Implementation of CFS Program and Its Challenges in Chesumei Sub-County, Nandi County, Kenya

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Abstract: This study investigated challenges facing implementation of Child Friendly School Program in Chesumei Sub-County, Kenya. The sample comprised of two hundred and thirty one teachers. Pilot schools were purposively selected while simple random sampling was used to select non-pilot schools. Data was collected using questionnaires, observation, and interviews. Content analysis was used to interpret qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of percentages, means, and standard deviation. The study revealed the following as the main challenges facing the implementation of Child Friendly Schools program; high enrolment, delayed release of FPE funds, vandalism, and gender disparity. The study recommends that teachers, pupils and the community should be sensitized and involved in working towards reduction of challenges facing the CFS program.

Keywords: Child, School, Program, playground, Funding, Kenya

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1. Introduction

Child Friendly School Programs take cognizance of the rights of children irrespective of their gender, religious and ethnic affliction, physical and mental abilities and any other inferences. The concept of child friendly school was introduced in 1999 by the Education Section of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2006).

Education is a fundamental right for every child and an opportunity to achieve and maintain an adaptable level of learning. This is acknowledged by the Universal declaration of 1948 on human rights, which makes education a fundamental right of every child. The world conference on Education for All (EFA) that took place in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand articulated the significance of the early years as the foundation for the life of individuals (Republic of Kenya, 2006).

Later in April, 2000, the international community in a World Forum held in Dakar, Senegal adopted the six Education for All (EFA) goals which are:- Expanding and improving comprehensive early child hood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, ensuring that by 2015 all children particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to a complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality, ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills program, achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults, eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 with a focus on ensuring girls full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality, and improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all, so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. Subsequently, the need for a holistic development of children is appreciated all over the world (Ndani, 2010).

Child friendly school is based on the principles of children's rights as expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1990) and other international human rights including the Declaration of Education for All(EFA)(UNICEF, 2006).

The safety of our school children, at all times, and everywhere cannot be ignored. The safety of the learner is central to the provision of quality education and excellent school management in any country. According to Zablon, Areba, Ngwacho, Monga're, Onguti, and Mikuro (2014) insecurity of children can emanate from inappropriate school facilities and infrastructure. These may include poorly constructed classrooms and playing grounds, insufficient and broken-down toilet facilities, gender insensitive location of toilet and bathroom facilities, and inadequate and inappropriate furniture.

Efficient management of school facilities is of vital importance in making the school a pleasant, safe and conducive place for students to realize their maximum potential in both curricula and co-curricular activities (Lyons, 2012). And as observed by Kanamba (2014), physical facilities have a lot of bearing on school enrollment and attendance, however, poor physical

2. Literature Review

Origins of the Child Friendly Schools Programs

UNICEF's Program Division of Education introduced the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) framework for schools that "serve the whole child" in 1999 and it has supported the implementation of the CFS framework in 95 countries, Kenya included at both the global and regional levels.According to UNICEF CEE/CIS (2010) after education was recognized as a human right in 1948, a number of other international conventions also supported the concept of free and compulsory primary education.

In 2000, UNICEF and Save the Children brought together representatives from 11 South Asian and South-East Asian countries in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to discuss and identify the core tasks of CFS. The representatives agreed upon four key activities for promoting CFS in the region (Bernard 2004)among them was to adapt the CFS principles at the national and local levels by "enabling the genuine participation of policy-makers, communities, families and children in creating both the vision and the functions of a child rights-based school."

Concept of Child Friendly Schools in Kenya and Other Countries

Child Friendly Schools (CFS) was introduced as a pilot program in 2002 in eleven UNICEF supported districts in Kenya. This was evaluated in 2008 with a

facilities in schools are one of the major barriers of Primary Education in Kenya (KESSP, 2005).

In addition, the Kenya Government through the National Health Strategy implementation plan 2011-2015 sought to implement strategies towards addressing the bottlenecks that hampered development of child friendly schools. This involved improvement in several dimensions including: school infrastructure and environmental safety, special needs school, disability and rehabilitation, health and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

According to Were (2014), the objectives of providing Low Cost Boarding Schools in Kenya is to provide the child with a conducive secure learning environment away from a home characterized by family conflicts and trauma ,caused by a hostile environment, cattle rustling, movement from place to place, female genital mutilation and early marriages. To ensure the success of the program, only schools from the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) benefited, this was done intentionally since the level of access and retention differed from those in the other parts of the country. The government had to allocate funds to the program and even seek for assistance from UNICEF to donate bed sheets, mosquito nets and mattresses.
recommendation to mainstream the concept through national policies and plans (MOE, 2010).As observed by UNICEF (2009b) the national manual on CFS was developed and launched by the Minister of Education in February 2011 thus becoming a national strategy for quality improvement of education in Kenya, the government through the MOE (2008) emphasizes that the

CFS challenges head teachers and education stakeholders to move beyond pedagogic excellence and performance outcome and instead focus on the needs of the child as a whole. Kenya has been cited as one of the most successful countries in managing to mainstream the concept of CFS into its national policies for example the Basic Education Act of 2013 (UNICEF, 2009b).

According to UNICEF (2009b) CFS model is a comprehensive, inter-sectoral package of interventions that embrace a multi- dimensional concept of quality and addresses the total needs of the child as a learner. It has in it the Whole School Approach which focuses on pedagogical excellence and learning outcomes with considerations of health, nutrition, availability of adequate facilities, services and supplies to ensure safety and protection of girls and boys. It's also grounded in the effectiveness of being linked to the wider community that makes education real and school curriculum relevant.

The child friendly school framework is located within a quality framework which holistically and functionally defines quality in education (Alina, 2010) and are a means of transporting the concept of Child Rights into classroom practice and school management (Christopher, 2001).

According to Acklers and Hardman (2001) the policy of child friendly school introduced in Uganda promoted good quality teaching and learning processes within individualized instruction. These processes were appropriate to each child developmental level, abilities and learning style. This also enhanced teacher capacity, morale, commitment, status and income and teachers recognition of child rights.

The Ministry of Education in Rwanda has developed a document which has four standards expected of Child Friendly Schools Infrastructure which are: a school must have appropriate, sufficient and secure buildings, must be a healthy, clean, secure and have learner protecting environment, must have a child-friendly barrier free environment which promotes inclusive access and equal rights of every child and must have adequate and appropriate equipment that support the level of education. The document is structured in a manner that it accommodates incremental development towards progressively improving the conditions of teaching and learning (Rwanda, Ministry of Education, 2009).

According to MOES&T (2005) the Kenyan government is committed to the provision of quality education as a human right for all Kenyans in accordance with the Kenyan laws and international conventions such as EFA. The key concerns however are access, retention, equity, quality and relevance. The implementation of the Free Primary Education (FPE) is critical to the attainment of universal Primary Education (UPE) as a key milestone towards the realization of the EFA goals.

Purpose of the Child Friendly Schools Programs

According to UNICEF (2006) there are a number of children around the world who do not attend school. But it is perhaps even more daunting to rectify the deplorable conditions endured by millions of children already in school. And the same children face negative conditions also at home. Children face challenges at home and the community, such as lack of food and under nutrition making it difficult for them to enroll and attend school regularly and complete a cycle. Schools must therefore focus on the whole child, which means taking into account the conditions in the family or community that might be hindering his or her educational progress.

UNICEF (2006) noted that it's not just getting all children into school but ensuring that the schools work in the best interest of the children entrusted to them. Schools should be safe and protective and have adequate and appropriate resources. Such schools enable children to develop the ability to think and reason, build self-respect and respect for others, and reach their full potential as individuals, members of their communities and citizens of the world. Child-friendly schools (CFS) embrace a multidimensional concept of quality and address the total needs of the child as a learner.

According to Orkodashvili (2010) the CFS at the national level can be used by ministries, development agencies, and civil society organizations to develop policies and programs leading to child-friendly systems and environments. At the community level, for school staff, parents, and other community members, the CFS framework can serve as both a goal and a tool of quality improvement through localized self-assessment, planning, and management and as a means for mobilizing the community around education and child rights.

These principles of CFS emphasize the right of all children to receive free and compulsory education in settings that encourage enrolment and attendance; institute discipline humanely and fairly; develop the personality, talents and abilities of students to their fullest potential; respect children's human rights and fundamental freedoms; respect and encourage the child's own cultural identity, language and values (UNICEF, 2006).

Definition of an Inclusive Child Friendly School

A Child Friendly School is inclusive of children when it seeks out children who are attending school and does not discriminate on the basis of difference. It welcomes nurtures and educates all children regardless of their sex, intellectual, social, emotion and language. It provides these children with an education that is free, compulsory and accessible (MOE, 2010).

According to UNICEF (2009c) Convention on Rights of the Child stresses that all children have a right to education. This is not a privilege that society grants to children, but a duty that society fulfills towards them. Schools should be open and welcoming to all children without exception and it should seek out children who are eligible for enrolment.

Challenges facing the Child Friendly School Program implementation

UNICEF (2006) posits that the main aim of child friendly school model project is to train teachers to better manage their classes so that every child gets the same attention and in the long run reduce overcrowded classrooms. Part of the reason for low involvement on the implementation of child friendly school approach is attributed to large class sizes and outdated teaching methods. Both of these make it likely for pupils to drop out of school before finishing their basic education.

According to Olando (2003) teachers are perceived to be integral in the provision of child friendly school environment. Child friendly school approach can only be successful if teachers are part of the team driving this process and thus it is important to examine the attitudes of these mainstream educators towards the implementation of the Child Friendly Schools approach.

According to UNESCO (2005a) the Child Friendly School program in South Africa faced many challenges which included lack of physical facilities and human resources and lack of community support among others. Most parents may not understand the welfare of their children in schools and some do not understand the dynamics of children's attendance and learning.

The scarcity of learning materials and physical facilities in schools affects the implementation of Child Friendly Schools. In some countries children learn in classrooms that do not have a single book shelf or reading corner (UNESCO, 2005a). According to teachers dilapidated buildings, leaking roofs burned out lights and broken toilets are negative to teaching and learning. Where conditions are serious enough, it would lead to higher absenteeism, low morale lower effectiveness, and reduced job satisfaction but where working conditions are good; they result in enthusiasm and acceptance of responsibility. Buildings should be constructed in such a way that they do not pose any danger to users. They should be spaced enough to avoid overcrowding and allow ventilation (Chumba, 2006).

Physical facilities have been cited as one of the factors leading to the implementation of child friendly schools and the presence of man power leads to good examination performance by the pupils; this is of significance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Adequate teachers, adequate teaching and learning resources, spaced classrooms guidance and counseling are factors that influence the child friendly school and bring about good examination performance by the pupils (UNICEF, 2009c).

A report from UNICEF in 2008, showed that the Moldovan schools have many improved school infrastructure with capital renovations, and provided professional development. Challenges in Moldova include payment of fees by parents, lack of clean drinking water and insufficient heating. To begin implementing Child Friendly Schools, UNICEF created partnerships to five pilot schools (Clair, Miske & Patel, 2010).

In Ethiopia, training of teachers and parents in non-violent, child-based strategies for dealing with disciplinary issues is also required to ensure quality learning and teaching, since most of them still believe in the use of corporal punishment on their children both at home and school (UNICEF, 2010a).

According to Cunningham (2012) in a study titled *Understanding Local Realities of Quality Education in Kenya: Pupil, Parent and Teacher Perspectives.* The findings called for a renewed dialogue between top-down and bottom-up perspectives of quality education in determining future criteria for measuring the levels of child-friendliness across Kenyan public primary schools.

The use of corporal punishment is emotive and those who support it say that even religious books warn against letting child offenders off the hook lightly. The book of Proverbs in the Bible, advises: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him, and folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away" are often quoted in debates about the legal and moral grounding of corporal punishment.

According to Maina and Sindabi (2016), teachers have a negative attitude towards the ban on corporal punishment unlike students who portray a positive perception. Some teachers still view corporal punishment as having a place in education; they are concerned about their personal safety and feel the administering of corporal punishment will ensure their safety. Some report that they have found alternatives that work, however they still feel that the training that is provided is not able to meet their needs in the classroom situation (Cicognani, 2004).

Koros (2015) argues that in Kenya, corporal punishment can be traced from the African tradition concerning duties of males and females in the society where men feel that they are custodians of authority and power. There is need, therefore, to create awareness on alternative methods to corporal punishment and also the overall effects of corporal punishment on the child.

According to Beyene and Tizazu (2010) a limited understanding of the concept of disability, negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities and a hardened resistance to change are the major barrier impeding inclusive education. Teachers' attitudes can be influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition, training of the teacher, experience, gender and availability of support. Bhargava and Pathy (2014) argue that a positive attitude helps teachers to develop a conductive learner friendly environment in the classroom. Attitude being a social construct is influenced by many factors like gender, social strata, age, and stream of education and previous experience of the job.

According to the Republic of Kenya (nd) in a paper titled *The future of education in Kenya. What can we do as public officers in Education?* Presented by NESP posits that the main challenges facing the education sector in Kenya are a high number of pupils about 1.5 million from poor backgrounds, disadvantaged groups and informal settlement who are out of school. Other issues are related to indiscipline such as alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancies and sectarian radicalization thus demonstrating a need to foster social competencies and national values in our society.

NESP recommends an emphasis' on a holistic development of the education sector through advancing access to free and compulsory basic education, improving the quality of education, supporting equity and inclusion and developing social competencies and values.

3. Methodology

Research Design

This study used a Concurrent mixed methods design. In this design both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used and data was gathered during the same time simultaneously. Concurrent mixed methods design was used so as to build on the strengths that exist in qualitative and quantitative research methods thus helping to understand the phenomenon fully than it would have been when either qualitative or quantitative research methods were used alone(Creswell & Plano 2011).

Quantitative research techniques were used more than qualitative research methods. Quantitative research methods were used to analyze the variables by respondents on safe and protective school, equity and equality promoting school, health and nutrition promoting school, and enhancing school-community linkages and partnerships. Qualitative research techniques were used in observation method and interview guide, data collected was in form of words, later thematic analysis was done on the same to identify, analyze and report patterns (themes) within the data

Population and Sampling Techniques

The total population of the sub-county is thirty three thousand, two hundred and five pupils and one thousand two hundred teachers, in one hundred and fifty public primary schools, in five education zones:-Chemundu, Kaptel, Kosirai, Kapsisiywa and Mutwot/Lelmokwo.

Purposive Sampling was used to select the three pilot CFS primary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select the fifteen other schools with three schools from each zone. Purposive sampling was used to select all teachers (TSC and BOM) including the Head teachers and Deputy Head Teachers.

A total of 231 respondents participated in the study.

Instruments

This study used two closed questionnaires (one for teachers and another for the pupils), classroom observation, Head Teachers interview guide and general observation guide.

Validity and Reliability of the instruments

In this study, face and content validity of the instruments was considered (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003, and Wanjohi, 2014). A pilot study was done in one public primary school in Nandi Central Sub County, with similar characteristics as the targeted population. The Cronbach's alpha results were: teachers (0.704 for safe and protective school, 0713 for equity and equality promoting school, 0.684 for health and nutrition promoting school and 0.686 for enhancing school-community linkages and partnerships) and pupils (0.698 for safe and protective school, 0.605 for equity and equality promoting school, 0.728 for health and 0.866 for nutrition promoting school and enhancing school-community linkages and partnerships. And because the items in the teachers and pupils questionnaires had a reliability of above 0.60 this qualified the instruments as reliable.

Data Gathering Procedures

Data collection was done after the researcher got clearance from the relevant authorities. The main instruments that were used during the study were close ended questionnaires for teachers and pupils, head teachers interview schedule, general observation checklist and classroom observation checklist. All the filled questionnaires and other documents used were collected and kept safely by the researcher.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS. Percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviation and Mann-Whitney and T-Test were used to analyze data. A coherent summary and analysis of findings was eventually done.
Qualitative data collected from each question were read, reread and analyzed into themes and sub-themes and conclusions made.

4. Results and Discussion

Challenges Facing the Implementation of the Child Friendly Schools Program

The study found out that the main challenges facing the promotion of safe and protective schools are:
Inadequate funds to repair classrooms, presence of drug and substance by some learners influenced by idle youth within the community, inadequate resources, poor playgrounds, absenteeism and truancy among learners and delay/inadequate FPE funds from the government.

This is in agreement with UNESCO (2005a) that the scarcity of learning materials and physical facilities in schools affects the implementation of CFS. Chumba (2006) noted that according to teachers, dilapidated buildings, leaking roofs, burned out lights and broken toilets are negative to teaching and learning. Where conditions are serious enough, it would lead to higher absenteeism, low morale and lower effectiveness and reduced job satisfaction but where working conditions are good; they result in enthusiasm and acceptance of responsibility.

According to headteachers the main challenges hindering the promotion of equality and equity are: inadequate teachers in some schools/gender imbalance among teachers (most schools have more female than male teachers), lack of enough manpower with proper knowledge and skills to carry certain and high enrolment.

This agrees with UNICEF (2006) that part of the reason for low involvement on the implementation of child friendly school approach is attributed to large class sizes and outdated teaching methods. Both of these make it likely for pupils to drop out of school before finishing their basic education. In all the schools visited, 65% female teachers had gone for in-service while the rest who are male had attended the same course showing a gender disparity even in terms of training. This is also collaborated from the demographic profile of teachers showing that pilot and non-pilot schools have more female teachers (64.4% and 58.7%) respectively compared to male teachers in both schools who are at 35.6% and 41.3% respectively.

According to Olando (2003) teachers are perceived to be integral in the provision of child friendly school environment. Child friendly school approach can only be successful if teachers are part of the team driving this process and thus it is important to examine the attitudes of these mainstream educators towards the implementation of the CFS approach.

The headteachers noted that the main challenges facing the implementation of of health and nutrition promoting schools include: inadequate provision of basic needs to pupils by parents/guardians like food leading to absents by some pupils, HIV/AIDS affected /infected children are ever absent from school, inadequate funding to enhance the feeding programme to cover most of the pupils, cultural beliefs, limited resources, for example toilets not enough and harsh climatic conditions like drought that affects food production and water provision.

This is in agreement with a report presented by NESP in the Republic of Kenya (nd) in a paper titled *The future of education in Kenya. What can we do as public officers in Education?* The paper notes that the main challenge facing the education sector in Kenya are a high number of pupils (about 1.5 million) from poor backgrounds, disadvantaged groups and informal settlements who are out of school. Pregnancies and sectarian radicalization; demonstrating a need to foster social competencies and national values in our society. NESP recommends an emphasis' on a holistic development of the education sector through advancing access to free and compulsory basic education, improving the quality of education, supporting equity and inclusion and developing social competencies and values.
Absenteeism by some parents in school meetings, cultural beliefs and society not willing to raise funds to assist in provision of some of the facilities are some of the challenges facing the implementation of the School-Community Linkages and Partnerships.

This is in agreement with UNESCO (2005a) that the Child Friendly School program in South Africa faced many challenges which included lack of physical facilities, human resources and lack of community support among others. Most parents may not understand the welfare of their children in schools and some do not understand the dynamics of children's attendance and learning.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study notes the following main challenges facing the implementation of the Child Friendly
School program as inadequate funds to repair classrooms, presence of drug and substance abuse by some learners influenced by idle youth within the community, Inadequate resources, most poor and unconducive playgrounds, absenteeism and truancy among learners, inadequate FPE funds from the government, the high enrolment of learners leading to congestion in classrooms thus affecting teaching and learning.

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher gave the following recommendations:-
1. All stake holders: parents, pupils, teachers and the community should be involved in the creation of Child Friendly Schools (CFS), for example through encouraging the community can construct classrooms through fundraising.
2. Teachers need to be sensitized more on the importance of creating Child Friendly Schools

(CFS), through seminars, orientation programs and bench marking.

3. The MOE and other stakeholders should provide adequate resources to be used in the creation of Child Friendly Schools (CFS) for example through provision of infrastructure grants to needy schools, for construction of basic facilities like classrooms, toilets, leveling of playgrounds, fencing of the school compounds, water storage tanks etc.

4. Some of the challenges by stakeholders are inadequate funds to construct classrooms, dilapidated buildings and leaking roofs, inadequate teachers, drug and substance abuse among pupils etc. Some of these challenges can be addressed by schools through: undertaking minor repairs immediately they are noticed especially on roofs, use of available materials like grass to thatch classrooms, smearing the classroom floors with cow dung to prevent dust, mobilizing the community and politician's to raise funds for the school, requesting for assistance from the government etc.

5. Schools and Ministry of Education and the County government should use the proposed model to help them implement the Child Friendly Schools Program.

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