

## 100% TRANSITION POLICY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT

*Kenya's 100% transition policy from primary to secondary education aims to guarantee universal access to basic education. While enrolment rates have improved, implementation faces challenges including inadequate facilities, teacher shortages, and socio-economic constraints. This study investigates how school-related factors influence the policy's effectiveness in public secondary schools. A descriptive research design was employed, gathering data from teachers, administrators, and education officers through questionnaires and interviews. Results indicate that infrastructure, staffing, leadership practices, and parental involvement significantly affect policy outcomes. Strengthening resource allocation, enhancing leadership capacity, and fostering community participation are recommended to improve the policy's sustainability and impact.*

**Keywords:** Instructional resources, policy implementation, enrollment rate 100% transition

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Education is widely recognized as a crucial driver of social and economic development worldwide. Hanushek (2020) emphasizes that education is essential to development, fostering new forms of production and accelerating technological transformation that reshapes organizations in the global economy. Similarly, Woessmann (2016) describes education as a guiding light capable of transforming children's lives. Consequently, governments across the globe allocate substantial resources to educational initiatives each year. Richards (2022) underscores that education underpins national economic, political, and social advancement. Investments in education not only stimulate economic growth but also promote social and national development, enhance productivity, and reduce social inequality. UNESCO (2015) identifies a nation's educational attainment as a key indicator of its socio-economic development level.

In Kenya, one of the flagship education policies aimed at promoting equitable access is the 100% transition policy from primary to secondary education. This policy seeks to ensure that all learners who complete primary education progress to secondary school, thereby safeguarding the right to basic education as enshrined in the Constitution. While enrolment rates have improved since its inception, the policy's implementation has faced notable challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and socio-economic disparities among learners. Given education's pivotal role in national development, it is essential to examine how school-related factors influence the effective implementation of such policies, which directly impact the country's social and economic progress.

### 1.2 Statement of the problem

Education plays a central role in fostering social and economic development, and Kenya has aligned itself with global initiatives to ensure inclusive and equitable access to quality education. The government's adoption of the 100% transition policy from primary to secondary school is intended to

guarantee that every learner completing primary education progresses to secondary school, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education.

While the policy has significantly increased enrolment rates, its implementation has exposed systemic gaps within public secondary schools. Overcrowded classrooms, inadequate infrastructure, shortages of qualified teachers, and insufficient learning materials have strained the capacity of schools to provide quality education. Moreover, socio-economic challenges such as poverty, lack of parental engagement, and the need for learners to supplement family income continue to hinder regular attendance and retention. In some cases, schools have resorted to improvisation, compromising the quality of teaching and learning.

Although several studies have explored factors influencing school enrolment and transition rates, there is a lack of focused research examining how specific school-related factors such as leadership practices, infrastructure availability, staffing adequacy, teacher motivation, and parental involvement relate directly to the effective implementation of the 100% transition policy in Kenya. Without such empirical evidence, policymakers and education stakeholders cannot design targeted interventions to address these constraints. This research seeks to fill that gap by examining the relationship between these school-level factors and the success of the policy's implementation.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between school-related factors and the implementation of the 100% transition policy in public secondary schools in Kenya. Specifically, the study seeks to determine how elements such as school infrastructure, staffing levels, leadership practices, availability of learning resources, and parental involvement influence the policy's effectiveness. The findings will provide evidence-based insights to guide policymakers, education administrators, and stakeholders in strengthening strategies for achieving and sustaining universal secondary education access without compromising quality.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Implementation of the 100% Transition Policy: The Role of Physical, Financial, Human, and Instructional Resources

The successful implementation of the 100% transition policy in education is highly dependent on the availability and adequacy of various resources, including physical facilities, financial resources, qualified teachers, and instructional materials.

### 2.2 Physical Facilities

Physical resources such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, dormitories, and ICT centers create an enabling learning environment and directly influence learning outcomes. Studies (e.g., Kigwilu & Akala, 2017; Edokpolor & Dumbiri, 2019) indicate that well-equipped schools facilitate smoother transitions, while inadequate facilities often lead to overcrowding, reduced quality of education, and higher dropout rates. Accessibility and suitability of facilities, especially for learners with disabilities, remain a challenge (Ackah-Jnr & Danso, 2019). Some institutions mitigate shortages through resource-sharing agreements, though underutilization of existing facilities has also been noted.

### 2.3 Financial Resources

While free basic education policies aim to increase access, hidden costs, such as uniforms, activity fees, and maintenance pose barriers for low-income families. Global experiences show that increased government funding, subsidies, and public-private partnerships improve transition rates (Mwikya, 2019). However, in many African contexts, parents still bear significant costs (Kathiwa, 2016), leading to dropouts. Financial constraints disproportionately affect learners from poorer households (Imran et al., 2023; Otieno, 2023), making sustainable funding mechanisms essential for achieving universal transition.

### 2.4 Adequate Teachers

Teachers are central to learning, and their availability determines both quality and sustainability of the transition policy (Odhiambo, 2022). Teacher shortages, uneven distribution, and high workloads reduce instructional effectiveness (Barasa, Likoko, & Ochwada, 2022). Recruiting and retaining qualified teachers remains a challenge worldwide, with staffing needs influenced by student enrollment, curriculum breadth, and extracurricular responsibilities.

### 2.5 Instructional Resources

Instructional materials, including audio-visual aids, laboratories, and teaching equipment, enhance student engagement and comprehension. Research shows that such resources significantly improve performance and transition rates (Hughes & Cao, 2018; Behtash et al., 2018). However, many schools either lack these materials or fail to use them effectively (Bukoye, 2019). Adequate preparation and availability of instructional resources have been positively correlated with higher transition rates (Chumba et al., 2021).

### 2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the **Education Production**

**Function Theory**, originally proposed by Mace (1979). The theory extends the economic concept of a production function into the field of education. As explained by Witte and López-Torres (2017), the model illustrates the relationship between the physical and human inputs in the learning process and the quantitative and qualitative outputs here conceptualized in terms of policy implementation outcomes.

The theory emphasizes that the effectiveness of educational processes depends on the quality and adequacy of the inputs provided. In the context of public schools, these inputs include physical facilities such as classrooms and laboratories, instructional resources such as textbooks and learning aids, financial resources for operational and developmental needs, and sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced teachers. These elements collectively shape both academic and non-academic activities, influencing how well educational policies are implemented.

The Education Production Function Theory was particularly relevant to this study because it enables the assessment of the return or contribution of each input toward achieving desired educational outcomes. While traditional economic theory identifies land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship as the main factors of production, this study reinterprets these within the education sector as **physical facilities, instructional resources, financial resources, and adequate teachers**. These inputs are considered essential for the effective and efficient implementation of the 100% transition policy from primary to secondary education, ensuring that access is not only expanded but also supported by quality learning environments.

### 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was informed by the **Education Production Function Theory** (Mace, 1979), which postulates that educational outcomes are a direct result of the interaction between various inputs within the learning environment. According to Witte and López-Torres (2017), the theory emphasizes the role of physical, financial, and human resources in shaping both the quantitative and qualitative outputs of an education system.

In the context of this study, the independent variables comprised **physical facilities, instructional resources, financial resources, and adequate teachers**. These factors were conceptualized as essential inputs that determine the extent to which the 100% transition policy can be implemented effectively. The dependent variable was the **implementation of the 100% transition to secondary schools**, operationalized through measurable indicators such as **enrolment rates and completion rates** of students in secondary school.

Furthermore, the study recognized the presence of **intervening variables** in this case, **student characteristics** (e.g., socio-economic background, motivation, academic preparedness) which could mediate the relationship between school-related factors and policy implementation outcomes.

The framework assumed that when physical facilities are sufficient, instructional resources are adequate, financial resources are well-managed, and there is an optimal teacher–student ratio, the implementation of the 100% transition policy will be more successful. Conversely, deficiencies in these inputs could hinder policy outcomes, regardless of government directives.

This integrated conceptualization also reflected the study's theoretical foundation, in which inputs (resources) feed into the education system and influence outputs (student retention and completion) through the policy implementation process.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodological framework that guided the study. It presents a description of the research area, the design adopted, and the population targeted. It further explains the sampling procedures, the sample size, and the instruments used for data collection. Issues of reliability and validity are addressed to demonstrate the rigor of the tools applied. In addition, the section highlights the procedures followed in collecting and analyzing data, while also considering the ethical

principles that ensured the integrity of the research process.

### 3.1 Research Design, Location, and Target Population

This study adopted a **correlational research design**, which is widely recognized as appropriate for examining statistical associations between variables without manipulation. Such a design provides a structured framework that enables researchers to establish the direction and strength of relationships among variables while ensuring objectivity and reliability in data analysis. In the context of this study, the design was instrumental in exploring how school-based factors relate to the implementation of the 100% transition policy. By applying this approach, the study was able to identify meaningful trends, highlight patterns of association, and provide evidence-based insights that could inform decision-making and policy adjustments in the education sector.

The research was carried out in **Bureti Sub-County, Kericho County**, located in Kenya's Rift Valley region. The area was chosen purposively due to recurring concerns by education stakeholders regarding the challenges of implementing the 100% transition policy. Bureti, characterized by a predominantly lower-middle-income population that relies heavily on small-scale farming, experiences unique socio-economic pressures that directly affect education access and sustainability. These conditions often translate into congestion in schools, making the region a representative case for assessing how institutions adapt to the policy. Although challenges of this nature exist in other parts of the country, Bureti provided a suitable context for drawing practical lessons on policy implementation.

The **target population** comprised **52 public secondary schools** within the sub-county. This included a mix of boarding and day schools for boys, girls, and mixed institutions, ensuring diversity in school contexts. Participants targeted were **52 principals, 520 teachers**, and the **Sub-County Director of Education**. This population was considered adequate for capturing a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and institutional realities. By involving both school administrators and teachers, the study ensured that data reflected multiple layers of educational practice and leadership, while the inclusion of the Sub-County Director of Education provided a policy-level perspective. Collectively, this population offered a comprehensive basis for analyzing the factors influencing the effectiveness of the 100% transition policy in the region.

## 4. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the study on the influence of physical facilities, financial resources, teacher adequacy, instructional resources, and student characteristics on the implementation of the 100% transition policy in public secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kenya. The results are organized into socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, descriptive analyses of key study variables, and inferential analyses examining relationships among the variables. In addition, the hypotheses were tested to determine the statistical significance of these relationships, thereby providing empirical evidence for or against the study's assumptions.

### 4.1 Response Rate

The study achieved a 100% response rate. All 151 questionnaires distributed to teachers and the 16 questionnaires administered to headteachers were duly completed and returned. In addition, an interview was conducted with the Sub-County Director of Education. After data cleaning and coding, all responses were found to be valid for analysis. A high response rate is critical in survey research because it enhances the reliability and generalizability of findings.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), response rates above 70% are considered excellent for social science research, a view supported by Kothari (2017) and Orodho (2017). Therefore, the 100% response rate in this study eliminates concerns of non-response bias and ensures that the data are representative of the target population in Bureti Sub-County.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Teachers

**Gender Distribution.** The majority were male (52.3%) compared to female teachers (47.7%), reflecting a relatively balanced gender distribution. This balance is notable as research indicates that gender diversity in teaching staff enhances both academic and social development of learners (Odhiambo, 2022). **Education Level.** The findings show that 72.2% of teachers held a bachelor's degree, 19.2% a postgraduate degree, and 8.6% a diploma. The dominance of bachelor's degree holders aligns with the minimum professional requirements for secondary school teachers in Kenya. However, the relatively small proportion of postgraduate-qualified teachers suggests limited advanced professional training, which may have implications for curriculum innovation and policy implementation.

**Experience.** Teaching experience varied, with the largest proportion (25.8%) having 8–11 years of experience. This was followed by 22.5% with 12–15 years, 21.9% with 4–7 years, and 19.9% with less than three years. Only 9.9% had over 15 years of experience. This indicates a workforce dominated by mid-career teachers, suggesting a balance between energy and classroom management expertise. However, the low number of highly experienced teachers highlights possible issues in teacher retention and career progression.

**Age.** The majority of teachers (31.1%) were aged 31–35 years, followed by 26–30 years (21.2%) and 36–40 years (19.2%). Teachers below 25 years constituted 13.2%, while those above 40 years were 15.2%. This distribution reflects a relatively young teaching workforce capable of adapting to educational reforms. However, the small number of older teachers may reduce opportunities for mentorship and institutional memory, which are essential for sustaining long-term policy implementation.

### 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Headteachers

**Gender Distribution.** Unlike the teachers, most headteachers were female (56.3%) compared to male (43.7%). This reflects increasing female participation in educational leadership, a trend consistent with efforts to enhance gender inclusivity in governance. Previous studies suggest that female leadership in schools promotes mentorship, equity, and improved school governance (Bergmann et al., 2022; Babafemi, 2022).

**Education Level.** The majority of headteachers (62.5%) held postgraduate degrees, while the rest (37.5%) held bachelor's degrees. The high academic qualifications among headteachers are significant, as advanced education equips leaders with critical skills in decision-making, resource mobilization, and curriculum management, which are crucial under the 100% transition policy.

**Leadership Experience.** Most headteachers (43.8%) had 4–7 years of leadership experience, followed by 31.3% with 8–11 years. Only 6.3% had over 12 years of experience, while 18.8% were relatively new, with less than three years in leadership. This indicates that while a majority have moderate administrative experience, the low representation of highly experienced headteachers raises concerns about succession planning, mentorship, and institutional continuity.



**Age.** A quarter (25%) of headteachers were aged 31–35 years, 37.5% were between 36–40 years, and another 37.5% were above 40 years. The concentration of leaders in their thirties and forties reflects a relatively young, energetic, and adaptable leadership cohort. However, maintaining experienced leaders above 40 years remains important for institutional memory and strategic stability in school governance (Barasa et al., 2022).

#### 4.4 Conclusion

Effective implementation of the 100% transition policy requires a holistic approach addressing the adequacy of infrastructure, sustainable financing, equitable teacher deployment, and availability of instructional resources. Without coordinated investment across these areas, disparities in access and quality will persist, undermining the policy's goals.

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