

Assessment of factors responsible for the performance failure in public secondary schools in Tanzania: The case of Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Jackson M.E. Muhoho¹ and Josephine Mchome²

¹Assistant Lecturer, Department of project planning and Management, Tengeru Institute of community development (TICD), Arusha, Tanzania

²Student, Tengeru Institute of community development (TICD), Arusha, Tanzania

Copyright © 2014 ISSR Journals. This is an open access article distributed under the *Creative Commons Attribution License*, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT: This paper identified and assessed factors responsible for failure in the public schools in the year 2013. The findings confirm that during the past five years, Tanzania has experienced alarming student failure rates in the public schools in particular. This paper revealed that most of the public schools have acute shortages of text books as well as laboratory equipment, incompetent and unmotivated teachers and also heavily lacking sound learning infrastructure. This study, due to financial and time constraints, adopted a case study design to strengthen investigation and therefore chose to use kinondoni district. A sample of 50 respondents was drawn and created by the use of both simple random sampling (to obtain 30 students), and purposive sampling (to get 10 parents/households, 5 head teachers, and 5 district education officers). Questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, observation, and review of existing education reports were employed to collect data. Data analysis was done through excel software. The study concludes and recommends the government should improve work environment by attractive salaries, better treatment of teachers, and provision of sound learning equipment and infrastructure, total subsidisation of the public schools education service delivery and ensuring effective management of this vital sector to the socio-economic development of this nation.

KEYWORDS: education policy, public schools, student performance.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Throughout the world the education factor is highly linked with the socio-economic development of any given nation (Sadker, 1995; Kuleana, 1999). Tanzania like any other thriving nation has been at the forefront stage armed with Tanzania development vision 2025, Millenium development goals, and National strategy for growth and reduction of poverty (NSGRP) to embark on efforts and various programs aiming at promoting educational excellences among its communities and groups (TETPO, 1995; Athumani, 1995). However, the results of these efforts seem not to tally with expectations since over the years it continues to witness and experience mass failure at lower levels of education i.e. the primary and secondary schools which further suggests few candidates get chances to proceed with tertiary education level (Suleman and Rakesh, 2004).

This study was strongly motivated by the public secondary schools mass failure performance and therefore undertook investigative enquiry upon a target population of head teachers in schools, students, parents and district education officers, with a view to identify, and assess the factors responsible for the failure contrary to national expectations and goals in the education system. Lack of sound learning equipment and infrastructure, lack of quality and shortage of teachers and presence of low motivated teachers has been strongly and repeatedly mentioned as being the core factor that drives students and public schools performance into failure score (Chediell, Sekwao, and Kirumba, 2000). This is vividly reflected and substantiated in the education sector performance evaluation reports of both SEDP I, SEDP II, and ESDP.

The Secondary Education Development Programme II (SEDP II) happens to be a continuation of SEDP I, which was implemented between 2004 and 2009, building on the national goals of secondary education provision. The programme

vision, as reflected in the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) 2008 - 2017 document, is meant to continue to have upgraded and coherently planned, managed and monitored education sector, secondary education sub-sector inclusive, that will develop human capital in order to boost economic growth and eliminate poverty. As in SEDP I, the changes, reforms and interventions reflected in the SEDP II were meant to continue to improve learning outputs and outcomes through teacher capability improvements and promotion of teaching and learning environments. These improvements would lead to increased achievement and competencies of learners and teachers, which in turn would also reflect efficient and effective output/outcome of secondary education (Chedié, Sekwao, and Kirumba, 2000).

Overall, the objectives of SEDP I were to improve access with equity, quality, management and delivery of secondary education in Tanzania. The review of SEDP I implementation has shown that the Programme was most successful in improving access and equity. The number of secondary schools has been more than tripled between 2004 and 2009 to serve different underserved communities and so has the number of enrollees. Despite these successes, there have been a number of challenges, including the following:

1. Poor performance in secondary education examinations, with most students getting marginal pass of Division IV or failing completely.
2. Acute shortages of teachers, especially in the sciences and mathematics, with many students not able to do these subjects at all.
3. Asymmetrical deployment of teachers of required, whereby urban areas have an advantage in recruiting more and better teachers compared to rural community secondary schools, most of which have an acute shortages of teachers.

It was the purpose of this study to explore and measure the responsibility borne by the above factors on the education sector performance. In doing so, the following has been studied and assessed accordingly:

- To find out government efforts in improving education performance in public secondary school
- To examine challenges faced by public secondary school
- To suggest and /or recommend solutions to alleviate failure in public secondary schools.

2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the research methodology followed in the study. It describes the research design; study area, the sampling techniques as well as tools used in collecting data and information (Kothari, 2004; Kombo, and Tromp, 2006).

2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a case study design so as to strengthen the depth of investigation of the population under enquiry (Kothari, 2004; Kombo, and Tromp, 2006). Kinondoni District is being used in this study to represent the case since it is manageable and realizable within the present research financial and time constraints.

2.3 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individual or object from population such that the selected group contains element representative of the characteristic found in the entire group. Probability sampling is the main sampling method in which the researcher applied. It was not easy to study the population as whole and so probability sampling (simple random sampling) and non-probability sampling (purposive sampling) was used in the study.

In probability sampling random sampling was selected and the researcher use lottery system to get 30 students in three schools of which ten students from each school where units was given numbers written on the uniform piece of paper then put them in the container mixed thoroughly and take out the required sample in random manner from the container.

In non-probability sampling purposive sampling was used to get specific respondents, this was used to get 10 parents from the household who only has children in secondary school, district education officer (DEO) and head from selected secondary schools who was selected purposively to provide relevant information.

2.3.1 SAMPLE SIZE

Sample refers to the number of respondent, was used to select in the study in order to provide required information (Kothari, 2004). The researcher was use the sample size of 50 respondents, where by the researcher was grouped the respondent into the following groups such as 30 students, 5 head teachers, 10 parents and 5 district education officers

Table 2.3.1 Shows the distribution of respondents

S/N	Categories of respondent	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Head teacher	5	10
2	District education officer	5	10
3	Parents	10	20
4	Students	30	60
	Total	50	100

Source: Research Design, 2013

2.3.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The study employed different methods so as to collect the accurate and required data in the study i.e questionnaires, interview, focus group discussions, observations and review of existing documents. These methods enable the researcher to obtain the needed information and data. Both primary and secondary data were obtained. Primary data are those data which are collected afresh and for the first time and therefore happen to be original in character (Kothari, 2004; Kombo, and Tromp, 2006), while secondary data are those data which have already been collected by someone else and which have already passed through previous process (Kothari, 2004).

Questionnaires

The list of questions for questionnaire was set for each heads of secondary schools, students and other respondents. They conceded of both closed and open ended questions. The use of questionnaire is more advantageous because it involves several respondents who answer a set of questions at once and also give respondents a greater feeling of privacy and minimizes interview bias.

This method was used to parents, students from different secondary schools, head teachers and also district education officer. This was used to collect data from respondents for the study because it help the researcher to gather much information from various people; so far the researcher was able to collect information about the respondent's personal characteristics and environment which is often a greater value in interpreting results.

Interview

Face to face interview was conducted in which respondents were asked questions to elicit information and data that describe answers to the main question under investigation such as to reveal why failure and what should be done to curb the situation in long term perspectives and permanent remedy

Observation

Observation is a method of data collection where by information obtained without asking the respondents. The information was obtained by looking or investigating effectiveness of the schools administrative system. The method enabled a researcher to visit places where and how Government make effort for the development of the schools in Kinondoni municipal.

Focus group discussion method

This method was conducted among the groups of students with the view of knowing the factor responsible for failure in public schools to their side, and what is should be done to reduce failure.

Documentary review/review of existing reports

This is the technique of collecting information from the data which have already been collected by someone else or other agencies. In this method a researcher utilizes secondary data by looking information that was taken from Kinondoni municipal documents. For example documents from news papers, internet, magazine, reports and other publication.

2.3.3 DATA PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data processing

The collected data was edited and examined to detect errors and omissions before coding them so as to make them amenable for analysis.

Data analysis and presentation

The collected data were analyzed and presented by excel graphs, charts and tables as well as documentation. Thus the percentage and totals according to categories of respondents were done by using excel software.

The term analysis refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for patterns of relationship that exist among data-groups, therefore the data collected was presented in term of tables and pie charts so as to help the reader understand them clearly.

3 DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section is designed specifically to present data collected in the field as well as interpretation and analysis so as to enable the whole concept of the study and research to be understood clearly for uptake purpose and usefulness. The presentation and analysis has been done according to the research questions and hence the specific objectives.

The major objective of this study was to assess the factors responsible for failure in public schools. In order to capture the reality of the above objective, the research questions were advanced. The first question aimed at finding Government efforts in improving education performance. The second question aimed at finding out the challenges facing public secondary schools. Lastly the third question identified the strategies done by the government to remove or curb the failure in public secondary schools.

This study sought to assess the factors responsible for failure in public secondary schools in Kinondoni District. The researcher interviewed 45 respondents constituting a success rate of 90 percent achieved from a sample of 50 respondents categorized in four groups as follows: 30 students, 5 head teachers, 10 parents and 5 district education officers.

3.2 RESPONDENTS CHARACTERISTICS DISTRIBUTION

The study also composed of different sex respondents that are male and female from interview, questionnaire and focused group discussion which are the methods of data collection in order to reduce the biases so as to promote the equality to both male and female in information collected.

3.2.1 RESPONDENTS BY AGE GROUPS DISTRIBUTION

The study involved respondents of different age groups distribution this aimed to eliminating the age biasing in responses. The below table shows the respondents in terms of their age groups.

Table 3.2.1 Respondents by age groups

Age	Sample size	Cumulative frequency	Percentage
14-30	15	15	31.25
31-40	20	35	41.66
41-50	15	50	27.08
Total	50	50	100

Source: research findings, 2013.

It can be observed that from age between 14-30 of 15. Respondents which is 31.25% from secondary school and other from household, Age between 31-40 of 20, respondents which is 41.66%, from District education officers and head teacher as well age between 41-50 respondents which is 27.08% from parent.

3.2.2 RESPONDENTS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

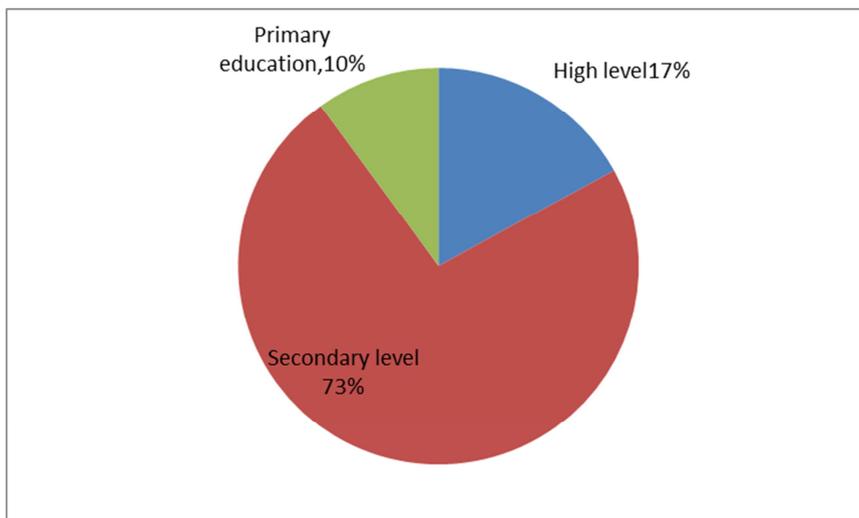


Figure 3.2.2 Respondents by the level of education (17% High level, 73% secondary level, 10% primary education)

Source: Research findings, 2013

3.3 RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

What are the efforts of the government in improving education performance in public secondary schools?

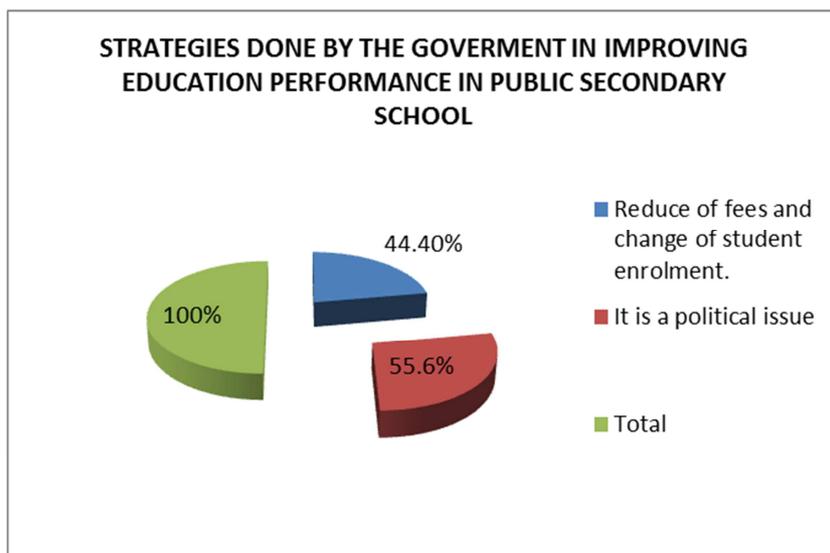


Figure 3.3.1 Shows the effort done by the government in improving education performance in kinondon municipal.

Source: Research findings, 2013

In order to answer the above question the respondents who were interviewed by 44.4% they said the Reduce of the school fees and change the of students enrollment, there was contribution in education performance around their places from the government while the remaining percent which accounts 55.5% of the respondents said no there are no any contribution from the government.

INTERPRETATION

During the field work through interview and focused group discussion Documentary Example files of the Mabibo secondary school sum of education officer and parent through their respondents by all, what are the efforts of the government in improving education performance in public secondary schools?

REDUCE OF SCHOOL FEES AND CHANGE THE OF STUDENTS ENROLLMENT

This question were asked to 5 key respondents who are head of school teachers and district education officer. This is 44.4% of all respondents and they commented that yes there is the relationship between lowering of secondary school fees and Enrollment where by for the two schools which were Mabibo secondary schools shows how the enrollment increased compared to the time before the lowering of of school fees and the remained three schools which started after the lowering of school fees that are Mburaati secondary schools shows how the enrollment increased year after year because of the low fee. The head teacher at Mabibo secondary school commented that the enrolment increased about 20% in the year 2005 when the fee was lowered as shown in the table below , where th head teacher of Mburiati secondary school has commented that the enrolment rate increase 90% and they enrol 200 student in form one each year.

Table 3.2 Shows the number of enrolment at Mabibo secondary school three years before and three years after the lowering of school fees.

Years	Number of enrolment	percentage	Cummulative percentage
1999	130	10.2%	10.2%
2000	114	8.9%	19.1%
2001	120	9.4%	28.5%
2002	200	15.6%	44.1%
2003	218	17.0%	61.1%
2004	230	18.0%	79.1%
2005	267	20.9%	100%
Total	1279	100	100

Source: Research findings, 2013

Respondents has commented that the issue of lowering secondary school fees by the government on january 2005 was a political issue because it was the year of general election in Tanzania and so they lowered the fees inorder that when it comes to the election the rulling part could get many vote from the citizens.

Respondents commented that lowering of school fees decreases child labour because many children from the poor families, orphans get the access to secondary education and they escape the issue of going in the streets to find jobs so as to get money to pay for their fees as it was before the reduction of school fees.

Respondents has commented that the lowering of school fees lead to the poor quality education because the government does not provide enough aids to the schools so that they can operate well where they are saying that there is lack of teaching and learning materials which made parents to find for private tuitions for their childrens. Also they commented on its effect on high enrolment rate, and lack of teachers where the study have shown that parents and students believe that the most important factor determining the effectiveness of a school is the existence of teachers who are able to use interactive method and maintain an active learning environment. So school with poorly trained teachers are unpopular and higher pay school attract qualified teachers.

3.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

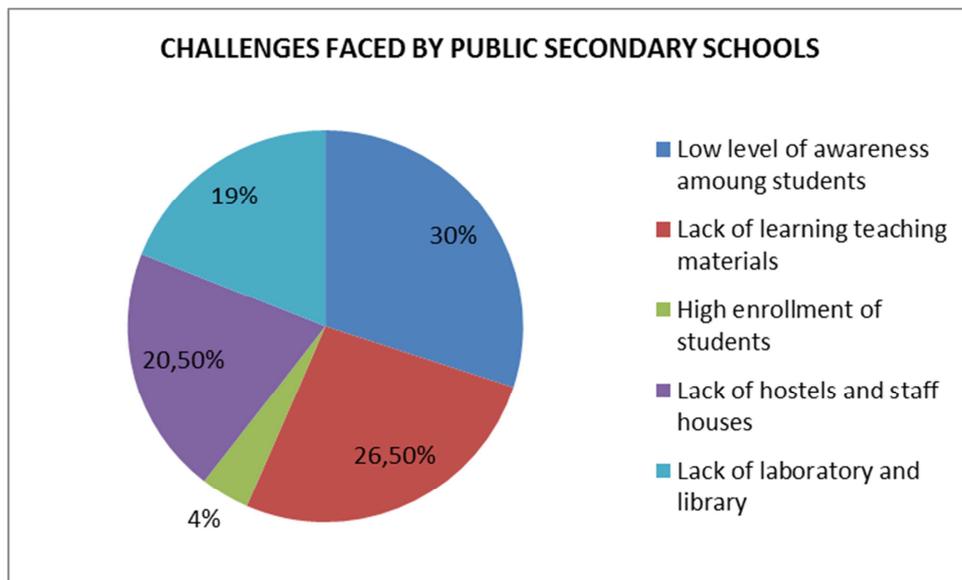


Figure 3.3.2 Shows the Challenges faced by public secondary schools effort in kinondon municipal.

Source: Research findings, 2013

INTERPRETATION

From the above figure, during the field work through interview and focused group discussion to the Mabibo secondary school sum of education officer and parent through their respondents by all, they respond to the question challenges faced by public secondary schools.

Low level of awareness among students

Interviewed teachers, students, parents and district education officer are saying that most of students are not aware of what they are doing at school and when asked them that why are they at school you will find them saying because the fee is low without ambitions about what next after my studies. This implies that most of students are not caring enough to what they have to do in school which lead to the poor performance among them.

Lack of learning and teaching materials

In improving education the government of Tanzania the researcher found that lack of learning and teaching material are among the factor which lead poor performance in public secondary because it lowered the fees but still it does not provide these schools with learning and teaching materials. For head of schools which the researcher has visited commented that one book is shared by many students in the class and so the situation is very difficult for students to learn also for the teachers to teach therefore it becomes an obstacle to a good performance.

High enrollment of students

Interviewed head of school teachers, district education officer and students has commented that big population among these community schools is an obstacle to the students performance. The interviewed teachers commented that since the lowering of school fees the student enrollment increased compared to the school facilities such as classrooms, tables, chairs, teachers and the like, they also commented that one teacher attend three classes per day due to large number of students (World bank, 2009). So high enrollment also becomes an obstacle to better students performance in these schools because its increase does not associate with many other factors such as increase of teachers, infrastructure and teaching and learning materials (World bank, 2009).

Lack of hostels and staff houses

The respondents has argued that due to the lowering of school fees many have get an access to secondary education therefore others are from far and they have to find for places to stay and find a way on how they will stay which make them to use much of the time to find food and other staffs which will enable them to stay far from their home and this takes student time for studying instead which can affect their performance. Also they have argued about teachers having no places to stay around the school environment where they are living far from their working environment which simetimes cost them and being absent to the work for some days, so for the teacher absenteesm affect the students performance.

Lack of laboratory and library

Respondents has argued that government schools can not afford to build laboratories and libraries because the fees which has been lowered is not enough for them because even though it is low still there are students who are finishing school without finishing the fee and since the government does not provide these schools with enough grants to operate.

3.3.3 RESEACH QUESTION THREE

What should be done so as to reduce failure in public secondary schools?

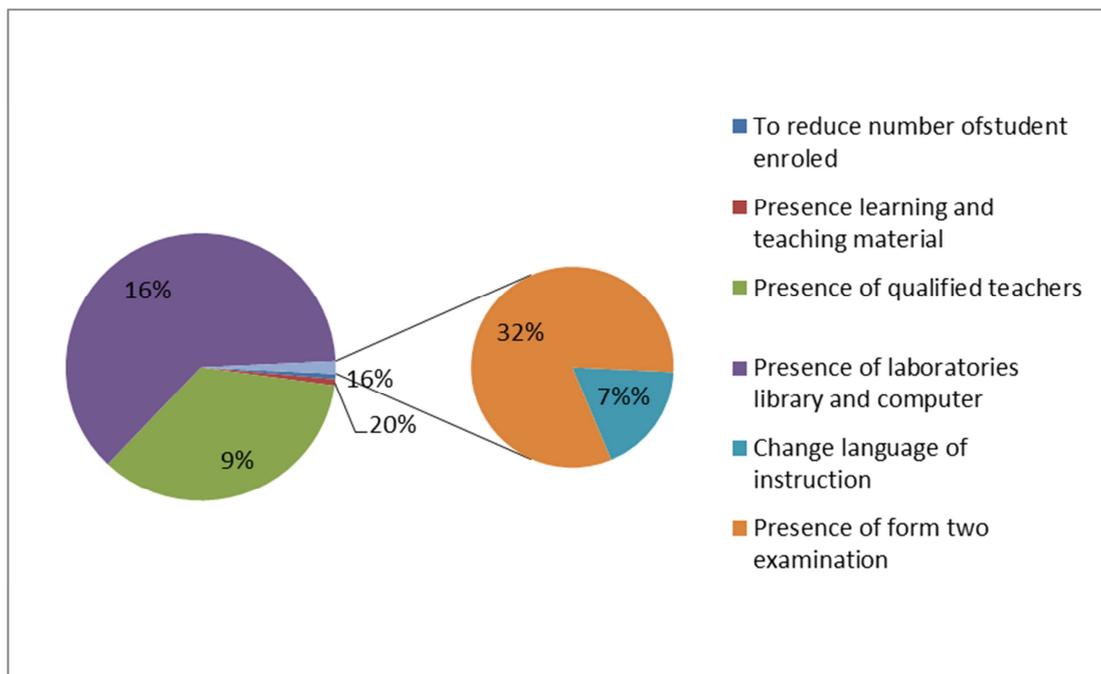


Figure 3.3.3 Things to be done to reduce failure in public secondary schools.

Source: Research findings, 2013

INTERPRETATION

From the above figure, during the field work through Interview, Observation and focused group discussion to the Mabibo secondary school, Mburiati secondary school, Umoja secondary school sum of education officer and parent through their respondents by all, they respond to the question. What should be done so as to reduce failure in public secondary schools?

To reduce number of students enroled

The lowering of school fees succeeded in expanding secondary education access to urban students, but there is serious problem of overcrowded schools, about 18 respondents which is equal to 9% of all respondents has commented on the alleviation of big number of enroled students in schools which does not match with the infrastructures available to these schools.

Presence of learning and teaching material

Efforts towards improving teaching and learning materials in schools for quality education attainment is needed more because the study has revealed that government financing of capitation grants to public secondary schools for the purchase of learning materials is not provided satisfactory and disbursed effectively. About 5% of the respondents has commented that increasing learning and teaching materials is a way to improve quality education especially in public schools.

Presence of qualified teachers

Interviewed respondent has argued that they believe the most important factor that determine the effectiveness of school is the existence of teachers who are able to use interactive methods and maintain an active learning environment and so schools with poorly trained and qualified teachers can not provide quality education. Therefore respondents were calling on the presence of qualified teachers as a way to provide quality education.

Presence of laboratories, library and computer

These are things which can promote a student to be updated with issues concerning their studies therefore absence of them in schools can make the education students are getting not quality therefore 5% of the respondents commented that government schools must have Library computer.

Change language of instruction

The respondents has commented that if the students in secondary schools were using kiswahili as their language of instruction they were performing very well because they know well kiswahili than the english language which is used to teach all subjects except kiswahili subject itself.

Presence of form two examination

Respondents commented that since the removal of national examination to the form two level students have been perform badly due to the fact that many are many are continuing with form three and four without having the passes required which will make them end up failing in form four national examination whereby they will not continue to advanced level studies.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents conclusion and recommendation; conclusions are given in accordance with research questions tested. Recommendations carry the possible solutions of factors responsible for failure of public secondary schools with reference to Kinondoni Municipal.

4.2 CONCLUSION

This paper revealed that, although the government had increased the students' enrolment by lowering the school fees, the quality of the teaching-learning environment has been impeded. This was in poor availability of teaching-learning facilities, increase of failure and supportive services, low quality learners entrants into secondary school education and lack of motivational strategies to teachers and students. Yet, others were the failure of the government to provide appropriate support and stimulate adequate community participation. The study noted that the community perceptions towards the lowering of school fees implementation as a process to attain quality education was negative.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper calls to the government and District Educational Officers in particular to align their efforts towards motivating the teachers and improving teaching-learning and working environment in schools for quality education. Furthermore, this paper recommends further studies to be done in other regions in rural and urban areas to establish a comparable pattern and trend. The Government in collaboration with Non-governmental organizations/private sector should review and formulate sound policies and strategies for empowering the citizens economically so as to have parents with income power to finance children's education. More education to sensitize over importance of education is still needed to urban and rural in particular.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kothari C.R. (2004): *Research methodology, methods ,and technques,2^e* ,New age international(P) Ltd,publishers ,New Delhi-110002,India
- [2] Athumani A. (1995): *Education for All in Tanzania 2000-2003, Lesson from Dodoma Urban and Kondoa districts*, A dissertation component of M. A. (Education) University of Dar-es- Salaam, Tanzania
- [3] TETPO (1995): *Education and Training policy*. Ministry of education and culture, Dar-es salaam
- [4] Chediel R. W, Sekwao N. and Kirumba P. L. (2000): *Private and Community Schools in Tanzania(Mainland)*, International Institute for Educational Planning/ UNESCO
- [5] Kombo D. And Tromp D. (2006): *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction*, Paulines Publication Africa, Kenya
- [6] Suleman S. and Rakesh R. (2004): *Secondary Education in Tanzania: Key Policy Challenges*, Working paper 04. 6, Hakielimu, Tanzania.
- [7] Sadker M.P(1995): *Teachers,schools and society*, 4th edition, Mc graw – Hill Companies Inc. New York
- [8] Kuleana (1999): Center for children’s rights The state of Education in Tanzania crisis and Opportunity, Mwanza.
- [9] World bank (2009): *Abolishing School Fees in Africa: Lesson from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Mozambique*.