

# Fee-Free Education and Infrastructural Situation for Students with Disabilities in Public Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality

Ben Sanga<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Daphina-Libent Mabagala<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Theresia J. Shavega<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Phd Candidate, Faculty of Education, The Open University of Tanzania. P.O. Box 23409, Dar es Salaam.

<sup>2&3</sup> Faculty of Education, The Open University of Tanzania. P.O. Box 23409, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

\*Corresponding Author's Email: ben.sanga@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** There has been less knowledge on whether the introduction of fee-free education has affected learning environment particularly infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools in Tanzania. This study aimed at examining the influence of fee-free education to the infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. The study employed cross-sectional design, whereby, questionnaires were used to collect data. The study sample included one (1) Educational Officer, five (5) heads of schools, and 24 students with disabilities, who were obtained through purposive sampling technique. Other study sample included 73 teachers and 98 students without disabilities, obtained by stratified sampling technique, making a total study sample of 201 respondents. Factor, linear regression and correlational analyses were employed. It was revealed that fee-free education had significant influence to the infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools. The study recommended that since government is a major funder of fee-free education in public secondary schools, adequate budgets should be allocated to finance schools to enable provision of education in a friendly manner to all students including students with disabilities.

**Keywords:** Fee-free Education, Infrastructure, Students with Disabilities, Public Secondary Schools

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Universal education marks one of the significant concerns of governments around the world. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights mentions education, particularly elementary education, as a fundamental human right. At the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (EFA), the development community instituted the attainment of Universal Basic Education (UBE) as a top priority. About 189 nations and the international development community promised to guarantee universal basic education by 2015 (UNESCO, 2000).

This international demand on the need to implement universal basic education came as the result of the high cost of education to parents, especially for the poorest households, experienced in many countries (UNESCO, 2002). This was evident in various countries including Indonesia, China, the Solomon Islands, and many African countries where, parents

revealed that user fees was a major obstacle to enroll their children in school, including those with disabilities (Saroso, 2005; Yardley, 2005; Pacific News, 2005). Zambia's Central Statistics Office, as well, estimated that at least 45 percent of children who drop out of school did so because they could not pay school fees (Tembo & Ndhlovu 2005). Sanga (2016) revealed that the parents' responsibility in incurring cost of schooling has relationship with the increase to students' dropout rates and poor enrollment as well. It is evident that students from poor family backgrounds and marginalized groups including students with disabilities are the big victims of costs of schooling.

In adhering to the Education for All (EFA) goals, many countries initiated free education policy in primary schools. Free education is education funded through government spending or charitable organizations rather than tuition funding (Wikipedia). Free education provision has resulted to the increase of enrolment rates of students including disadvantaged groups like students with disabilities. In Kenya schools, for example, enrollment raised from about six million to about 7.2 million pupils, resulting in a gross enrolment rate of 104 percent compared with 87.6 percent in 2002. Primary enrolment in 1996 in Uganda was 2.7 million. As the result of abolition of tuition fees, by 2002, enrolment had surged to 7.2 million pupils (Riddell, 2003). Malawi experienced enrolment increase of over 50 percent from 1.9 million in 1993/4 to about 3.2 million in 1994/5. When Zambia started to implement free primary education in 2002, primary enrolments grew by 7 percent compared with only 2 percent in the prior year (Riddell, 2003).

In Tanzania, significant increases in school enrollment were observed following the implementation of the fee-free primary education through Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) in 2002. Due to abolition of tuition fees, enrolment raised from 4.8 million students in 2001 to 5.9 million students in 2002, the same to an increase of 1.1 million students in primary schools (URT, 2002). Prior successes of enrolment increase at early years of implementing free education in many of developing countries, has left aside the question of the impact of enrolment increase to infrastructural situation in schools particularly to students with disabilities .

In extending and widening of Education for All (EFA) goals initiated for the purpose of stimulating the provision of accessible, quality and equitable education for all, Tanzanian government have gone more further by introducing fee-free education provision at secondary schools level to increase students enrollment rate (Taylor, 2016) . On November 27, 2015 the Tanzanian government presented Circular 5 which implements the Education and Training Policy 2014 and directs public bodies to ensure secondary education is free for all children. This includes the elimination of all forms of fees and contributions. According to Tanzania Daily News (2016, January 30), a total of 131.4 billion Tanzanian Shillings was issued to implement fee-free education provision, whereby 18.77 billion Tanzanian Shillings was to be disbursed monthly, as declared by the government. Following the implementation of fee-free education, a total number of 538,826 students were enrolled in secondary schools at form one level in 2016, comparing to 448,826 students who were enrolled in 2015 before the establishment of the fee-free education provision. As well, there was an increase of 7512 students with disabilities in 2016, comparing to 4744 in 2009 in secondary schools (URT, 2016; URT, 2009). However, less was known on whether the financial resource allocated by the government to finance fee-free education at public secondary schools affected the infrastructural situation for students with disabilities.

People with physical disabilities are termed as among the most marginalized groups in the world, leading to wide exclusion of the group from quality education (Macleod, 2014). People with various disabilities have higher rates of poverty, poorer health outcomes and lower education achievements than people without disabilities (WHO, 2011). According to Canadian Human Rights Commission (2017), students with disabilities experienced, among others, unfriendly infrastructure comparing to their fellow students without disabilities. Following the implementation of fee-free education in public secondary schools in Tanzania, it was of the interest to examine whether the named challenge to students with disabilities exists.

For the named concern, preparation of suitable learning environment for students with disabilities is inevitable since, the disabled people holds the right to quality, accessible and equitable primary, secondary and higher level education. This is evident through The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which entered into force in 2008. The convention declared that disability is not only a social welfare matter but also part of human rights. Article 24 of the convention emphasized that: “*State Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of their disability*” (DFID, 2012).

Many countries, including Tanzania has ratified this convention. This was evident through the introduction of

National Policy on Disability (2004) in Tanzania, focusing on the development, rights and dignity of people with special needs, education being one (The Kesho Trust, 2013). Nevertheless, the level of implementation of this important obligation differs between countries depending on countries’ economic stabilities, political and governmental priorities and levels of awareness among leaders (Kattan, 2006). Specific analyses in countries’ education systems including in Tanzania was needed to be conducted to find out whether students with disabilities were well accommodated with education systems as equally to students without disabilities.

### *1.2 Problem Statement*

The establishment of fee-free education has brought significant rise of students’ enrollment in public secondary schools in Tanzania (URT, 2016). The increase of enrollment rates in schools demands preparation of friendly learning environment to accommodate all students regardless of their gender, economic status, students’ geographical locations as well as their disability conditions (Kabuta, 2014). Friendly learning environment, as expected by fee-free education provision at public secondary schools, among other things, involves assurance of accessible infrastructure for students with disabilities.

The increase of students’ population at schools without plans and adequate resources to prepare friendly learning environment, including infrastructures, raises a big challenge to students with disabilities, who are forced to struggle and compete the sharing of inadequate and unsupportive learning infrastructures with students without disabilities whose learning needs differs. Certainly, less was done to explore whether the implementation of fee-free education affected infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. This study, therefore, was set out to response to this key question.

### *1.3 The Study Objective*

Specifically, the study intended to examine the influences of fee-free education on the infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *2.1 Study Design*

This study used cross-sectional survey design. Cross-sectional survey design involves collection of data at one point in time across respondents (Creswell, 2012; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). Cross-sectional design was chosen because fee-free education provision has been implemented in a wider sphere of public secondary schools across the country and that, using of this design helped to collect data from a larger pool of participants in a single time quickly.

## 2.2 Area of Study

The area of the study is Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. Morogoro Municipality is one among the districts of Morogoro region. The rationale for choosing Morogoro Municipality as a study area was that, many of its educational institutions had infrastructures facilities which were not supportive to students with disabilities prior to the implementation of fee-free education (Kabuta, 2014). It was due to the named challenges, Morogoro Municipality had been sought to be an appropriate area to examine whether the implementation of fee-free education had managed to influence the infrastructural situation of students with disabilities in public secondary schools.

## 2.3 Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The total population for this study was 5361 people. Sample size for this study was 201 respondents, including; one district educational officer, five (5) heads of schools, twenty five (24) students with disabilities, seventy three (73) teachers and ninety seven (98) students without disabilities. The sample sizes for teachers and students were determined by Yomane's (1967) formula. Purposive sampling technique was employed to obtain the sample of district educational officer, head of schools and students with disabilities. On the other hand, stratified sampling technique was employed to obtain students without disabilities and teachers sample.

## 2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The study employed questionnaire method to collect data from respondents on their knowledge, perception and experiences on implementation of fee-free education and its influence on infrastructural situation for students with disabilities. The rationale for choosing questionnaire method was its ability to accommodate bigger number of respondents within short period of time. Also, it offered higher freedom for respondents to contribute to the study. Besides, the study employed factor, linear regression and correlational analyses to analyse data. Factor analysis examined variable items by rejecting items with poor loading factor while variable items with higher loading factor were retained for further analyses. Linear regression analysis was employed to examine the overall contribution of independent variable to the dependent variable, as well as examining significance of the study. Correlational analysis on the other hand examined the strength and direction of relationship between independent and depend variable and contribution of independent variable to the dependent variable.

## III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 3.1 Factor Analysis for Fee-Free Education

The independent variable on this study was 'free education'. The variable items under 'fee-free education' involved abolition of tuition fee; examination fee, academic fee, desks fee, construction fee, security fee, caution fee, and identity fee. The study adopted confirmatory factor analysis to test the validity of the attributes/variable items used in this study. The

factor analysis was carried out in order to find out whether fee-free education was directly linked with infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools. In factor analysis technique, the extraction of data was carried out whereby; the acceptable loading cut-off point as recommended in previous studies (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010 & Musabila, 2012) was normally +0.500.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was used to verify suitability of data for factor analysis. The result for KMO and Bartlett's Test was .936 sampling adequacy which is highly acceptable value as shown in Table 1. Also, factor analysis was significant whereby Significance value was .000 (Sig. value "p = .000) which is below the recommended value of  $\leq 0.5$  (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010 & Musabila, 2012).

Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test for Free Education

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.936
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.130E3
	Df	28
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Data, (2022)

Also, by the use of factor analysis, two (2) out of eight (8) variable items were removed or dropped since they were poor loaded factors, while six (6) variables with higher loading factor were identified and retained for further analysis of the study. Likewise, the Cronbach's Alpha for Fee-Free Education variable was .925, an acceptable value as recommended by Musabila (2012). The retained and removed loading factors, as well as Cronbach's Alfa for fee-free education variable are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Retained and Removed Loading Factors for Fee-Free Education Variable

Code	Variables	Value	Decision
C1	Abolition of tuition fee	.668	Retained
C2	Abolition of examination fee	.842	Retained
C3	Abolition of academic fee	.789	Retained
C4	Abolition of desks fee	.766	Retained
C5	Abolition of construction fee	.706	Retained
C6	Abolition of security fee	.696	Retained
C7	Abolition of caution fee	.451	Removed
C8	Abolition of identity fee	.451	Removed
Cronbach's Alpha (Overall) .925			

Source: Field Data, (2022)

### 3.2 Factor Analysis for Infrastructural Situation

The dependent variable was Infrastructure Situation, supported by five sub-variables namely; infrastructural availability, infrastructural adequacy, infrastructural accessibility, infrastructural condition and infrastructural repair and

maintenance. By the use of factor analysis method on infrastructural situation variable, the result of KMO and Bartlett's Test on measure of sampling adequacy was .943 which is considerable acceptable. In parallel to that, the significance value was .000 (p value = .000) which is significantly acceptable (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010 & Musabila, 2012) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test for Infrastructural Situation

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.943
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3.220E3
	Df	595
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Data, (2022)

Similarly, the study used 0.500 as a cut-off point in determining the loading factors. Using factor analysis, eight (8) out of 35 variable items were removed or dropped since they were poor loaded factors, while variables with higher loading factor were identified and retained for further analysis of the study. Besides, the result of Cronbach's alpha for Infrastructural Situation variable is .948 whereby the value is very good fit for the study and hence coinciding with recommendation presented by Hair et al., (2010) and Musabila (2012). The retained and removed loading factors, as well as Cronbach's Alfa for infrastructural situation variable are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Retained and Removed Loading Factors for Infrastructural Situation

Code	Variable	Value	Decision
DA1	Classrooms availability	.595	Retained
DA2	Laboratories availability	.562	Retained
DA3	Library availability	.633	Retained
DA4	Dining hall/canteen availability	.480	Removed
DA5	Administrative offices availability	.531	Retained
DA6	Wash rooms availability	.656	Retained
DA7	Play grounds availability	.659	Retained
DA8	Classrooms adequacy	.515	Retained
DA9	Laboratories adequacy	.617	Retained
DA10	Library adequacy	.590	Retained
DA11	Dining halls/canteen adequacy	.735	Retained
DA12	Administrative offices adequacy	.525	Retained
DA13	Wash rooms adequacy	.588	Retained
DA14	Play grounds adequacy	.570	Retained
DA15	Classrooms accessibility	.497	Removed
DA16	Laboratories accessibility	.616	Retained
DA17	Library accessibility	.530	Retained
DA18	Dining hall/canteen accessibility	.531	Retained
DA19	Administrative offices accessibility	.611	Retained
DA20	Wash rooms accessibility	.462	Removed

DA21	Play grounds accessibility	.607	Retained
DA22	Classrooms condition	.588	Retained
DA23	Laboratories condition	.455	Removed
DA24	Library condition	.496	Removed
DA25	Dining hall/canteen condition	.654	Retained
DA26	Administrative condition	.542	Retained
DA27	Wash rooms condition	.569	Retained
DA28	Play grounds condition	.587	Retained
DA29	Classrooms repair and maintenance	.680	Retained
DA30	Laboratories repair and maintenance	.536	Retained
DA31	Libraries repair and maintenance	.417	Removed
DA32	Dining hall/canteen repair and maintenance	.455	Removed
DA33	Administrative offices repair and maintenance	.512	Retained
DA34	Wash rooms repair and maintenance	.456	Removed
DA35	Playgrounds repair and maintenance	.649	Retained
Cronbach's Alpha (Overall)		.948	

### 3.3 Regression Analysis on the Influence of Fee-Free Education on Infrastructural Situation

After Factor analysis technique, the study adopted simple linear regression analysis to test the relationships among independent and dependent variables of the study. According to Field (2009), for linear regression to be a valid model, the observed data should contain a linear relationship. With the use of linear regression analysis; the model summary describes the overall contribution of the predictor variable (Fee-Free Education) to the dependent variable (Infrastructural situation). Using the value of R Square, the results shows that Infrastructural Situation is directly influenced with Fee-Free Education by 78.3% and adjusted R-Square of .782 as shown in Table 5. The given result provides the ground base that the assumptions on free education to influence infrastructural situation have positive relevance for further analytical concerns.

Table 5: Model Summary for Fee-Free Education and Infrastructural Situation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.885 <sub>a</sub>	.783	.782	.39374
a. Predictors: (Constant), Fee-Free Education				

Source: Field Data, (2022)

In parallel to that, the present study, as shown in Table 6, reveals that, Fee-Free Education has positive significant relationship with Infrastructural Situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools by a Significant value of .000 which is an acceptable value as suggested by Hair *et al* (2010); Pallant (2010) and Musabila (2012). Finally, Fee-Free Education has shown significant relationship with Infrastructural Situation with a contribution on Beta value of .885 ( $\beta = .885$ ).

Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis for Fee-Free Education and Infrastructural Situation

Model		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			T	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.623	.096		6.456	.000
	Fee-Free Education	.709	.027	.885	26.382	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Infrastructural situation						

Source: Field Data, (2022)

### 3.4 Correlations between Fee-Free Education and Infrastructural Situation

The study was interested to measure the association between fee-free education and infrastructure situation variables. Using Bivariate correlation technique, the result in Table 7 show that, there was a close and strong positive relationship between fee-free education and infrastructural situation as shown by a Pearson correlation ( $r = 0.885^{**}$ ) and a p-value of ( $p = 0.000$ ). This indicates that fee-free education has relative relationship with infrastructural situation and hence can be used to accelerate performance in infrastructural situation.

Table 7: Correlational Analysis between Fee-Free Education and Infrastructural Situation

		Infrastructural situation	Fee-Free Education
Infrastructural situation	Pearson Correlation	1	.885**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	195	195
Fee-Free Education	Pearson Correlation	.885**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	195	195
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Field Data (2022)

## IV. DISCUSSION

The study sought to determine the influence of fee-free education on the infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. Fee-free education with its variable items is discussed as one entity (fee-free education), while, infrastructural situation variable is discussed under items namely; infrastructural availability, infrastructural adequacy, infrastructural accessibility, infrastructural condition and infrastructural repair and maintenance.

The findings of the study reveal that, increasing of fee-free education provision is allied with increasing likelihood of infrastructural availability. These infrastructural facilities includes; classrooms, laboratories, library, administrative offices, washrooms and playgrounds. The findings in this study are in line with Phukubje and Ngoepe (2016) in South

Africa who revealed that students with disabilities assumed that laboratories and libraries were unavailable since the present ones were inaccessible to students with disabilities. The study further revealed on little funding on education as a causative of such infrastructural availability situation. The same findings were also given by the study by Kabuta (2014) in Tanzania who revealed that, infrastructural challenges faced students with disabilities including unavailability of important infrastructural facilities such as special washrooms, libraries and playgrounds were a result of little financial investments in education. The findings of the current study, Phukubje and Ngoepe (2016) and Kabuta (2014) findings are possibly caused by little priority and consideration given by governments among developing countries such as Tanzania and South Africa to the learning environment of students with disabilities.

On the other hand, the findings indicate that increasing fee-free education provision is connected to the increasing likelihood of an impact to the infrastructural adequacy for students with disabilities. In the same way Musalia (2005) found that provision of free education has an impact on infrastructural adequacy. The current findings are also in line with Khamati and Nyongesa (2013) who revealed that provision of fee-free education which increases students' enrolment at schools, is connected to adequacy situation of classrooms, libraries, laboratories and toilets, where, students with disabilities become big victims. Khamati and Nyongesa further revealed that if the government delay in making educational funds available, learning environment particularly infrastructural facilities adequacy is definitely affected both in the short and long term. Kilonzo (2007) study also revealed that persistent delays by the government in sending the money to schools was hampering the effective provision of fee-free secondary education and hence, affected infrastructural situation for students including those with disabilities. The findings of the current study, Musalia (2005), Kilonzo (2007) and Khamati and Nyongesa (2013) findings could possibly be due to the fact that governments are normally the main funders of education and once there is less funding or funding delays, learning environment particularly infrastructural facilities might negatively be affected.

Likewise, findings indicate that, increasing fee-free education provision is linked with increasing likelihood of an impact to the infrastructural accessibility for students with disabilities. In particular, findings imply that provision of fee-free education has an impact to the accessibility of infrastructural facilities for students with disabilities including; laboratories, libraries, administrative offices, dining halls/canteens and playgrounds. This is similar to the study by HakiElimu (2008) which found that fee-free education provision had an impact to the infrastructural accessibility for students with disabilities. HakiElimu further observed that due to less funding on schools, there was infrastructural inaccessibility to the extent that many students with disabilities, especially those with visual and physical impairments, struggled in their movements from one point to another within school premises. The

findings by HakiElimu might possibly due to the fact that most of rural areas where the study was conducted, public schools infrastructural situation is less friendly to students with disabilities due to less funding of education in rural areas comparing to urban areas.

The same study findings were given by Kabuta, (2014) who revealed presence of the contribution of free education to the infrastructural accessibility among physically disabled students in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. This is in line with The Kesho Trust (2013) in Tanzania who gave the same result that, students with disabilities, after the increase of students' enrolment rate brought by fee-free education, experienced infrastructural barriers. Infrastructural barriers experienced included inaccessibility of special unit, bigger number of steps in buildings and narrow doors which hardened easy passing for students with disabilities. The findings by Kabuta (2014) and The Kesho Trust (2013) are probably due to the truth that, provision of fee-free education offered increase of students' accessibility at schools, while, financial investment to the infrastructural renovation and expansion remained minimal. This has been evident in many of Tanzania's public educational institutions with less financial investment whereby students with disabilities experienced barriers in various infrastructural facilities and hence their learning process became harder (HakiElimu, 2008).

Not only that, but also there is the issue of infrastructural condition. Increasing fee-free education provision is associated with the increased impact to the infrastructural condition for students with disabilities. Specifically, the study found presence of the association between fee-free education provision and the condition of infrastructural facilities for students with disabilities including: classrooms, administrative offices, dining halls/canteens, wash rooms and play grounds. These findings are in line with HakiElimu (2008) which found that the physical infrastructure for many schools was unfriendly, conditionally poor and generally unsupportive for the needs of children with disabilities. In addition, the study revealed presence of open pits, large stones and mud around school compound. There were also dirty toilets where, a student with disability has to crawl through excrement. All these poor infrastructural conditions happened along with provision of fee-free education. The findings of this study might be resulted from little government's consideration on budget allocation to improve infrastructural condition so as to accommodate students with disabilities equally to those without disabilities.

Likewise, the study by Kabuta (2014) gave similar findings of the current study that presence of poor infrastructural condition was associated with little funding on free education. Kabuta further noted that, along with provision of free education through students' loans, infrastructure condition was good in administrative offices and ICT labs, while it was poor in areas such as dormitories and washrooms. The findings might be possibly caused by the fact that the conditions of

administrative offices and ICT labs were good since administrators and teachers spent much of their time in such places. Contrary to that, students including those with disabilities, experienced poor conditions in dormitories and washrooms since they visited much of their time and never shared the facilities with teachers and administrated. It was probably the reason for poor consideration of infrastructural condition experienced in such learning institutions.

Equally, results on infrastructural repair and maintenance signify that increasing of fee-free education funding is related to the increasing likelihood of infrastructural repair and maintenance for students with disabilities. Specifically, the study found presence of association between fee-free education provision and the repair and maintenance of various infrastructural facilities for students with disabilities including classrooms, laboratories, laboratories and play grounds. The findings concur with the study by Bakari (2017) in Ilala Municipality who found the higher need of repair and maintenance of infrastructures for students with disabilities as the result of little financing of schools, regardless of fee-free education provision. Bakari revealed presence of stairways and road with bad shapes that hindered access to movement for students with disabilities. The findings by Bakari (2017) might be caused by the reason that, many of urban public secondary schools are old and likewise, its infrastructures are too old as well to the sense that its repair and maintenance is much costly.

Similar findings were given by Kiyuba and Tukur (2014) who revealed that existing facilities at the schools such as toilets, classrooms and hostels were not user friendly for students with disabilities and hence needed serious repair. Also, there was lack of ramps and smooth pathways. Even where such equipment was available, they were in a bad state and needed repair or replacement. The current study findings, along with Kiyuba and Takur (2014) are probably due to the fact that awareness on the rights of people with disabilities form family to institutional levels rises differently. Some of public schools as agents of equality to students with disabilities delays to repair and maintain its infrastructures to suit needs of students with disabilities.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to findings from the study, it is concluded that fee-free education have significant influence on infrastructural situation for students with disabilities in public secondary schools ( $\beta = .885$ .  $P = .000$ ). In other words, effective provision of fee-free education by government' commitment in incurring adequate fund to finance schools is likely to improve infrastructural situation for students with disabilities. This involves assurance of infrastructural availability, adequacy, accessibility, good condition and timely repair and maintenance of infrastructural facilities to favour conditions of students with disabilities at public secondary schools. Students with disabilities under favorable and friendly infrastructural facilities at school are likely to attain good academic achievements equally to students without disabilities.

From the findings of this study, several recommendations can be drawn for the effective management of fee-free education and the learning environment of students with disabilities in public secondary schools. It is recommended that, since government is a major funder of fee-free education in public secondary schools, enough budgets should be allocated to finance schools to enable provision of education in a friendly manner to all students including students with disabilities.

In parallel to that, special budget for students with disabilities in public schools should be introduced. Government should also review a fee-free education circular by increasing the width of educational financing through cost-sharing. This will enable parents, community members and private sectors to contribute to various school development programmes such as improvement of learning environment for students with disabilities.

As well, it is recommended that further studies be conducted on the influence of fee-free education to the learning environment of students with disabilities in public primary schools level, so as to get a wider view of a matter at both levels of education and comprehend generalization of the findings.

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