

## The Impacts of Free Quality Education on Households in Makeni City

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### ABSTRACT

The specific objectives are to determine the impacts of free quality education on teachers' performance, students' learning outcomes, and parents' perceptions about free quality education. The descriptive research design was used to conduct the study, with a sample of 61 teachers, 100 parents, and 100 pupils selected purposively in the case of the teachers and randomly in the case of the parents and pupils across the board in Makeni City. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources, with a questionnaire as the primary instrument for collecting primary data. The significant findings were that the free quality education was free tuition with no extra charges and a supply of exercise books and textbooks. However, it lacked active school feeding and free school buses. In addition, it affected teachers' performance in terms of competency in teaching their subjects, assessing students, and dealing with their colleagues. Some of the recommendations were that there should be frequent refresher training, active school feeding in all schools, mass sensitization, and effective monitoring in schools in Makeni City.

**Keywords:** Academic, Assurance, Education, Performances, Quality.

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### INTRODUCTION

There was a widespread interest in improving the levels of academic performance in schools. Education in developing countries was critical as international effects were galvanized towards attaining internationally agreed targets to expand and improve education as part of the Education for All (EFA) movement. However, at the same time, a potential crisis in teaching threatened the ability of governments of developing and developed countries to reach this target (MBSSE 2020).

The social benefits are tied to improving access to more significant numbers of younger people to post-primary education and training opportunities and laying stronger foundations for skills for lifelong learning. The interest in raising levels of achievement has led to a focus on identifying the range of factors that shape achievement as well as understanding how these factors operate to limit or enhance the achievement of different groups of learners, hence necessitating the implementation of the free quality education in Sierra Leone by the Government of Sierra Leone. This research focuses on assessing the impacts of free quality education on households in Makeni City, Bombali Sheborah Chiefdom, Bombali District.

For several years, education in Sierra Leone has been characterized by severe challenges such as high tuition, unavailability of learning materials, and poor condition of service for teachers, among others. These challenges were more severe for people living in rural areas and were believed to be a significant factor for the high dropout rate and illiteracy across the country. In response, Sierra Leone (GoSL) 2018 government introduced the Free Quality School Education (FQSE), which is believed to increase enrolment in schools and reduce the economic burden of parents to pay fees and buy exercise books and textbooks. Owing to his background, this study determines the effects of free quality education on the welfare of households in Makeni, northern Sierra Leone. This study will be based on the perceptions of teachers and parents on how they think the FQSE has impacted their welfare.

Many people, however, are unfortunate to benefit from the socio-economic desirability of education mainly because of the high tuition and learning materials charges. As it is seen by some international organizations as a right individual should enjoy, the “Right to Education” is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 2015); and the Millenium Development Goal 2 (MDG 2); and made compulsory upon state actors to provide free primary education for all citizens of their countries (UN, 2015). In addition, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) emphasized the need for education for all by coining the phrase “Include and ensure equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UNDP, 2015). The high preference given to education, as specified in some international instruments, suggests that education serves a crucial function in molding individuals’ behavior in conformity with the cultural standards of their societies.

According to Morrison (2013), free education is funded through governments or charitable organizations. Providing accessible and quality education enables people to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their potential as human beings and members of society. In the words of the Delors Commission, “Education is at the heart of both personal and community development; its mission is to enable each of us, without exception, to develop all our talents to the fullest and to realize our creative potentials, including responsibility for our own lives and achievement of our aims” (UNESCO, 1996). This statement emphasized the benefits of education, especially one with quality, also referred to as a good education. A good education affects a person’s life in many ways, such as a well-paying job, better opportunities, and a high standard of living; furthermore, it makes a person more intelligent. These benefits are not limited to the individual alone but to his/her family, community, and country (Blainey, 2015).

In the United States (US), state schools, also called public schools, are generally primary or secondary schools mandated for or offered to all children without charge, funded in whole or in part by the government through taxation (Chris, 2014). In 2013, about 87% of school-age children attended state-funded public schools (Michael, 2018). This has reduced the financial burden of low-income families that could not afford to pay fees for their children. Also, it is a significant factor in the increase in the US literacy rate from 81% in 2013 to 88% in 2018. Consequently, it is the main reason for the strong human capital base of the US (Robertson, 2018).

In recent years, some African countries have committed to supporting primary and secondary education in state-owned or public schools through taxation. Although challenges are associated with its effectiveness, some progress has been made (Summer, 2013).

In Senegal, the government fully funds primary education but does not fully guarantee free secondary education because education is accessible only to ages 6 to 16 (Ozturan, 2012). This has had more significant socio-economic impacts on society at various levels. It increased the literacy rate and has contributed to an increase in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Furthermore, many families (both high and low-income families) send their children to school with less economic burden for tuition and learning materials (Kumar, 2014).

In Sierra Leone, free quality education was launched on 20th August 2019 by Julius Maada Bio, president of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AYV, 2018). It was launched with the title "Free Quality School Education (FQSE)," one of his flagship programs to develop the country's human capital base. The program is called FQSE because the government has now controlled the education system at pre-primary, primary, junior, and senior secondary school levels. The FQSE package includes (but is not limited to) tuition, supply of core textbooks and exercise books, and the provision of subsidies to help run the schools smoothly. In the 2018/2019 academic year, the FQSE started by distributing over 12 million exercise books to pupils in all public schools: government and government-assisted schools. It distributed more than 94 containers of core textbooks and teaching and learning materials nationwide (Sheriff, 2019). In addition, school subsidies included substituting school fees, furniture, expansion of school infrastructure, providing school amenities such as toilet, water, and sanitation facilities, and personal hygiene kits for girls (Sheriff, 2019). This was followed by providing 50 school buses across the country, equitably distributed among the 16 electoral districts. These buses are meant to reduce the transportation challenge by carrying pupils to and from main junctions leading to their schools and homes at cost recovery (AYV, 2019).

These packages that are therein many Sierra Leoneans believe the FQE package to have impacted individuals, families, and communities at large by providing the required support needed for children to achieve quality education. The facilities of the FQE further motivate parents to send their children to school because of the decreased economic burden of paying tuition, buying books, and spending much on transportation for children to go to school (Sesay, 2019). This development in the educational system of Sierra Leone is explicitly believed to have increased school enrolment in the country. It has shifted the economic burden from parents in paying fees and buying books to the central government, which now funds pre-primary, primary, and secondary education through tax and donations. Also, locals have been allowed to perform significant functions in ensuring that quality education is provided to children in their localities (SLBC, 2019).

Despite this progress, the FQSE is perceived to be characterized by some challenges which tend to be more severe among low-income families and people living in relatively isolated settings. It is, therefore, against this backdrop that this study will be carried out.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This generally refers to the type of investigation used to carry out this research. The overall strategy used to integrate the different components of the study coherently and logically is a descriptive survey. This method enabled the researcher to collect adequate data through questionnaire administration and desk surveys. A systematic summary of the data followed this to determine the absolute frequencies of each question and then presented on tables and charts to determine relative frequencies to critically describe the issue under investigation. The integration of these methods was appropriate because it achieved a reliable and valid result by investigating each specific objective to achieve the study's general aim.

The targeted population of this study were teachers of Makeni City, parents or household heads, and the pupils of Makeni City. Since Makeni City is a large municipality, it was challenging to cover the entire city. However, it was then divided into different sections from which schools were selected. Teachers were selected from the targeted schools, totaling 61 teachers, and 100 parents and household heads were selected randomly. Additionally, 100 pupils were selected purposively for this research, implying that 261 people were considered the targeted population. Seventy-eight people were randomly and purposively selected, representing the study's sample size.

The method used to select these teachers was simple random sampling. A sampling frame was first constructed by reviewing the appropriate document containing a list of all the teachers. The Teaching Service Commission reviewed this list.

Data presentation includes the pictorial representation of the data by using graphs, charts, maps, and other methods. This method helped add the visual aspect to the result, making it much more comfortable and quicker to understand (Philemon, 2018). Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data to discover useful information, inform conclusions, and support decision-making (Suite, 2015).

For this study, the data collected from the field were cleaned and summarized according to responses. The researcher then used tables in Microsoft Word to determine the total responses for each question. Furthermore, charts in Microsoft Excel were used to determine percentages for each variable in the questionnaire. This was followed by an interpretation of what each figure suggests, after which conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Section A: Selected Characteristics of Respondents (Teachers)**

This section examined data on the respondents' profiles and considered sex, age, marital status, the status of a teacher, category of schools, highest qualification, major field of study, years of teaching experience, and average monthly income. As shown in Figure 1 below, 60.7% of the respondents were males, while 33.3% were females. This shows that most of the respondents were males implying that there were more male teachers than female teachers in Makeni.

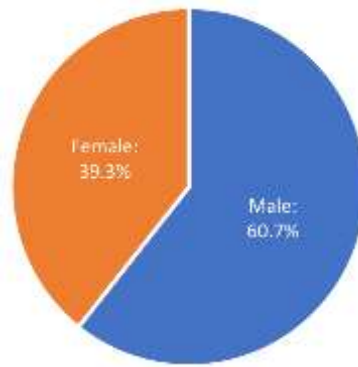


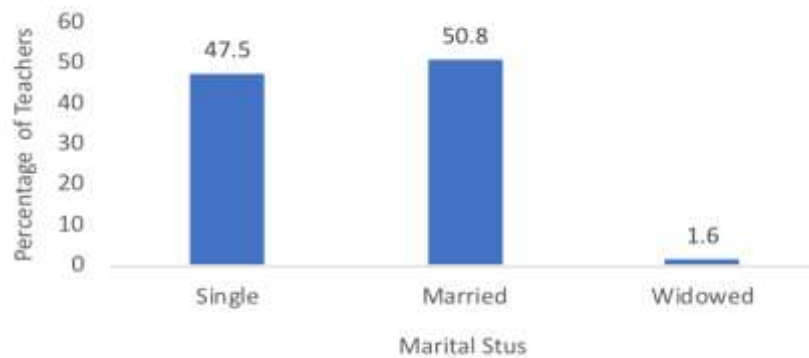
Figure 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents (Source: Field Survey, 2022).

**Table 1.** Average Age and Teaching Experience of Teachers

	M	SD
AGE	36 years	7.15
Teaching Experience	6 years	3.39

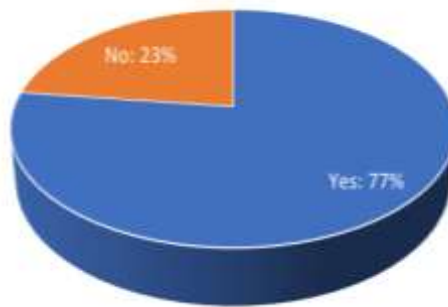
Source: (Field Survey, 2022).

The data in the table below represents the ages of respondents. The majority of the teachers are 36 years old. This implies that a significant number of the teachers in Makeni were youths. Moreover, 3.39% of them have six years of teaching experience.



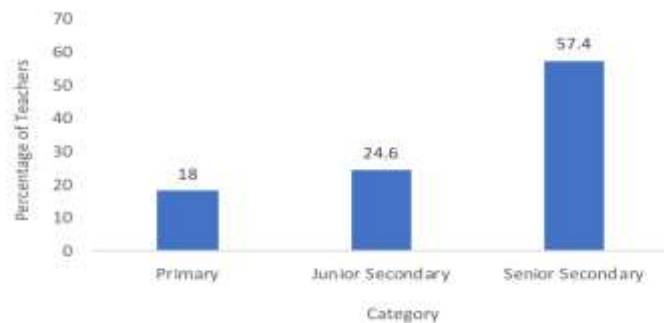
**Figure 2.** Marital Statuses of Teachers Source: (Field survey, 2022)

Figure 2 shows that 50.8% of the respondents were married, 1.6% were widowed, and 47.5% were single. This implies that the majority of the respondents were married.



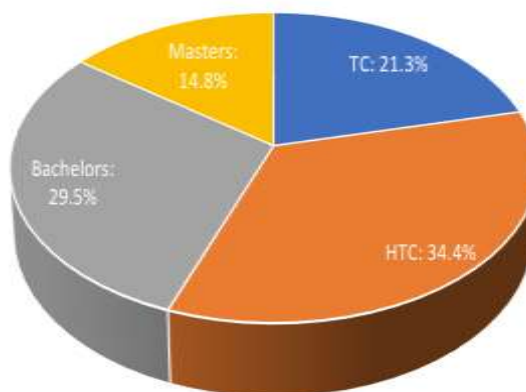
**Figure 3.** Teachers on Payroll Source: (Field survey, 2022)

Figure 3 above shows that 77% of the selected teachers were approved, while 23% were not. This implies that most of the respondents were approved.



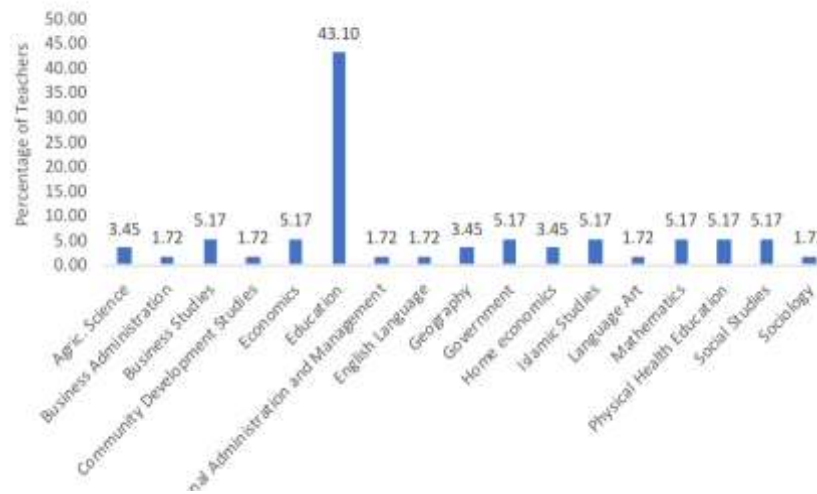
**Figure 4.** Category of Schools Source (Field Survey, 2022)

The data in Figure 4 above 18% of the respondents were primary school teachers, 24.6% were junior secondary school teachers, and 57.4% were teachers of senior secondary schools. This means senior secondary school teachers constituted the majority of the respondent.



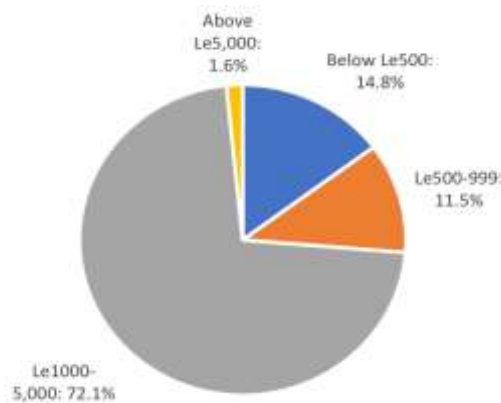
**Figure 5.** Educational Qualification of Teachers Source: (Field Survey, 2022)

From the data in Figure 4, 21.3% of the teachers had TC, 34.4% had Higher Teacher Certificates (HTC), 29.5% had Bachelor's Degrees, and 14.8% had Master's Degrees. This shows that the majority of the teachers targeted had HTC.



**Figure 6.** Major Fields of Study (Source: Field survey, 2022)

The above chart presents the major field of study of the respondents. 43.10% of them studied education, and an equal percentage (5.17%) studied Business Studies, Economics, Government, Islamic Studies, Mathematics, Physical Health Education, and Social Studies. Also, an equal percentage (3.45%) of respondents studied Agric. Science, Geography, and Home Economics, 1.72% of them studied Business Administration, Community Development Studies, English Language, Education Administration, and Management, Sociology, and Language Arts. This implies that the majority of the respondents studied education, suggesting most of the respondents were trained and qualified.



**Figure 7.** Average Monthly Income of Teachers Source: (Field survey, 2022)

According to the data in Figure 7, 14.8% of the respondents earned below Le500 monthly, while 11.5% earned between Le500-999 and 72.1% earned between Le1000-5000. Also, 1.6% of the respondents earned over Le5000 monthly. This implies that most respondents (72.1%) earned between 1000-5000 monthly.

#### 4.1.2 Perception of the Effects of Free Quality Education in Makeni

This section encompasses teachers' understanding of free quality education, level of satisfaction with the implementation of free quality education, Perception regarding the Implementation of Free Quality Education, teaching competencies of teachers - knowledge, teaching competencies – engagement.

**Table 2.** Teachers' Understanding of the Free Quality Education

	Yes (%)	No (%)
No tuition fees in primary and secondary schools	93.4	6.6
No extra charges for primary and secondary schools	72.1	27.9
Free supply of exercise books	90.2	9.8
Free supply of textbooks	85.2	14.8
Active school feeding	24.6	75.4
Free school bus for students/pupils	21.3	78.7

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

93.4% of the respondents opined that the free quality education was tuition-free, while 6.6% said there was no free tuition in the free education of Makeni. 72.1% of the respondents believed there were no extra charges for free quality education, while 27.9% believed there were extra charges. It also reveals that 90.2% of the respondents believed there was a supply of exercise books, while 9.8% said there was not. 85.2% of the respondents believed there was a supply of textbooks, while 14.6% believed there was no supply of textbooks, 24.6% believed that free quality education was accompanied by active school feeding, and 75.4% said there was no active school feeding. 21.3% of respondents said there were free school buses for all students, as opposed to 78.7% who said there were no free buses.

**Table 3: Teachers' Level of Satisfaction with the Implementation of the Free Quality Education?**

	M	SD
Free supply of exercise books	2.9	0.52
Free supply of textbooks	2.8	0.71
No extra charges for primary and secondary schools	2.6	0.74
No tuition fees in primary and secondary schools	2.5	0.85
Free school bus for students/pupils	2.1	1.10
Active school feeding	2.0	0.89

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Very dissatisfied), 1.50 to 2.49 (Dissatisfied), 2.50 to 3.49 (Satisfied), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very satisfied)

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

Table 3 shows that respondents (M = 2.9; SD = 0.52) were Satisfied with the Free supply of exercise books, and (M = 2.8; SD = 0.71) were Satisfied with the Free supply of textbooks, (M = 2.6; SD = 0.74) admitted that the extra charges in primary and secondary schools are satisfied (M = 2.5; SD = 0.85 are satisfied with the tuition fees in primary and secondary schools, while (M = 2.1; SD = 1.10 are Dissatisfied (M = 2.0; SD = 0.89) are dissatisfied with active school feeding.

**Table 4.** Teachers' Perception Regarding the Implementation of the Free Quality Education

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Increased school enrolment	3.1	1.01
Increased number of schools	2.8	0.86
Improved interest and involvement of parents in education	2.7	0.73
Improved student/pupil learning outcome	2.5	0.83
Improved teacher performance	2.5	0.83
Improved school/classroom facilities	2.4	0.78
Improved school infrastructure/building	2.4	0.80
The reduced financial burden of households on education in Makeni	2.3	0.90
Improved teachers' conditions of service	2.0	1.04

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Strongly disagree), 1.50 to 2.49 (Disagree), 2.50 to 3.49 (Agree), 3.50 to 4.00 (Strongly agree)

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

This data shows that respondents ( $M = 3.1$ ;  $SD = 1.01$ ) indicate that they agree there is an increase in school enrollment ( $M = 2.8$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ) implies that the respondents agreed with the statement that free quality education increased the number of schools, improved interest, and involvement of parents in education, improved student /pupil learning outcomes, improved teacher performance, ( $M = 2.4, 2.3$ ) indicate the respondents disagree that free quality education improved school/classroom facilities, improved school infrastructure/building. ( $M = 2.0$ ) according to the respondent, they strongly disagree that free quality education has improved teachers' service conditions in schools in Makeni City.

**Table 5.** Teaching Competencies of Teachers - Knowledge

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Knowledge of how to teach the subject	2.9	0.83
Knowledge of the Sierra Leonean context and goals of education	2.7	0.80
Knowledge of the physical, socio-cultural, and psychological characteristics of learners	2.7	0.83
Knowledge of how to assess learners	2.7	0.91
Knowledge of subject content	2.6	0.97
Knowledge of international context and goals of education	2.5	0.92
Knowledge of fundamentals of education governance and channels of communication	2.4	0.83

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not competent), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less competent), 2.50 to 3.49 (Competent), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very Competent)

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

According to respondents, teachers are less competent (2.9) in the knowledge; how to teach the subject, the Sierra Leonean context and goals of education, the physical,socio-cultural, and psychological characteristics of learners, how to assess learners, subject content, and international context and goals of education. Although many teachers are competent (2.9) in practicing these activities above, they must be very competent to give quality output. The need for teachers training to capacitate them in

service delivery is significant and should be done regularly to improve their output and enhance quality education.

**Table 6.** Teaching Competencies of Teachers - Practice

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The practice of participating in and supervising extra-curricular activities	2.9	0.73
The practice of safeguarding human rights and lives	2.8	0.86
The practice of delivering lessons	2.8	0.89
The practice of assessing learning	2.7	0.95
The practice of Planning learning activities and programs	2.5	0.81

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not competent), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less competent), 2.50 to 3.49 (Competent), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very Competent)

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

According to respondents ( $M = 2.5$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ), teachers are competent in planning learning activities and programs, delivering lessons, assessing learners, participating in and supervising extra-curricular activities, and safeguarding human rights and lives. Although many teachers are competent in practicing these activities above, they need to be very competent to give quality output.

**Table 7.** Teaching Competencies of Teachers - Engagement

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Engagement professionally with colleagues	2.8	0.87
Engagement professionally with own development and academic leadership	2.8	0.79
Engagement professionally with statutory and administrative authorities	2.7	0.81
Engagement professionally with learners	2.6	0.73
Engagement professionally with society	2.6	0.85
Engagement professionally with employers	2.5	0.83

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not competent), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less competent), 2.50 to 3.49 (Competent), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very competent)

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

From the table above, teachers are competent in dealing with colleagues and their development and academic leadership. However, according to respondents, they are also competent in dealing with learners and society (2.6).

**Table 8.** Teaching Competencies of Teachers - Leadership

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Leadership by leading professional engagement	3.0	0.65
Leadership by leading professional knowledge	3.0	0.72
Leadership by leading professional practice	2.9	0.69
Leadership by leading organizational management and transformation	2.8	0.67
Leadership by nurturing self for leadership excellence	2.7	0.73

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not competent), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less competent), 2.50 to 3.49 (Competent), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very competent)

Source (survey, 2022).

According to the respondents, it shows that teachers should be relied on as they are competent in nurturing self for leadership excellence (2.7), leading professional knowledge (3.0), leading professional practice (2.9), leading professional engagement (3.0) and leading organizational management and transformation (2.8).

**Table 9.** Influence of the Free Quality Education - Knowledge

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Knowledge of how to teach the subject	2.8	0.79
Knowledge of the Sierra Leonean context and goals of education	2.7	0.81
Knowledge of how to assess learners	2.7	0.87
Knowledge of fundamentals of education governance and channels of communication	2.6	0.84
Knowledge of the physical, socio-cultural, and psychological characteristics of learners	2.6	0.82
Knowledge of subject content	2.6	0.88
Knowledge of international context and goals of education	2.4	0.69

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (*Not influential*), 1.50 to 2.49 (*Less influential*), 2.50 to 3.49 (*Influential*), 3.50 to 4.00 (*Very influential*)

Source: (Field survey, 2022)

The above table shows that ( $M = 2.8$ ;  $SD = 0,79$ ) free quality education greatly influences teachers' knowledge of teaching subjects, assessing learners, fundamentals of education governance, and communication channels. It is also influential on learners' physical, socio-cultural, and psychological characteristics ( $M = 2.4$ ;  $SD = 0.69$ ), indicating that it is less influential on knowledge of international context and goals of education.

**Table 10.** Influence of the Free Quality Education - Practice

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The practice of delivering lessons	2.8	0.74
The practice of participating in and supervising extra-curricular activities	2.7	0.79
The practice of safeguarding human rights and lives	2.7	0.94
The practice of assessing learning	2.7	0.83
Practice Planning learning activities and programs	2.6	0.88

\*"Real limits" of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (*Not influential*), 1.50 to 2.49 (*Less influential*), 2.50 to 3.49 (*Influential*), 3.50 to 4.00 (*Very influential*)

Source: (Field survey, 2022)

The respondents who participated in the survey admitted that the free quality education is very influential in delivering lessons, participating in and supervising extra-curricular activities, safeguarding human rights and lives, assessing learning, and planning learning activities and programs.

**Table 11.** Influence of the Free Quality Education – Engagement

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Engagement professionally with statutory and administrative authorities	2.7	0.76
Engagement professionally with learners	2.7	0.85
Engagement professionally with colleagues	2.7	0.85
Engagement professionally with own development and academic leadership	2.6	0.86
Engagement professionally with employers	2.6	0.76
Engagement professionally with society	2.6	0.84

*\*\*“Real limits” of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not influential), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less influential), 2.50 to 3.49 (Influential), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very influential)*

Source: (Field survey, 2022)

Table 11 shows that free quality education is influential in engagement professionally with statutory and administrative authorities, learners, colleagues, own development and academic leadership, and society.

**Table 12.** Influence of the Free Quality Education – Leadership

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Leadership by leading professional practice	2.9	0.68
Leadership by leading professional knowledge	2.9	0.70
Leadership by nurturing self for leadership excellence	2.8	0.70
Leadership by leading professional engagement	2.8	0.61
Leadership by leading organizational management and transformation	2.8	0.64

*\*\*“Real limits” of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Not influential), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less influential), 2.50 to 3.49 (Influential), 3.50 to 4.00 (Very influential)*

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

Table 12 shows that the respondent admitted that leading professional practice, leading professional knowledge, nurturing self for leadership excellence, leading professional engagement, and leading organizational management and transformation influence free quality education.

**Table 13.** Improvement in Student Learning

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Psychomotor learning: demonstrated by physical skills	2.7	0.72
Cognitive learning: knowledge recall and the intellectual skills	2.7	0.70
Affective learning: demonstrated by behaviors	2.6	0.62

*\*\*“Real limits” of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (No improvement), 1.50 to 2.49 (Low improvement), 2.50 to 3.49 (Moderate improvement), 3.50 to 4.00 (High improvement)*

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

Respondents were questioned to rate the improvement of student/pupil learning outcomes using the following scale; no improvement, low improvement, moderate improvement, and high improvement as a result of the implementation of free quality education. Psychomotor (demonstrated by physical skill) and cognitive learning, which includes knowledge recall and intellectual skills, is measured to be improved at the same rate 2.7 of the respondents stated that both Psychomotor learning and cognitive learning have moderate improvement, affective learning, which is demonstrated by behavioral

change measured in the above table according to respondents is also believed to have been a moderate improvement.

**Table 14.** Positive Effect of the Free Quality Education on the Improvement of Education

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Cognitive learning: knowledge recall and the intellectual skills	2.5	0.67
Affective learning: demonstrated by behaviors	2.5	0.65
Psychomotor learning: demonstrated by physical skills	2.5	0.74

*\*\*“Real limits” of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (No effect), 1.50 to 2.49 (Less effect), 2.50 to 3.49 (Moderate effect), 3.50 to 4.00 (High effect)*

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

The table shows that free quality education has a moderate effect on cognitive learning (0.67), affective learning (0.65), and Psychomotor learning (0.74).

**Table 15.** Performance of Students

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attendance rates	2.8	0.74
Graduation rates	2.6	0.88
Student achievement	2.5	0.67
Teacher satisfaction	2.3	0.87
Discipline referrals	2.2	0.85

*\*\*“Real limits” of the scale: 1.00 to 1.49 (Unsatisfactory), 1.50 to 2.49 (Moderate satisfactory), 2.50 to 3.49 (Satisfactory), 3.50 to 4.00 (Highly satisfactory)*

Source: (Field survey, 2022).

Attendance rates ( $M = 2.8$ ;  $SD = 0.74$ ) satisfactorily believed to have been impacted by free quality education, graduation rate ( $M = 2.6$ ;  $SD = 0.88$ ) was satisfactory, student achievement was satisfactory, and teacher satisfaction and discipline referrals were moderately satisfactory according to respondents.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study, it can be concluded that the free quality education in Makeni was free tuition, with no extra charges. The supply of exercise books and textbooks also accompanied it. There was, however, no active school feeding and no free school buses to transport students/pupils to and from schools. It also affected teachers' performance by making them competent in teaching lessons, dealing with their colleagues and teachers, and in their self-development and leadership. In addition, free quality education was very influential in the teachers' knowledge of their subjects, how to assess learners and the fundamentals of communication. However, there is a need for improvement in practicing learning activities and programs. In order to ascertain the reliability and validity of this study, it was suggested that it be conducted in other areas.

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