

Influence of School Management Attitude on Implementation of Inclusive Education for learners with Disabilities in Regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive Education endeavors to make regular schools accessible for all school going children without discrimination in line with the EFA goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) No. 2 of Universal Education, the World Declaration on Education for All adopted in Jomtien Thailand (1990) and the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca Spain (UNESCO, 1994). Currently, most developed Countries have invested heavily in inclusive Education by providing teaching/learning facilities and training manpower. Asia, North East India, and Papua New Guinea have continued to show that inclusive Education does work well. However, most sub-Saharan Africa countries still haven't implemented inclusive Education. This could be attributed to financial constraints and lack of awareness on the need to academically empower children with Special Needs as well as inadequate trained personnel in SNE (UNESCO, 2008). In Kenya for instance, though the Government of Kenya (GoK) has enacted various pieces of legislation; The Disability Act 14 of 2012 (GOK, 2008). The ACT stresses that no person/learning institution shall deny admission to a person with a disability by reason only of such disability, the Sessional paper 1 of 2005 which emphasizes the need to have inclusive education (GoK, 2005) and the new Constitution (2010) which envisages inclusive Education in free Basic Education (GoK, 2010; Tororei, 2009), many school age going children are not still enrolled in schools though it is expected that every child irrespective of gender, disability, and race has a right to attain basic Education in Kenya. To achieve this, there is need to create awareness to school managers on the educational, social and adoptive problems that affect learners with special needs and how to support the program. Hence the need for this study to assess influence of Education Management Attitude on Implementation of Inclusive education for learners with Disabilities in regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to: establish the attitude of the school managers on Inclusive Education and assess how availability of teaching/learning resources influenced the performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub County; Vihiga County Kenya. The study used mixed methodology design with concurrent triangulation. The target population was 226 which consisted of 105 head teachers, 105 teachers and 16 education officers. The sample was 48 participants composed of 22 head teachers, 22 teachers and 4 education officers. Sample was from 105 schools, composed of 98 public schools and 7 private schools and systematic random sampling was employed. The study used inclusive management theory, and production function input output model theory. Data instruments; questionnaires for teachers and interview schedule for education officers. Piloting was done in three schools involving 10 participants who were not included in the study. Quantitative data was presented in descriptive statistics using tables, means, standard deviation, and percentages. Inferential statistics used where; Pearson, chi-square and ANOVA in SPSS Version 22. The study revealed that there were inadequate teaching and learning materials for learners with special needs although more than three quarters of the teachers held positive attitude towards LSN. It was recommended that there was need for more teacher collaboration, time and how inclusion programs should take place in school systems and Ministry of Education should provide a special education funds vote in the Free Primary Education to procure adequate teaching/learning resources.

KEYTERMS: Inclusive Education, Disability, Regular schools, Special Needs Education, Education/ school managers

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I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) states that many children with Special Needs still face exclusion in educational institutions worldwide (UNESCO, 2008). Inclusive education aims at transforming regular schools into centres that would cater for all children of school going age without discrimination of their inabilities. Failure to educate all children is an impediment to

attainment of the EFA goal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically SDG 2 of Universal Education. The World Declaration on Education for All adopted in Jomtien Thailand (1990), the Education for all goals (EFA) and the recent World Conference on special needs Education in Salamanca Spain (UNESCO, 1994) all affirm the need for inclusive Education.

Major impetus for inclusivity in education was given at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, held in Salamanca, Spain, June 1994 whose attendance was about 300 participants from different countries globally. Currently, most developed Countries have already implemented inclusive education by investing heavily in the provision of teaching/learning facilities and training manpower to ensure that Education is all inclusive (Ferguson, 2002; Gale, 2000). In Asia, North East India, and Papua New Guinea continued to show that even in low resourced settings with a lot of challenges, inclusive Education does work well. In Africa, the Dakar framework for action paved way for inclusive Education in initiating strategies to challenge marginalisation and exclusion of children with special needs (UNESCO, 2000). However, most sub-Saharan Africa countries still have a problem of implementing inclusive Education partly because of financial constraints to purchase facilities, lack of trained personnel and poor attitude by education managers towards inclusive education (UNESCO, 2008). Hence the need for this study. Countries which have achieved great strides in inclusive Education in sub-Saharan Africa include Burkina Faso and South Sudan.

In Kenya, the Government has formulated various legislative frameworks to bolster inclusive education. For instance; The Disability Act which stresses that no person or learning institution shall deny admission to a person with a disability by reason only of such disability (Act 14 of 2012), also through the Sessional paper 1 of 2005, there is need to have inclusive education (GoK, 2005). Moreover, the current Constitution of Kenya also envisages inclusive Education in which Basic Education is now free, compulsory and a basic right (GoK, 2010). It is expected therefore, that every child irrespective of gender, disability, and race has a right to attain basic Education. Schools are expected to integrate learners with special needs in regular primary schools to attain education. In this program, learners with special needs who previously have been referred to special schools and had been judged 'less able' are now integrated in regular primary schools. These learners include those with hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical disabilities, emotional and behaviour disorders, the gifted and talented, and the deaf blind among others.

However, for inclusive education to succeed there is need to create awareness to education managers to understanding the educational, social and adoptive challenges or issues that affect learners with special needs and hence develop strategies to support the program. This is because learners with special needs face numerous challenges such as ;being slow learners, they need special facilities, patience and understanding from both the teachers and other learners as well as the need for trained teachers. Hence the need for this study on Hence the need for this study to assess influence of Education Management Attitude on Implementation of Inclusive education for learners with Disabilities in regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to: establish the attitude of the school managers on Inclusive Education and assess how availability of teaching/learning resources influenced the performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub County; Vihiga County Kenya. Sabatia Sub-County in Vihiga County Kenya is densely populated with a large proportion of the population between ages 1-15 years GOK, 2008). Sabatia Sub-County has only 2 special schools to cater for children with special needs for the entire population; this implies that all the other learners with special needs have to be integrated in regular primary schools. Efforts have also been made to put in place special Units in regular schools to cater for the ever increasing population of children with special needs. Hence the need for proper implementation of inclusive Education to ensure that children with special needs get education and are not marginalized.

Statement of the problem

Inclusive Education' has gained currency in Kenya over the past few years because if learners with Special Needs are not given opportunity to develop their full potential through education, their own future and future of their families will be at risk of staying poor. It is government policy that inclusive education be implemented in regular primary schools. Although the Government of Kenya supports inclusive education through the free and compulsory basic education policy, it is still not clear how regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub-County of Vihiga County are implementing inclusive education in regular primary schools to make the program successful. There have been claims of poor Completion rates, frequent drop out in school and ultimately low academic performance especially for learners with special needs enrolled in regular schools. Studies reviewed heap blame poor facilities but no comprehensive study has been done to assess the education managers attitude towards the provision of T/L resources implementation of inclusive education.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish influence of management attitude towards implementing Inclusive Education for learners with disabilities in regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub County.

Research objectives

The Specific objectives of the study were:-

- i. To establish the attitude of the school manager on implementation of inclusive education for learners with disabilities in the regular schools in Sabatia Sub-County.
- ii. Assess the teaching/learning resource availability - use and effect on performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub County

Research questions

To guide this study, the following research questions were be used.

- i. How does attitude of the school managers influence implementation of inclusive education for learners with disabilities in the regular schools in Sabatia Sub-County?
- ii. To what extend does availability and use of teaching learning resources affect the performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub-County?

Research Methodology

The study applied mixed approach, that is, quantitative and qualitative methods.

Research Design

The study adopted concurrent triangulation design in which the researcher implemented the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same time frame and with equal weight (Creswell, 2009). This design generally involved the concurrent, but separate, collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data so that the research may best understand research problem. The researcher used this, design because it too with intense accuracy and described precisely what the researcher saw at the particular moment.

Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Sabatia Sub-County within the Vihiga County, Kenya. Vihiga County borders Kakamega County to the North, Nandi County to the East, Kisumu County to the South, and Siaya County to the West. It has 5 sub counties and the headquarters is at Mbale town. The sub-counties include Luanda, Emuhaya, Vihiga, Hamisi and Sabatia Sub-Counties.

Sabatia Sub County was selected because of the high number of children with disabilities (GOK, 2008). Whereas this was the recorded finding in the 2009 census, little is known about the preparedness of schools in the study area on the level of preparedness for inclusive education.

The target population of the study were learners with special needs in public regular primary (98) and (7) private regular primary schools in Sabatia sub County of Vihiga County. The other respondents consisted of Head teachers, assistant teachers, and officials from Ministry of Education (AEO, DQASO and EARC) in the Sabatia sub-county.

Target Population

In this study the target population comprised of 22 Head teachers, 22 teachers, and 4 education officers' make a total of 48 respondents.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The researcher used multiple sampling (triangulation) strategies. Stratified sampling will involve choosing samples from different categories among the 105 regular primary schools (i.e. 98 public regular primary schools and 7 private regular primary schools). Systematic random sampling was employed. The interval of selecting the school (nth value) will be the 4th. According to Kerlinger (1983) and Garet *al*, 1996, in Social science research, a sample of 10-20 per cent is adequate for data analysis in survey studies; thus a sample size of 20% will be considered in this study. Given 105 regular schools, 20% is about 20 public school and 2 private schools total of 22. Therefore, the sample size was 22 Head teachers, 22 assistant teachers, and 4 education officers' make a total of 48 participants.

Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interview schedule as instruments of data collection.

Questionnaires

The researcher used questionnaires for head teachers and teachers. Questionnaires with Likert scale were used to solicit data, Questionnaires are preferred for data collection in this study because they present an even stimulus potentially to large numbers of respondents simultaneously and provide the investigations with an easy accumulation of data (Creswell, 2013).

Interview Schedules

Interview guides for education officers were used to elicit data on implementation of inclusive education effect on performance of learners with disabilities and on factors that enhance implementation of inclusive education in regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub-County. Interview guides were preferred because they gave respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and also make suggestions.

Testing for Validity

In this study, the researcher validated the instruments to improve their accuracy in generating desired data sets using a pilot study. According to Ainscow (1999; Anis, 2006), a pilot study can be used to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Instruments used for data collection during the pilot study were assessed by the supervisors to identify weaknesses such as inaccurate questions and inconsistencies. Such deficiencies and inconsistencies were addressed by modifying the instruments accordingly before embarking on the main study.

Testing for Reliability

To ensure the reliability of instruments, the researcher used the test-retest method. The test-retest reliability method was used to establish an alpha (α) Cronbach coefficient value or KR20. A pilot study population was subjected to data collection instruments at different times within a period of two weeks during the first two weeks of the month of May, 2015. Inadequate items on the instrument were modified or discarded to improve the consistency of the items in generating the required data sets. For the purpose of the pilot study, three schools in the Sub County represented the target population. Reliability of instruments was ascertained using results of the pre-test study from respondents who were involved from the study population but were not included in the sample population. The results from the pre-test study were used to calculate the alpha Cronbach using the formula below;

$$\alpha = KR20 = k (S^2 - \sum s^2)$$

$$S^2 (k-1)$$

Where k = number of items in the instrument

S^2 = variance of all scores

s^2 = variance of individual items

An alpha (α) Cronbach value Coefficient threshold of 0.70 was used for the purpose of calculating the reliability score. Alpha coefficient (α) value was 0.83 was obtained, and thus the instruments were adopted as reliable for use in data collection.

Data collection Procedures

Primary data was collected by using a semi structured questionnaire which was administered by the researcher to all Head teachers and teachers selected to participate in the study. Questionnaires were distributed to selected respondents and filled with the guidance of research assistants. Participation was at individual level to maintain confidentiality. Interview guides were used to conduct a set of the oral questions for key informants that is education officers purposively selected. Document analysis was employed to gather secondary data on availability of teaching /learning resources and on the learner friendliness of environment for LSN in primary schools.

Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics was used to calculate the demographic characteristics of respondents and presented in tables, pie charts and showed central tendency to include means, modes, standard deviations and frequencies. Inferential statistics involved the use of Pearson correlation coefficient tests to determine the significant of the relationships between variables.

Objectives data was analysed per objective. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to analyse the data obtained. The process of data analysis utilised the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software program Version 22. In order to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables of the study, chi square tests were employed. Qualitative analysis involved inferences made from the opinions of the respondents. This technique entailed using content analysis based on analysing of meanings and implications emanating from respondent information and opinions. The qualitative data has been presented in form of narratives.

II. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussions were done as per study objectives as follows.

Establishing the Attitude of School Managers to implementation of inclusive education for Learners with Disabilities in regular primary schools

The First objective of the study sought to establish the attitude of school managers on implementation of inclusive education for learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub-County Vihiga County Kenya. Teacher attitudes towards LSN and inclusive education was determined from teacher feelings on a 5 point Likert scale of responses i.e. 'strongly disagree', 'disagree' undecided', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. More than three quarters (81.8%) of the teachers held positive attitude towards Inclusive education. The observed t test-results (7.689) for the attitude of teachers is greater than the t- critical value (2.000). This implies that the difference between the observed mean (2.1654) and the expected mean is statistically significant; this indicates that the teachers' attitude towards the inclusion Education in the regular classroom is positive

However, further analysis revealed a few varied opinions on willingness to implement inclusive education through teacher instruction. Many teachers are willing to implement inclusive education through their instruction process; teachers with more than 5 years of teaching experience are more willing to effect inclusive education than their counterparts with less than 5 years of teaching experience. It was observed that all the teachers who had undergone some training in SNE were all in agreement that there should be no segregation of learners. This same pattern applies to adapting and modifying the content of instruction and setting learning goals appropriate for each individual learner.

Attitude towards inclusive education has important implications because attitude has a major influence over behaviour whether discriminatory behaviour or the acceptance of Inclusive education. A positive attitude towards Inclusive education is necessary for stigma mitigation and provision of social support for inclusive education. Conversely, negative attitudes displayed by a sizable number of teachers such as not working with other teachers in planning the instruction to receive support from SNE teachers.

Teaching/Learning Resources Availability and use Effect on Performance of Learners with Disabilities

The second objective of the study was assess the availability and adequacy of teaching/learning resources for learners with special needs enrolled and the effect on their performance in regular primary schools in Sabatia Sub-County Vihiga County Kenya. Many sampled schools had either inadequate or completely lacked essential Teaching and learning materials for inclusive education. This negatively affected the implementation of inclusive education. The problem is compounded by head Teachers inability to know what is required for SNE to effectively implement Inclusive Education. The state of the available facilities was poor due to poor maintenance and timely replacement displaying generally poor state of management of such facilities.

These findings differ from what is seen in the high in-come countries. In the high income countries, some efforts have been made to redress these inequities. These range from specific education interventions, facilitated access such as support workers, ICT and other adaptations to the workplace, through to targeted training and employment opportunities

III. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings were summarised as follows

To Establish the Attitude of School Managers Effect on Performance of Learners with Disabilities

The first objective of the study sought to establish the attitude of school managers. Effect on performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub County. It was revealed that more than three quarters (81.8%) of the teachers held positive attitude towards LSN the observed t test-results (7.689) for the attitude of teachers is greater than the t- critical value (2.000). This implies that the difference between the observed mean (2.1654) and the expected mean is

Statistically significant; this indicates that the teachers' attitude towards the inclusion of LSN in the regular classroom is positive. Teachers perceived by this study as youthful (35 years of age and below) appeared less willing in some aspects of implementation of SNE than those seen to be fairly old (above 40 years) with regard to the variables of segregation of learners and instruction of SNLs. These differences seen are significant ($p < 0.005$).

Assess Teaching Learning Resource Management Effect on the Performance of Learners with Disabilities

The second objective of the study sought to assess the teaching/learning resources management effect on performance of learners with disabilities in Sabatia Sub County. Results show that there is inadequate and lack of essential Teaching and learning materials for LSN in all cases. This negatively affects the implementation of inclusive education.

IV. CONCLUSION

Conclusions were done as per objectives.

To Establish Attitude of School Managers' Effect on Performance of Learners with Special Needs

School managers had positive attitude towards implementation of inclusive education for learners with disabilities. This positively impact on the performance.

To Assess Teaching Learning Resources Management Effect on Performance of Learners with Disabilities

There is lack of teaching learning resources for learners with disabilities. This has affected negatively their performance.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings, the study recommends that;

- i. Teachers should be trained in skills to identify and handle. This can be done through regular workshops and seminars. This would ensure that the teachers provide the required assistance in implementation of Inclusive Education.
- ii. The Ministry of Education should increase Free Primary Education Funds to so that schools' can cater for the availability and adequacy of teaching/learning resources for learners with special needs enrolled in regular primary schools in Kenya. Parents and sponsors should equally be encouraged to cater for basic needs of LSN adequately so that they learn and acquire education.
- iii. As a matter of urgency, the Government should consider revising the Primary Teacher Education Training Curriculum to include basic information on how to identify and handle LSN. This will make the implementation of inclusive education easier since the teacher will better be prepared to handle LSN.

Recommendations for Further Research

There is need for further research to generate more information on how to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education policy of children with special needs. Researchers can use a bigger sample.

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