Learning from Change: Benefits and Implications of Distinct Primary and Secondary Schools for Education in Zambia

by

Mukuka Mulenga-Hagane, Harrison Daka, and

Maureen Kanchebele-Sinyangwe
The University of Zambia

Abstract

This study aimed at examining the concept of change in the primary education sector through the lens of three in-service students of the University of Zambia, that were also serving as primary school head teachers or school managers for different schools. The study sought head teachers' experiences on the concept of having a distinct primary school void of basic or secondary school. The data collection and analysis was supplemented by document analysis of official policy documents. The case study research design of the qualitative mode of inquiry was used. The use of case studies can facilitate evidence based decision-making as it relates to the current changes in education. The three head teachers were interviewed to explain their experiences on what it takes to have a distinct primary school. The study was guided by the change theory and Participatory Learning approach. Findings revealed that having a distinct primary school free from secondary classes was difficult. In other words, change did not materialise in the studied schools as grades eight and nine were still a part of primary schools in all the three schools studied. Furthermore, there was no change in access. Respondents indicated that having an independent primary school was not easy because even Grade ten classes are at times, taught by primary school teachers in some subjects such as science. Change was said to affect demand for education negatively. This was because the studied schools were the only schools within the 30km radius in their locality where learners paid for boarding facilities to access the school. The proposed change, denied many families who could not afford to pay for boarding facilities a chance to access junior secondary education as access to secondary schools in the locality were non-existent. Upon analysing the findings, the following conclusions were drawn; the government needs to focus on expansion of existing primary schools into secondary schools to carter for the populations in far flung places. A different system of tier, that includes maintaining grades eight and nine in rural areas needed to be devised for the rural populations.

Key words: Change, Education, Independent Primary Schools, Policy

Overview

Zambia's general education system follows a five-tier hierarchy starting with early childhood education (ECE), followed by primary school, junior secondary, senior secondary, and tertiary or higher education (Mkandawire and Ilon, 2018). Early childhood education (pre-school) provides education for children aged 3-6 years while primary level caters for 7-13 year olds (grades 1 to 7) and the secondary level (combined junior secondary grades 8 to 9, and senior secondary grades 10 to 12) cater for 14-18 year olds. Tertiary education level includes universities and colleges (Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin, 2017).

The Government of the Republic of Zambia has developed plans consistent with the goals of using education as a means of development through the vision 2030 and the seventh National Development Plan. Although the Ministry of Education has over the years instituted interventions to ensure that all learners have access to education, there are still bottlenecks that make this difficulty. Some of these have been noted in the Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin (2017) as inadequate infrastructure and classroom space. It is in this spirit that, the education system has again undergone reform from the organised two levels namely; basic education running from grades 1-9, translated into 7 years of primary education and 2 years of junior secondary. The other level was the high school, running from grades 10-12 and secondary education running from grades 8 to 12 which has been over the years a trend in government and grant aided schools. There have been changes at junior secondary level or upper basic education level that may have a negative impact on attaining holistic education for both genders.

The importance of a country attaining equality in education is immense as is outlined in the seventh National Development Plan were an enlightened population has been identified as a basis for development in all sectors of the country. Perhaps for this reason, the country has reverted to the old system of having primary school from grades one to seven and secondary schools from eight to twelve, a system that had been abandoned by the previous government. This paper set out to consider benefits of educational reform at basic education level in Zambia. It further examined the implications of the shift.

Research Objective

The study sought to address the following objectives:

i.   To analyse head teachers' perceptions of having a distinct primary school.
ii. To assess the benefits of having distinct primary schools.

Research Questions

The study adressed the following research questions:

    i.   What were the head teachers' perception of a distinct primary school?

    ii. What were the benefits of having distinct primary schools?

Theoretical Framework

The study was influenced by the theory of change. This theory helps in understanding the connection between activities and achievement (Weiss, 1995). Weiss (1995) indicated that the theory of change aids in planning. This is because the theory shows how change happens and how progress can be measured to ensure desirable outcomes. Weiss further advises that for this theory to work, there must be clarity in what the people as well as the organisations aimed to achieve.

Kubisch, Brown, Chaskin, Hirota, Richman, and Roberts (1997) established quality control criteria for the theory of change. These are: plausibility, feasibility and testability. Plausibility here refers to outcomes and whether they make sense or if preconditions are necessary to achieve the required change. Feasibility refers to the extent to which the initiative can achieve its outcome in the long term and if the organisation has resources. Testability is the question on whether or not their indicators to measure outcomes are feasible. The theory of change is essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.

The theory is important to this study in that, it discusses preconditions that can enhance implementation of programmes and what stakeholders think need to be in place to effect changes. In short, a theory of change creates a working model upon which assumptions can be tested. It further provides indicators upon which evaluation can be instituted. Important in this is the role of stakeholders who determine what factors would lead to changes. Stakeholders determine activities to be worked on, identify contextual factors likely to affect the activities and the outcomes.

Literature Review

This segment presents literature review of the study aimed at analysing benefits and implications of distinct primary and secondary schools for education in Zambia. Education systems world over pass through changes. It could be change to harmonise the systems from decades of segregation and discrimination (Mahlangu, 2003) or changes to create space so that all people can be accorded a chance to learn regardless of gender (MOE, 1996) or current change in the Zambian education system to improve quality, access and retention of learners in school (Zambia Education Act, 2011).

There were changes in the Zambian education sector that aimed at addressing various issues such as tackling the problem of out of school children, covering for children with special needs and allowing mothers to get back to school. For example, the education broadcasting introduced Learning at Taonga Market that was aimed at targeting those children who are not in regular schools to have a chance to learn. In 2011, United Nation International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Statistics showed that Zambia is home to 6 million children under the age of 18 of which 4 million children are of the primary school age 7-14 (United Nation International Children Fund, 2011). United Nation International Children Emergency Fund (2011) further presents the problem of out of school children. Statistics show that there were '129,029 males that are out of school and 104,407 females' (UNICEF, 2011: 3).

Apart from the out of school problems, the Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin (2014) reports that the education sector still experiences infrastructure deficits. For example, some rural areas in Zambia have classrooms and accommodation for teachers that are temporary (MOE, Statistical Bulletin, 2017). Mwanza and Mkandawire (2020) equally indicated that lack of classroom space in schools is a factor that affects the implementation of a curriculum as it is considered a school problem. Although the government has tried to improve infrastructure in some rural areas, there is much more that needs to be done. The Ministry of Education Statistica Bulletin (2017) shows that government has expanded school infrastructure at both primary and secondary school level. This was to pave way for the new changes that require that some primary schools be upgraded to secondary schools while some secondary schools were rehabilitated.

To put the infrastructure struggles into perspective, in studied areas, infrastructure was not only inadequate but restrictive and mainly poor. For example, in one studied school, there was one permanent housing unit for the head teacher. The rest of the housing units were made of mud and poles. These houses or huts were made through partnerships with communities were schools are located.

The other changes that have characterised the education sector in Zambia started with the 1977 Education Reforms. A quick synopsis of the current change to the two-tier education system stems from the 1977 education reforms. The 1977 Education Reforms were the first ever to shape the education milieu until the change to basic education in 2002. The now abandoned system called basic education was adopted in 2002. The previous Movement for Multi Party Democracy (MMD) government started by first upgrading lower basic schools (grades 1-4 to full basic status (1-9) and then removing grades 8 and 9 from secondary schools and relocating them to basic schools. The aim of this plan was to ensure access to

junior secondary education. Whilst this was a welcome move, for a while, the new basic schools had their own distinctive structures. The only drawback was that new classes at Grade 8 and 9 levels, on average, had limited access to laboratories and metal and woodwork facilities required at the levels, in addition, the Ministry of Education Statistica Bulletin (2010) observed that such schools continued to suffer static infrastructure developments and lack of skilled manpower to handle higher classes.

Despite the change to basic education in 2002, the Ministry of Education still used the Policy of 1996 that acknowledged the learning levels as outlined in the first ever Education Policy of 1977. The current change shows that it is in tandem with the 1977 reforms that shows distinct primary and secondary schools. The Policy documents do not include community schools. Community schools were introduced to allow children in disadvantaged areas to access education.

Although it can be argued that Zambia must anchor her education system on kindergarten, primary, secondary, college and university, the Ministry of Education (2010) showed that community schools have improved access to education to the majority of rural and peri-urban children who are poor. Similarly, the introduction of basic schools improved access to education. The focus of the Ministry of Education (MoE) on basic education was important due to prevailing factors at that time where many children did not have access to basic education. It was critical for the MoE to address the basic needs in education especially from 2007. Ministry of Education (2010) reports that the country had a deficit of over 2 million school places, and so far, places for 1.6 million learners have been created from the change from primary to basic schools (MOE, 2010).

The final change being discussed here is that which came with the new Patriotic Front (PF) Government in 2011. When the new government came into power in 2011, there were several radical pronouncements, one of them included, the reversion to distinct primary and secondary schools. There was condemnation of basic schools. It was stated in the new government manifesto that the government would phase out basic education within three years of being in office and introduce a distinct primary, secondary and tertiary education system (PF Manifesto, 2011). This part of the manifesto has now come to fruition. This means that high schools have over the years been gradually taking in learners at Grade Eight and Nine levels unlike in the past where high schools were restricted to learners between grades 10 and 12. One argument for the change was that learners in basic schools were not being exposed to skilled teachers and did not have facilities that would provide a strong foundation for future learning. Another accusation labeled against the Ministry of Education was that they were focusing on basic education and

community schools, concepts which are unconventional and not in line with the Education Act. As a new government in power, the Patriotic Front Government argued that basic education and community schools are unheard of and hence, unconventional (PF Manifesto, 2011). The sentiments against community schools were that they helped to condemn Zambia's poor children to fate and a cycle of illiteracy, poverty and backwardness. The next segment presents the methodology that was used in the study.

Methodology

Herein lies the methods and techniques used in the fulfillment of the research.

Research Strategy

The study was influenced by tenets and principles of qualitative approach. The qualitative strategy was identified to suit this study as it allowed the researchers to explore issues related to distinct primary schools through the experiences of individual primary school head teachers.

Research Design

The study was a case study of three schools through the opinions and observations of head teachers of these schools; spread as follows, Lusaka, Western and Central provinces. These schools were selected through convenience sampling of head teachers studying at the University of Zambia.

Sampling

The sample was conveniently sampled. It consisted three head teachers doing their studies at the University of Zambia. Bryman (2014) defines convenience sampling as the kind of sample drawn from sources that are handy or within the reach of the researcher. This study sampled three head teachers that are students at the University of Zambia. The researchers, through lecture contacts were introduced to three head teachers, all being head teachers of primary schools. These schools were formerly basic schools.

Research Instruments

The study used semi structured interview schedules as well as participatory learning approaches. Chambers (2002) recommends participatory learning approaches (PLA) especially when researchers want to understand the contextual realities of participants. Mulenga (2011) used PLA in her study where she explored the possibility of using HIV prevention messages to halt the spread of HIV. This study is based on that experience and uses the the approach to learn about head teachers' experiences of the change in the education sector. Here, head teachers were asked to map their situations, outlying the change, contextual realities as well as expected outcomes.

Semi Structured Interviews

Semi structured interviews are the kind of interviews where the researcher asks questions which are treated as a starting point for a much wider discussion of a particular point (Wood and Smith, 2016). Thus, with semi-structured interviews, the interviewer was able to probe for more meaningful information on the research topic as the interviews progressed. Probing is one of the key features that makes the interview method of data collection unique and practical (Mkandawire, 2019). This enabled the interviewer to obtain more in depth data from the three primary school head teachers regarding their percetions on the benefits and implications of distinct primary education in Zambia.

Participatory Learning Action (PLA)

Semi structured interviews were preceded by Participatory Learning Action (PLA) exercises. Chambers (2002:3) defines PLA as "A growing family of approaches, methods, attitudes and behaviours to enable and empower people to share, analyse and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect". Participatory Learning Action emerged as a method used in developmental research. It was realised that developmental projects in the third world nations often do not work because donors often impose their philosophies on to the people. Such projects failed as the people do not have an input in their sustenance. This was what Freire (1993) was against, the concept of 'banking education' were people were treated as if they were incapable of analysing their situations and finding solutions to their problems.

The benefit of PLA exercise is on the part of the recipients as it helps them appraise themselves and analyse their situation. The aim of using PLA in this study was to essentially, empower head teachers to do their own appraisal of their situations. This would considerably help them be part of the process of resolving challenges they encountered in their communities. In this way, they would develop a sense of ownership of the solutions and would thereby encourage others to sustain them.

To ensure that PLA is carried out effectively, researchers should be facilitators. Chambers (2002:4) advises that researchers must not view themselves as 'teachers or transferors of technology but instead as convenors, catalysts and facilitators'. Researchers, in this study, assumed the role of facilitators. In this study, head teachers where asked to plan and map areas of their environment.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study used themes to dissect conversations the researchers had with the head teachers that served as respondents for this study.

Findings and Discussion

This segments presents findings of the study that aimed at analysing benefits and implications of the distinct primary school in the education sector. A discussion of findings occurs simultaneously or concurrently.

Continued Presence of Grades 8 and 9 in Primary Schools

The studied schools still had grades 8 and 9 as part of the primary school system. The reason given was that there were no secondary schools in the communities where learners could go. What this means is that, while the pronouncements were made about changing basic schools to primary schools, there has been very little change in infrastructure to facilitate the change. For this reason, grades 8 and 9 still learn in primary schools, eight years after the pronouncements for distinct primary and secondary schools were made. From the mapping by head teachers interviewed, the continued presence of grades 8 and 9 in primary schools would ensure access to junior secondary school by young people in the communities.

The study was informed that although the head teachers were happy that primary schools continued to carter for grades 8 and 9, they bemoaned the lack of science and mathematics teachers. For this reason, all the head teachers indicated that they relied on teachers that were trained to teach other subjects in order to fill the gap. For example, head teacher X said the following, *"a teacher, who was trained to teach Civic Education was re deployed to teach science."* Head teacher Y added the following, "*a teacher trained to teach geography was teaching mathematics"*. The head teachers were of the view that the lack of skilled teachers affected the results in mathematics and science. When requests were made for mathematics and science teachers, the head was informed that the district did not have such teachers.

4.2   Fewer Drop Outs at Grade 7 Level

The findings also showed that the continued presence of grades 8 and 9 at the primary school means that learners can access basic school and stay until grade 9. After this level, one head teacher said that Grade nines drop out completely due to the distance they have to cover to access the next secondary school. He said the following;

> *It is good that the basic form of education is here, it means that learners at least, can be in school until Grade nine. But after that I have seen many dropping out because the secondary school is in another district. Maybe this school can be expanded to include Grade 10 but then again we don't have buildings for accommodate this. (Head teacher X, 2019).*

Findings also showed that there are high dropouts rates at grade nine level in the community. This continued to widen the gap between rural and urban areas thereby increasing disparities.

One of the tenets of the current education policy 'Educating our Future' is the promotion of equity. It is stated that there be justice and fairness in the distribution of resources in education provision for groups such as the girl child, disabled and the rural child (Kelly, 1999; MOE, 1996). This should mean that rural areas have the same basic infrastructure and support as the urban counterparts to increase access, participation and retention.

Since the introduction of the free basic education policy in 2002, enrolment in basic education levels has steadily increased. However, children from poor households, rural children and girls are the last to enroll in school and the first to drop out, and are significantly underrepresented in the upper grades of basic education as well as the secondary level (Lungwangwa, Kelly and Sililo, 1999; McConnell and Mupuwaliywa, 2015). These are the groups likely to suffer with the current reversion to primary schools. For a learner in the urban set up, the change may have minor effects. This is because in urban areas, schools are often within walking distances and where distances to be covered are longer, some learners have access to different modes of transport. This is, sadly, not the case in rural areas where learners have to walk long distances to access the nearest school and in most cases, modes of transportation are limited. Head teachers in the study explained that learners still have to cover long distances to access education. One head teacher said the following: *'our children come from far flung places; we have a few who are lucky to live nearby but most of them have to start off early to come to school in time'* (Head teacher Y, 2019). This finding agreed with the Ministry of Education (2014) and a study by Mumba (2002) who stated that almost 20% of the children in rural areas live more than ten Kilometers away from school and in some cases or more.

Possible Improvement on Quality Graduates

Findings revealed that the proposed change was expected to improve quality both for learners that remain in primary school and those that proceed to secondary schools. However, this expectation was not to include graduates from the studied schools who did not have an opportunity to move to secondary schools before they qualifying to Grade ten. Head teachers support this move as one of them stated in the following statement;

> *Taking the eighth and ninth graders back to secondary schools will improve on quality. High schools have infrastructure as well as other*

resources that most grade 8s and 9s in many schools are not accessing at the same time teachers here would focus on the classes that they were trained to teach' (Head teacher Z, 2019).

The change to distinct primary, therefore, addresses the concern by Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) about the quality of graduates from basic schools. It has been argued that quality of basic education graduates had declined since the introduction of basic schools. Further, Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has pointed out that teachers are said to be inadequately trained and this has impacted on the quality of graduates can hardly read or write (ECZ, 2012). One head teacher also reported that some teachers were teaching pupils merely to pass examinations than understanding the skills and knowledge required as they did not fully know the subject matter themselves. This is what Mkandawire (2010) called the backwash effect of national examinations where pupils are trained to pass examinations than understanding the core values of the subject matter. This also goes back to the concerns expressed by the ECZ (2012) about ill-trained teachers that also mirrors a study by Mulenga–Hagane, Daka, Msango, Mwelwa and Kakupa (2019) on basic schools in Lusaka province which reported that resource constraints had an impact on the quality of education and assessment. And the blame has always been on the inefficiencies of basic schools that have been condemned for producing half baked learners. The inadequate training observed by ECZ was supported by findings in this study where teachers for civic education were used to teach science and mathematics due to lack of skilled teachers for those subjects.

There is lack laboratories for experiments and lack technical laboratories for experimental subjects. The Ministry of Education (2014) gives the following statistics for science laboratories in schools. In Central province, there were 32 science laboratories while in Western province the report indicates that there were 13 science laboratories and Lusaka had 70 (Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin, 2017). However, the studied schools did not have laboratories and did not have skilled science teachers as the following statement shows by head teacher Y *"my school does not have science teachers, one teacher volunteered to be handling science classes".* The participatory chats the head teachers provided also showed that their schools lacked libraries and did not have enough learning and teaching materials. The absence of teaching and learning materials in learning institutions contributes to poor academic achievements on the part of learners (Mkandawire, 2012). For this reason, while the move would impact grades Eight and Nine positively, those remaining in primary schools still need provision of resources to make quality education attainable.

Taking the above findings into account, the researchers point out that

merely moving grades Eight and Nine to secondary schools is a utopian way of looking at this problem. This is because secondary schools are also overcrowded, with basic essential laboratories and lacking other amenities that make learning worthwhile such as functional science laboratories, creative arts, sports facilities and appropriately qualified teachers (Mulenga, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2010). One may be correct to conclude that quality schools simply do not exist in the Ministry of Education, where the majority of Zambian children go.

We, therefore, state in agreement with the individual head teachers interviewed that the existing basic schools be expanded and equipped to create quality education. The move to relocate grades 8 and 9 will not improve quality in the already overcrowded classrooms in high schools where efficiency and quality are still questionable and where in 2009, 7% of learners repeated between grades 10 and 12 an increase from 1.5% whilst 6.4% repeated between grades 1-9 (MOE, 2017). This increase in repetition still points to how inefficient the internal formal system is and how much attention is required.

Head Teacher Uncertainty Over the Change

The study noted degrees of uncertainty expressed by head teachers on the continued presence of grades 8 and 9 in primary schools. The study was informed that they did not know for how long grades 8 and 9 would continue to be in primary schools. There has not been official communication from the Ministry of General Education. One head teacher had this to say: *'The Ministry has not told us anything. So we wait for them to give us direction if they decide to move grades eights and nines from the school' (Head teacher X, 2019).*

The head teachers' uncertainties, therefore, were affecting the teaching and learning morale. The fear is that when schools remove grades Eight and Nine from primary schools, the change would affect the local population negatively. The worry was that communities would be back to previous situations where many communities were educating their children only up to the level available near them, which will now be possibly up to seventh grade. This, therefore, needs critical analysis. In addition, head teachers reported that the change to distinct primary schools and the uncertainties that followed from lack of communication on what the change entailed had an adverse effect on the morale of teachers. The study noted that teachers felt that the new government made pronouncements without considering them and the contexts in which they work. Again here, Weiss (1995) discusses the importance of stakeholder involvement. She states that without the mapping out of the people that are to implement the change, the change will not be sustained as it would be antithetical to conditions in which it

would be implemented. Similarly, Santos (1995) suggests that critical analysis be combined with alternatives for them to work. We are therefore suggesting that there be expansion in schools offering upper basic education to include secondary classrooms. This is possible. This possibility should be hinged on the positives of the current state.

Access to Education

The head teachers reported that there was no change on access to education that came with distinct primary schools in their locality as the change has not materialised. This was because the studied schools have maintained the status despite the name change from basic to primary school. The unchanged status quo was reported as a good thing as it afforded a chance for learners to learn up to Grade nine in schools near them. This was a positive move. The essence of basic schools was to increase access to junior secondary in rural areas. The gist was that the majority of the people were in rural areas and where people needed basic education more. Learners in rural communities, like in the studied population, would have a chance to learn up to the junior secondary level without uprooting them from their settings (Chipindi, 2020). Many parents too would not need to worry about finances to send their children to boarding schools at this stage. The challenge with the rural areas is that private schools cannot be an alternative as these are for business (Mulenga – Hagane and Daka, 2019).

Calls by Head Teachers for Primary Schools to Remain Basic Schools

Another finding was that basic schools should remain in rural areas. This is because schools are not being built at the same pace as the policies are changing. If possible, government must maintain the status quo, especially for the rural areas. This argument is valid considering that in terms of location, 84.7% of the schools are in rural areas where the majority of the population lives (MOE, 2017; MOE, 2010). In addition, the calls by head teachers hinge on access and equity. This change ignored the fact that many basic schools are situated in rural areas. The implication for the change of basic to primary schools means that parents without finances to secure a place in boarding schools for their children have to withdraw their children from schools. Many learners will now have to dropout at end of primary education. Therefore, if there should be change, it should be in line with increasing access by expanding basic schools into fully fledged and well equipped secondary schools. Kubish, et al., (1997) present that conditions be filled before change can be fulfilled. In line with the theory of change, and the measurement of plausibility, it seems the change was not well thought out. Whilst government aimed at phasing out basic schools, the conditions in rural schools, for example,

inadequate secondary schools within where people live, makes this unattainable. The feelings of head teachers are in line with Busher (2006) who in his paper on change concluded that when change is imposed from outside, insiders tend to feel uncomfortable or demoralised hence, the need to involve them and assure them of their continued cohesion into the system and staff development. Similarly, theories of change also state the importance of stakeholder involvement as earlier indicated. It is, therefore, evident that this was not a well thought out plan by the government. From the concerns expressed by head teachers, the current changes seem to disregard social and demographic changes, vis a vis, populations and the need for higher tier of education in areas far away from towns and cities. In this case, it is clear that there is a disregard of the current social economic context of the population.

5.0 Conclusion

Busher (2006) advises on the need to ground change in its contexts. In addition, the theories of change discuss conditions that need to be fulfilled before change could occur. These include feasibility, plausibility and stakeholder involvement (Kubisch, et al., 1997). Right now, the government needs to ground changes in the current context. Contexts where there are few primary schools, basic schools need to continue and if possible expand such facilities to increase access to secondary schools within the vicinity of local populations. The main issue is not to improve access at primary level, as from data on Zambia, this has been done to an extent (Ministry of Education, 2010). So, what is needed is to build on this and if possible expand access at grades Eight and Nine where currently the greatest need is as only 0.02% of public schools offer grade Eight and Nine only.

We argue that basic education increased access to basic education. Whilst the provision of quality education seems to be a dream in the pipeline for the studied schools, the head teachers felt that there was an improvement. What is needed is the availability of manpower in science subjects as well as equipping the studied schools with the needed resources. At the moment, from conversations with head teachers, it was overwhelming that scrapping grades Eight and Nine at these schools will deprive learners of a chance to access education.

We further postulate, that the concept of keeping basic structure is in line with the justice principle. This principle entails that all members access basic needs, which includes education. Plato developed this concept of educational policy in his two largest works, Republic and the Laws. According to Plato, an ideal state must among other ideals embody justice (Blackburn, 2007). This concept is vital in the education sector worldwide. An education system should be hinged on justice,

especially for the poor who, in many instances, do not fight for fairness but to be a part of a system which they themselves do not perceive as unfair and are not likely to benefit from. It is often difficult for the poor to change the system to which their participation mostly ends at enrolling their children in school and then following laid down rules governing the system. However, bringing quality education to the poor masses and ensuring that they stay long enough in the system to benefit from it, can be seen as a form of justice. In line with this, this next segment critiques the perceived benefits of the current changes to the education sector.

Recommendations

The study, recommended the following:

(i)   The government should not just use political theory but should use educative analysis in developing appropriate strategies and tactics for reform in education. The change should be context specific.

(ii) The government should come up with clear policies to maintain the basic schools in rural areas where there are fewer secondary schools. This must include communication to relevant schools in order to remove uncertainties.

(iii) The government should build laboratories in primary schools to enhance learning of mathematics and science.

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