child compared to boys in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county. The study reveals that although the girls lag behind boys in graduation rate in public primary schools even after the introduction of FPE policy, many girls were noticed to transfer to private schools thus lowering their graduation rates in public primary schools. The study also established in both the genders those who enrolled in class eight finally graduated as drop out was minimal.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1Introduction

This chapter contains summary of the research findings, conclusions of the study and recommendation.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of FPE policy on gender participation in education in Public Primary schools in Rongo Sub-county, Kenya. The summary and conclusions are presented according to themes deduced from the research questions that guided the study.

5.2.1Influence of Free Primary Education Policy on access in Public Primary Schools by gender

The study established that:

i) There was increase in enrolment in the sub-county for both girls and boys after the introduction of FPE policy which was characterized by decline in enrolment as boys and girls move to upper primary school levels.

ii) The rise in enrolment after the introduction of FPE policy led to shortage of teachers hence dropout in public primary schools due to low quality of education and curriculum delivery, as confirmed by head teachers and SQASO.

5.2.2 Influence of Free Primary Education on the Survival rates by gender in Public Primary Schools

The study established that:

i) FPE policy enhance survival in public primary schools, through re-entry policy many girls who drop-out of school had got a second chance to pursue their education thus increase in survival rate.

ii) Although the AGRS of the 1995 and 2003 female cohort students based on grade are both high at 83.3% and 84.1% representing an increase of 0.8%. It is notable that girls' still lags behind boys whose AGSR for the same cohorts was high at 95.5% and 96.9% giving a wide gender gap of 12.2% and 12.8% respectively. According to the researcher, the possible reasons for high AGSR based on grade could be due to those female students who might have dropped out of school in the middle of classes but resumed learning on the way when FPE policy was introduced thereby surviving in the middle classes up to class 8. The researcher therefore concludes that although FPE policy has had a positive influence on survival of girls based on grade, it is notable that they still lags behind the boy child.

5.2.3The influence of Free Primary Education on Graduation Rates by gender in Public primary schools

The study established that:

FPE Policy has relieved their parents of the burden of paying large amount of fees and this has helped them stay in school which finally leads to their graduation. Despite the other challenges facing girls in primary education, most of the head teachers agreed that FPE Policy has positively influenced completion rates of the girl-child as the number

graduating has increased as compared to the period before the introduction of the policy. Those who finally enrolled in class eight in relation to both gender ended up graduating. Thus FPE policy eliminated cases of drop out at the final grade in both gender.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were arrived at by the researcher:

It was established that factors such as class congestion/overcrowding, staff shortage and transfer of girls to private schools pose real threat to gains made by FPE Policy. If the factors that affect pupil participation by gender in Rongo Sub-county are addressed, the school going children will benefit a lot from FPE programme hence a big move in narrowing gender gap and reducing the level of poverty in the country as education is central to economic development.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

The study confirmed both girls and boys access, survival and graduation rates to education in public primary schools increased after the introduction of FPE Policy, with girls still lagging behind compared to boys in the same period. The researcher therefore came up with the following recommendations:

a) The government should come up with affirmative action to promote more female teachers to head public primary schools who will be role models to female pupils to enhance enrolment; some girls are still locked out or drop out due to lack of role models.

b) Provision of public boarding girls primary schools in Rongo Sub-county to ensure girls are in school always to curb issues of absenteeism due to child labour that always leads to repetition and finally drop out.

c) The stakeholders should look into other factors other than school fees that influence gender participation in education. This is because even with the introduction of FPE Policy the girls still lags behind the boys in participation in education. So it means there are other barriers that challenged girls in Rongo Sub-county despite the introduction of FPE Policy.

d) Provision of enough teaching and learning materials in public primary schools to eliminate congestion and overcrowding which has led to drop out and transfers to private primary schools.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

This study established the influence of Free Primary Education on pupil participation by gender in education in relation to access, survival rates and graduation rates in Public Primary Schools in Rongo Sub-county. Despite the introduction of FPE Policy, girls still lags behind boys in Public Primary Education in Rongo Sub-county. The researcher suggests that further research should be done on:

i. Causes for continued expansion of Private Primary Schools even with introduction of FPE Policy in Kenya.

ii. Challenges faced by stakeholders in the effective implementation of FPE Policy

iii. Impact of poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) by public primary schools in effective implementation of free primary education policy.

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