

INFLUENCE OF LEARNING RESOURCES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The goal of inclusive education has not been to erase differences among learners, but to enable all students to belong to an educational community that validates and values their individuality. Therefore, inclusive education call for making children with disabilities participates fully in all activities within a regular school. This study was purposed to establish the influence of learning resources on the implementation of inclusive education in Trans Nzoia County. The study used the Catalytic Model (Implementation Model) by Gross (1975) to investigate whether inclusive education is being implemented according to the EFA goals by 2015. The study was conducted using correlation research design and a sample of 179 respondents who are stakeholders for 483 primary schools were used from a population consisted of 483 primary school, 4,349 teachers, 107,064 boys and 94,811 girls, Ministry of Education officials and the surrounding community. Purposive sampling was used to derive a sample of schools in Trans-Nzoia County, and random sampling was used to arrive at the sample of respondents from each school to participate in the study. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and observation techniques to collect pertinent data for the study. Instrument validity and reliability coefficients to at least 0.05 confidence level were accepted as valid and reliable. Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study established that learning resources significantly influence the implementation of inclusive education in regular schools. The study recommended for government to increase technical and resource support including funds to schools so that the schools can be able to implement inclusive education.

Keywords – Disability, Inclusive Education, Implementation, Learning Resources

Introduction

The Salamanca conference marked a new point of departure for millions of children deprived of education. It provided a unique opportunity to special needs education within the wider framework of the education for all (EFA) movement. Launched in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, it came at a time when the world's leaders and the United Nation system as a whole were adopting a new vision and taking the first steps to its realization. The goal was inclusion of all the world's children in schools and the reform of the school system to make this possible. The conference provided a platform to affirm the principle and discuss the practice of ensuring that children with special education needs be included in these initiatives and take their rightful place in a learning society.

In Ghana, the government took the responsibility of catering for the educational needs of children with disabilities in 1957, when Ghana became the first nation in sub Saharan Africa to declare independence. The Ministry of Education (MOE) only took over the affairs of special education from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in the late 1960's (Anthony & Kwadade, 2006) and in 1970, special education unit currently known as the special Education

Division (SED) assumed full responsibility for special schools, (Anson-Yeru, 1988). In 1980's, the government came up with the term 'integration' which means students with disabilities are educated together with students without disabilities (Vislie, 2003).

In East Africa, particularly in Kenya, various education commissions have recommended policy guidelines on SNE including the Presidential Working Party on Education and Training for The Next Decade and Beyond Kamunge Report (1988), which emphasized deployment of special needs education inspectors at district level. The Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (TIQET) Koech Report (1999) recommended the establishment of National Special Education Advisory Board and noted that there was no comprehensive SNE policy or legal framework on SNE. The Task Force on Special Needs Education appraisal exercised Ko'chung Report, (2003) provides a comprehensive legal framework which outlaws all forms of discriminative treatment of persons with disabilities. This includes others' access to education and training. It provides for adaptation of infrastructural, social economic environmental facilities to ensure a conducive environment for persons with Special Needs and Disabilities (SND).

A number of these report have been implemented. Recent policy initiatives have focused on the attainment of Education for All. The key concerns are access, retention, equity, quality and relevance, and internal and external efficiencies within the education system. One of the policy initiatives is the sessional paper No. 1 of 2005 on Education, Training and Research, (Rok, 2005). It sets out clear policy guidelines for all sub sectors including SNE with the intention of pulling in place positive measures to facilitate access to education by children with disabilities by addressing the obstacles to equal rights of education, thus inclusive education.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) developed the special needs education policy document in order to provide a framework for the planning and implementation of SNE devoid of all barriers that inhibit access to quality and relevant education. Inclusive education is a fundamental human right for all, which is enshrined in international and national legal and development frameworks. The rights are provided in the Universal Declaration of Human Right and protected through various international convections including 'Education for All' and the United Nations Millennium Development goals. Education reforms has a significant impact on policies, strategies and teaching practices in most countries with provision of equal education opportunities for all students becoming an important topic (Forlin & Lian, 2008).

In inclusive classroom more students with disabilities are in public schools and teachers, principals and schools are held more accountable for the performance of students and as a result, teachers and principals must provide relevant resources and have relevant skills to deal with inclusive classrooms as per the policy on inclusion. The successful inclusion of students with disabilities requires fundamental change in the organizational structures of schools and in the roles and responsibilities of teachers, (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxon, Cabello & Spagna, 2004). Research done by Burstein et al. (2004) suggests that successful inclusive schools provide a unified educational system in which general and special educators work collaboratively to provide comprehensive and integrated services and programming for all students. At these sites, inclusive practices have been carefully developed and implemented by the entire school system and are provided with resources to support and maintain change. According to Villa and Thousand (2003) research, administrators must take action to publicly articulate the new

vision of inclusion, build consensus for the vision, and lead all stakeholders to active involvement.

Burstein et al. (2004) states, inclusion is not something that simply happens, but something that requires careful thought and preparation implemented with proper attitudes, accommodations, and adaptations in place. Inclusive education is most easily introduced in school communities that have already restructured to meet the needs of their increasingly diverse student populations in regular education, (Villa & Thousand, 2003). Currently educational programs and strategies have been insufficient with regards to needs of children who are vulnerable or marginalized, where programs for such children are available, the function outside mainstream of school or society either as special programs specialized institutions and special educators. This led to exclusion, differentiation and thus discrimination of learners with special needs (Ngugi & Kabuchoru, 2007).

Research Objective

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of learning resources on the implementation of inclusive education in Trans Nzoia County.

Literature Review

In most countries, funding constraints for disabled children are a major issue, (Kirui, 2012). Kirui continues to say that, there is first a need for the government to find the resources to initiate the shift educational thinking. Policy without funding is no policy. The Role on African Universities in the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals conference (Nov. 14-18, 2008), says though government funding to schools under FPE has been on a predetermined unit cost, concerns have been raised that the annual allocation of ksh 1,200 per pupil cannot adequately cater for all educational costs within the school. This will obviously affect the qualities of teaching and learning and the provision of other services. This conference finding is in agreement with the researcher; however, the current research looked at the budgetary allocation of all the equipment and materials to be bought to cater for learners with special needs. Republic of Kenya - Special Needs Policy, (2008) states that; apart from the funds allocated to every learner in primary schools, those with special needs get a top up capitation to cater for specialized teaching and learning materials and other assistive devices.

Studies by Sindiswa (2008) in South Africa, indicated that the resources in some of the schools were grossly inadequate and this impacted negatively on the teachers' efforts to teach effectively. Research shows that inadequate facilities and materials are a major barrier to the implementation of effective inclusion in developing countries, (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). It has been reported that as a result of lack of resources, "learners with special needs in rural areas in developing countries remain at home because the resources in the urban areas are inaccessible due to cost and distance" (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). Further, in India for instance, because of limited resources, special education is unaffordable, and hence inclusion is the only option (Mani, 2001).

Kanini, (2011) in her study on Challenges facing implementation of inclusive education: A case study of primary schools in Kibirichia Division, found out that the most hindering factor is the support materials when it comes to resources. Kanini only looked at materials as a resource, which is narrow to base on to make a conclusion. This study looked at resources in terms of human, funds and infrastructure. None of the scholars looked at it comprehensively.

According to Machio (2012), teachers with relevant skills in Special Needs Education are in short supply in schools, this is due to multiplicity of disabilities, “an issue that often leads to poor quality and standards of teaching and learning. The finding above is similar to the current research; however, it gives only one reason, not mentioning expertise among teachers.”

The Government of Kenya has embraced inclusive education whereby learners with disabilities and special needs are provided with appropriate education within regular schools, however, the challenge with most regular schools is that they are ill equipped to deal with special needs learners (Ministry of Education Task Force - Aligning the Education System to the Constitution, 2012). This study sought to establish the influence of learning resources on the implementation of inclusive education in Trans Nzoia County.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Trans-Nzoia County. This was due to the fact that in Trans-Nzoia, county inclusive education has not fully been implemented. This study adopted both descriptive survey design and correlation design. Descriptive Survey design is ideally suitable as it provides numeric descriptions of some parts of population. Correlation design was selected to determine whether and to what degree, a relationship exists between quantifiable variables. Questionnaires, interviews and observation methods were used for data collection. The target population consisted of 483 primary school, 4349 teachers, 107064 boys and 94811 girls, Ministry of Education officials and the surrounding community in Trans-Nzoia County.

The sample size was determined by Magnani (1997) formula:

$$n = \frac{t^2 \times p(1-p)}{m^2}$$

Where;

n = required sample size

t = confidence level at 95 % (standard value of 1.96)

p = estimated of participants in the study area

m = margin of error at 5%.

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.135(1-0.135)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 179$$

The sample size was 179 participants.

To establish validity, the instruments were given to two experts to evaluate the relevance of each item in the instrument to the objectives and rate each item. In the study, reliability of the instruments was obtained through re-test method to obtain two sets of scores which was subjected to Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient to determine the reliability index.

Before the actual study was conducted, piloting was done at two schools so that the researcher was able to detect any problem(s) to be corrected before the actual study was conducted. The pilot study was done on three schools within the county. The questionnaires and interview

schedule were administered twice, the test was administered to fifteen teachers, two head teachers and one education officer Trans-Nzoia County who were not part of the main study. Once the test had been done, the results were correlated using Pearson products moment coefficient correlation. A reliability coefficient above 0.7 was obtained indicating that the instruments were reliable and therefore the researcher adopted the instruments for data collection.

Out of 179 survey questionnaires administered, 135 were dully filled and delivered. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22.0 aided in analysing descriptive (means, percentages and frequencies) statistics. Correlation and regression analysis was done for every objective to establish the degree to which the dependent variable influence the independent variables.

Results and Discussion

**Table 1:
Teachers with Special Need Training**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	21.9
No	103	70.5
Total	135	100

About 32(21.9%) had received training on special need. This implies that on average each school has only one teacher with special training. With the low number of teachers with special need training, majority of teachers in schools will be ignorant on how to support the physically challenged children access education, be retained in school and support them transit to the next level.

**Table 2:
Descriptive Statistics for Population of Learners and Teachers in Schools**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Total population of learners in schools	30	354.00	1472.00	713.26	46.53
Total population of teachers in schools	30	6.00	37.00	9.23	1.18
Valid N (listwise)	30				

The small standard deviation of teachers' population (1.18) implies that there is no significant difference between population mean of teachers and sample mean. With the low number of teachers in relation to the number of pupils (Std. Dev. 46.53), it is hard to for the few trained teachers to cause a positive attitude influence to their colleagues and effectively implement inclusive education in schools.

Table 3:
Resource Challenges in Teaching and Learning by Disabled Learners

Response	Frequency	Percent
Lack of appropriate facilities	76	56.3
Lack of enough teaching materials	59	43.7
Total	135	100

76(56.3%) the challenges faced included lack of facilities like classes, ramp instead of stairs and appropriate desk. 59(43.7%) of the teachers said the challenge is lack of enough teaching material. This finding shows the deeply rooted challenges caused by inadequacies in teaching and learning materials.

Table 4:
Effect of Challenges Encountered in Teaching and Learning by Disabled Learners

Response	Frequency	Percent
Poor quality education	83	61.5
Bad conditions of teaching	52	38.5
Total	135	100

The results show that 83(61.5%) of the respondent felt the effect of inadequate resource challenge was poor quality education while 52(38.5%) of the respondents felt the effect was bad conditions of teaching. To establish the relationship between learning resource variable (skilled teachers, funds, facilities and materials, and number of teachers per school) and inclusive education a correlation analysis was also performed.

Table 5:
Correlation between Inclusive Education and Resource Variables

		Current population of disabled learners in regular schools
Current population of disabled learners in regular schools	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	108
Skilled teachers	Pearson Correlation	.400**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	108
Funds	Pearson Correlation	.586**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	108
Facilities and materials	Pearson Correlation	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	108
Total population of teachers in regular schools	Pearson Correlation	-.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004
	N	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results show that skilled teachers, funds, and facilities and materials positively and significantly influence implementation of inclusive education at ($r = .400^{**}$, $p < .001$), ($r = .586^{**}$, $p < .001$), ($r = .546^{**}$, $p < .05$) respectively. However, the analysis results revealed that

the number of teachers in a school negative and significant influenced implementation of inclusive education.

Table 6:
Correlation between Inclusivity and Resource Factor

		Correlations	
		Current population of disabled learners in regular schools(inclusivity)	Learning Resource factor
Current population of disabled learners in regular schools(inclusivity)	Pearson Correlation	1	-.503**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	108	30
Resources factor	Pearson Correlation	-.503**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis results show that there is a negative ($r = -.503^{**}$) relationship which is equally significant ($P < .05$) between learning resource and implementation of inclusive education among schools in Trans-Nzoia County. This shows that when educational resources for learners with disabilities are inadequate in most schools, it might hinder the ineffective implementation of inclusive education.

This findings are in concurrence with Machio (2012) who states that teachers with relevant skills in Special Needs Education are in short supply in schools, this is due to multiplicity of disabilities, – an issue that often led to poor quality and standards of teaching and learning. Sindiswa (2008) in South Africa, who indicated that the resources in some of the schools were grossly inadequate and this impacted negatively on the teachers’ efforts to teach effectively. Research shows that inadequate facilities and materials are a major barrier to the implementation of effective inclusion in developing countries (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). It has been reported that as a result of lack of resources, “learners with special needs in rural areas in developing countries remain at home because the resources in the urban areas are inaccessible due to cost and distance” (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002). (Kirui, 2012) argues that in most countries, funding constraints for disabled children are a major issue. Kirui continues to say that, there is first a need for the government to find the resources to initiate the shift educational thinking. Eleweke & Rodda, (2002) findings that shows that inadequate facilities and materials are a major barrier to the implementation of effective inclusion in developing countries.

The place of learning resources had long been established by Gross (1975) in a theory of Catalytic Model (implementation model) who identified resources as necessary in the process of implementing a curriculum innovation. This context is empirically supported by Kanini, (2011) in her study on Challenges facing implementation of inclusive education: A case study of primary schools in Kibirichia Division, which found out that the most hindering factor is the support materials when it comes to resources. In a wider aspect, resources should be adequate; human, fiscal and infrastructural, which are essential supports to inclusive education and in order to facilitate provision of educational services to learners.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study has established that inclusive education has not received required facilitation. The study has also shown that there is a negative and significant relationship between learning resource and implementation of inclusive education. This means that to realize inclusive education in schools, learning resources must be provided.

The study recommends that the government and other stakeholders should provide enough learning resources that can be used for the implementation of inclusive education. It also recommends that a similar study should be carried out in more districts in the country to support the results of this study.

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